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Director Bellock & Ms. Moody,

Recently, we joined Governor Rauner and other state and federal government stakeholders to kick off Illinois' Getting to Zero campaign aimed at eliminating new infections of HIV/AIDS in Illinois by 2030 and ensuring people living with HIV (PLWH) are receiving effective therapy to keep them virally suppressed and healthy. A key tenet of the framework of the Getting to Zero strategy is ensuring access to the most effective drugs and therapy available to successfully control the HIV virus in PLWH, keeping them healthy and reducing and maintaining their viral loads to a point to which they are no longer able to transmit the virus to others. In this spirit, we encourage you to add the review of Biktarvy to the agenda for the August 15, 2018 D&T committee meeting, and we further encourage its addition as "Preferred" to the Illinois Medicaid PDL as another tool available to providers treating PLWH.

Biktarvy is a new one-pill-once-a-day, single tablet regimen (STR) therapy for a broad patient population of PLWH. It has been added as one of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' recommended treatment regimens. This new regimen represents one of the most effective tools at providers' disposal:

- Has high HIV suppression rates
- Has a high genetic barrier to the development of drug resistance mutations
- Is extremely well tolerated by patients
 - Low incidence of adverse events/side effects/drug interactions

- Smallest three-drug single-tablet regimen (STR) pill in its class, so easy for patients to swallow
- Does not need to be taken with food, increasing patient compliance and adherence

Also significant to this STR is that it can be started before certain baseline lab results are available. For example, if an HIV diagnosis is positive, a patient could begin this treatment immediately and begin their process to suppress the virus, protecting not only their own health but also protecting others from infection.

Finally, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services publishes HIV treatment guidelines that list HIV medications that are recommended for most people living with HIV. AFC urges the D&T Committee and HFS to add *all* DHHS-recommended STRs as Preferred to the state's Fee For Service (FFS) Preferred Drug List (PDL). Making this change would bring the FFS PDL in line with almost all other MCOs currently operating in Illinois and would enable all PLWH in the Medicaid program equal access to robust treatment options, even during transitions between plans. As Medicaid is the number one provider of health care for PLWH in Illinois, this would go a long way towards the Getting to Zero goal of achieving wide-spread viral load suppression.

We thank you very much for your time and consideration and look forward to a continued dialogue on this important topic moving forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Frey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel Frey

Director of Government Relations, AIDS Foundation of Chicago