



# National Antiretroviral Treatment Guidelines



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# FOREWORD

South Africa's response to HIV and AIDS has evolved significantly over the last four to five years. Our response has been guided by our Strategic Plan for HIV and AIDS, 2000 – 2005, and the Comprehensive Plan for the Management, Care and Treatment of HIV and AIDS in South Africa.

**Government's response to HIV covers the full range of interventions including:**

- Information, education and communication;
- Prevention programmes, including access to barrier methods such as male and female condoms;
- Increased access to voluntary counselling and testing;
- Prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV;
- Robust nutritional interventions; and
- An emphasis on individual choice of treatment.

In order to ensure optimal therapy and good clinical outcomes, the Ministry and Department have developed these national guidelines for use of ART.

These guidelines complement all other existing guidelines. Patients who are on ART need to comply with their treatment schedules. To facilitate this, counselling and family support, as well as robust nutritional interventions, are critical.

Health care providers and clinicians in the public and private sector are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the content of these guidelines. This will ensure that we provide safe, sustainable and effective care to all our citizens.

These guidelines will be subject to ongoing review in line with emerging evidence, as well as the information gathered from surveillance and pharmacovigilance monitoring.

Partnerships with the private sector and civil society are critical for the successful implementation of these guidelines.



**DR MANTO TSHABALALA-MSIMANG  
MINISTER OF HEALTH**

# INTRODUCTION

These guidelines serve to assist the clinic team in the management of patients on antiretroviral drugs as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan for HIV and AIDS Care, Management and Treatment. The approach adopted is that of the continuum of care, with a holistic patient focus in an integrated health system.

This system will be integrated from primary to tertiary levels, as well as from the clinic to the community and from pre-diagnosis to palliation whichever is appropriate. The focus is at the primary level within the context of the district health system being implemented throughout the country. These guidelines will be revised as necessary to reflect the changing world of the treatment of HIV. This will ensure the highest possible standard of care for all South Africans.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of such a challenging document for ART in the context of South Africa required the collaboration of experts in the HIV and AIDS field.

As such, the Department of Health wishes to recognise South African, international and regional expert paediatricians, obstetricians and physicians who contributed to development of this guideline.

The Clinical Care Team of the HIV and AIDS Cluster worked tirelessly, and we thank them. A special word of thanks to Dr Ashraf Grimwood for his clinical and editorial support.

The list of contributors are included on page 93.

**DR NP SIMELELA**

**CLUSTER MANAGER: HIV, AIDS and TB**

# PREFACE

South Africa's response to HIV and AIDS has evolved rapidly over the last few years. The Strategic Plan for South Africa 2000-2005 provides for a comprehensive framework for a multi-sectoral response involving all spheres of our society. Government has committed to providing a comprehensive package of care for HIV and AIDS, and has now taken steps to provide antiretroviral treatment (ART) to patients in the public sector.

Mounting an effective ART programme requires more than just the drugs. Establishing an adequate cadre of well-trained health care professionals, laboratory technicians, pharmacists and community workers is critical for the success of this programme.

Mobilisation of the community to participate and fully understand the benefit and limitations of ART is essential for maximum adherence.

The purpose of these guidelines is to set standards as the basis for the use of ART drugs in South Africa on which training- and support-programmes should be based.

All health care workers in the public and private sector are urged to familiarise themselves with the content of these guidelines so that we, together, provide the best possible and safest care for those with HIV and AIDS in South Africa.

The field of ART is dynamic and changes fairly rapidly, thus these guidelines will be reviewed periodically to ensure that South Africa continues to provide quality care.

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