STOCK SITUATION FOR ANTIRETROVIRAL DRUGS IN UGANDA

Kampala – 4/12/2017 - The Ministry of Health would like to inform the public that contrary to the information that has been making rounds in the press and some public fora, the Country has adequate stocks of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to manage all the patients on treatment in Uganda.

Stakeholders and patients countrywide should be reassured that there are the right quantities of ARV drug formulations for patients to continue their treatment without any interruptions.

The Ministry of Health operates a dual track supply chain for ARVs involving two large sectors namely the public sector represented by Government (Public Health Facilities) which are supplied through the National Medical stores (NMS); and the private sector represented by the Private Not for Profit (PNFP), and Private for Profit (PFP) health facilities supplied through the Joint Medical Store (JMS) and Medical Access Uganda Limited (MAUL).

Over two-thirds of patients in Uganda are supplied through the public sector supply chain through the National Medical Stores. The public sector commodities are primarily funded by the Government of Uganda and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria. The Private Sector commodities on the other hand, are funded by the US Government through the PEPFAR program. However, In the last two years, the United States Government through PEPFAR have provided some resources to bridge gaps in the public sector ARV supplies.

During the month of September, the quantity of second line and some pediatric ARV formulations for the public sector, fell below the acceptable buffer stock of 4 months. This was a result of some delays in the delivery of some of the ARV orders.

As a result of this, we had to rationalize drug usage in the health facilities. This meant that instead of prescribing the normal two months of drug refills, health workers reduced the refill period to one month. The Ministry of Health also worked with District Health Teams and Implementing Partners to redistribute stock among facilities in consideration of their stock levels.
Ministry of Health, hereby informs the public that the pending deliveries of the affected second line and pediatric ARV formulations for the public sector have now arrived in the Country.

NMS is in the process of distributing these commodities with prioritization of the Districts and Health facilities that were most affected by the rationalization. For the first line formulations, the stock levels in the public sector have been and remain normal and stable. The situation for all commodities (First line and second line) for commodities in the private sector supply chain are normal and stable.

In the same vein, the Ministry of Health would like to clarify that contrary to claims by a section of AIDS advocates, no funds meant for the procurement of ARVs were diverted to pay for other commodities that are not ARVs. In fact, any additional funds such as from the programming of other activities are allocated to procurement of ARVs. For instance, in the current Global Fund grant, United States Dollars 19million was reprogrammed to procure ARVs to bridge the public sector gap.

Isolated stock outs of some ARVs found in health facilities should be reported to our call center on toll free line 0800-100-066 for proper follow-up.

Ministry of Health appreciates the partners who provide resources for the procurement and delivery of these important lifesaving drugs. We appreciate the contribution of the United States Government through PEPFAR, the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria and the Government of Uganda for these efforts.

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