

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
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NEMLC grants approval for Lenacapavir` s inclusion on the for Essential Medicines List

Pretoria: The Department of Health`s National Essential Medicines List Committee (NEMLC) has approved the inclusion of the recently registered injectable Lenacapavir on the Essential Medicines List (EML) as part of its mandate to ensure access to safe, effective, quality and affordable medicines to be used in the public sector for all citizens.

The inclusion of treatments like lenacapavir on the EML is crucial to encourage manufacturing of generic medicines to improve their availability and affordability, especially in low- and middle-income countries like South Africa. Lenacapavir has potential to address critical gaps in current HIV prevention methods.

Essential Medicines List plays a crucial role as a global public health policy tool and a guide for countries to achieve universal health coverage. It ensures that people have access to carefully selected and cost-effective medicines that satisfy their priority health care needs, are of quality and are affordable.

Access to affordable essential medicines is a vital component of an efficient health care system. In our resource-constrained environment with the high burden of disease, the value of the Standard Treatment Guidelines and Essential Medicines List in ensuring affordable and equitable access to medicines should not be underestimated.

The NEMLC is a non-statutory Committee appointed by the Minister of Health, constituted in terms of the National Drug Policy to develop and review an essential medicines list for use in the public sector, where possible accompanied by standard treatment guidelines prepared for three levels of care - primary, secondary, and tertiary care.

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