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AIDS Vancouver

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www.aidsvancouver.org

October 11, 2022

Dr. Julio Montaner
Executive Director & Physician-in-Chief
BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS (BC-CfE)
608-1081 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC
Canada V6Z 1Y6

Dear Dr. Montaner:

Together with our community partners, Community-Based Research Centre, Health Initiative for Men, and YouthCO, AIDS Vancouver is writing to ask you about the status of injectable HIV treatment on the BC-CfE formulary. We continue to hear from our communities that there is a need for injectable HIV treatment options. We understand that while the BC-CfE has approved the currently available injectable option approved for use in Canada, it is not yet listed on the BC-CfE's formulary. While the vast majority of our clients living with HIV are well-served by the antiretroviral therapies currently available, there are some who face serious struggles taking pill(s) on a daily basis. For a variety of reasons, these clients face health concerns and require the option of an injectable to make HIV treatment work.

As one of the first AIDS service organizations in Canada, AIDS Vancouver has long been involved in ensuring all people living with HIV have information about, and access to, the newest developments in HIV treatment and care. We are grateful that today, these developments include injectable treatment options, and look forward to seeing this choice available in our province, too.

Our organizations serve a diversity of people living with HIV, including Indigenous people, those new to Canada, people experiencing addictions, those who are underhoused, queer and trans people, youth who have been living with HIV since childhood, and sex workers. We are hearing from some of our clients that the ability to access injectable HIV treatment is a gamechanger when it comes to taking care of their health, and want to do our part to make that a reality.

We understand that all other provinces in Canada have decided to publicly cover Cabenuva. We are concerned that this option is not currently available here. In particular, we understand that Indigenous people who are enrolled with federal non-insured health benefits would be able to receive Cabenuva if they simply lived in another province.

With this in mind, we write to request that the BC-CfE formulary be expanded to include Cabenuva, as the only currently available injectable HIV treatment. We see this as a vital choice for people living with HIV who are clinically eligible and would benefit from a different option than daily pill(s). If you are interested in learning more about patients who are in greatest need of injectable treatments, kindly let me know.

While my service as the Executive Director to AIDS Vancouver began only in July of this year, I know that our respective organizations have collaborated before, including when you presented your success stories in our 30 30 Campaign¹ in 2014. I hope that we can collaborate again here, to provide an important HIV therapy vital to the patients truly in need of them.

Thank you for your continued leadership, and your consideration of this request. We look forward to hearing from you,



Sarah Chown
Executive Director



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¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C19_KAi53xY