



*Canadian HIV & Viral Hepatitis Pharmacists Network
Réseau Canadien des Pharmaciens en VIH et Hépatites Virales*

**Position Statement Regarding Access to Care,
Evidence-Based Uncensored Science, and Equity and Inclusion of all
Communities Impacted by HIV and/or Viral Hepatitis**

February 28, 2025

The Canadian HIV & Viral Hepatitis Pharmacists Network (CHAP) is an organization of pharmacists dedicated to implementing evidence-based science in practice and promoting health equity for all individuals affected by HIV and viral hepatitis. We express deep concern regarding recent U.S. policy changes that have resulted in:

1. Funding pause of critical aid programs, including the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)
2. Removal of clinical practice guidelines and health statistics from federal websites
3. U.S. withdrawal from the World Health Organization
4. Cessation of important medical research funding
5. Executive orders targeting 2SLGBTQIA+ communities

These actions pose significant threats to global public health, human rights, and scientific progress, potentially undermining decades of advancements in HIV and viral hepatitis care.¹

Impact and Concerns:

CHAP recognizes infectious disease transmission transcends geographic boundaries and political ideologies. Interrupted access to life-saving medication and medical care will pose significant public health threats, including:

- **Immediate Effects:** Disproportionate harm to communities most at risk of HIV and viral hepatitis
- **Global Health Risks:** Increased transmission of sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections, disease progression, and preventable deaths due to interrupted access to life-saving medication and care.^{2,3}
- **Exacerbated Health Inequities:** Increased health risks for people in Canada, the U.S., and globally

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CHAP's Position:

1. **Access to Care:** We advocate for low-barrier, timely, and continuous access to effective HIV medication for all who need it for treatment or prevention.⁴
2. **Equity and Inclusion:** We firmly believe that sexual and gender diversity, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status should never impede access to health services.
3. **Evidence-Based Resources:** We commit to the use of objective, evidence-based medication-related resources for all communities at risk or affected by HIV and viral hepatitis.
4. **Support for Partner Organizations:** We stand in solidarity with Canadian partners [CATIE](#) and [CTN+](#), along with international bodies and organizations (including [AmFAR](#), [HIV Medical Association](#), [International AIDS Society](#), [PLOS](#) and [JAMA](#)), who have voiced similar concerns and reaffirmed their commitment to supporting equitable care, unbiased and uncensored research, and compassionate public policies.

Call to Action:

CHAP urges policymakers at all levels to:

1. Protect public health systems
2. Recognize and support affected communities
3. Ensure evidence-based approaches to HIV and viral hepatitis care remain at the forefront of the global health response and are never silenced

As an organization proud of the diversity served by the Canadian public health system, CHAP reaffirms its commitment to inclusion, diversity, access, and equity in health promotion efforts both within Canada and abroad.⁵

References:

1. Lankiewicz E et al. Early impacts of the PEPFAR stop-work order: a rapid assessment. *JIAS* 2025;28:e26423. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jia2.26423>
2. Grinsztejn B & Poniatowski B. International AIDS Society Annual Letter: Why HIV could be poised for a monumental comeback. 6 Feb 2025. <https://www.iasociety.org/annual-letter-2025>
3. Gandhi A et al. Potential Clinical and Economic Impacts of Cutbacks in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Program in South Africa: A Modeling Analysis. *Ann Intern Med*. 2025 Feb 11. doi:10.7326/ANNALS-24-01104. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39932732.
4. Canadian HIV and Viral Hepatitis Pharmacists Network (CHAP) Position Statement on the *Universal Access to Antiretroviral Drugs in Canada*. 2017 April 5. Toronto, Canada. Available at: [Canadian HIV and Viral Hepatitis Pharmacists Network \(CHAP\) | Immunodeficiency Clinic](#)
5. Tkachuk S, Ready E, Chan S, Hawkes J, Janzen Cheney T, Kapler J, Kreutzwiser D, Akagi L, Coombs M, Giguere P, Hughes C, Kelly D, Livingston S, Martel D, Naccarato M, Nhean S, Pozniak C, Ramsey T, Robinson L, Smith J, Swidrovich J, Symes J, Yoong D, Tseng A. [Role of the pharmacist caring for people at risk of or living with HIV in Canada](#). *Can Pharm J (Ott)*. 2024 Aug 2;157(5):218-239.