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CAB-LA in the News

AFROCAB

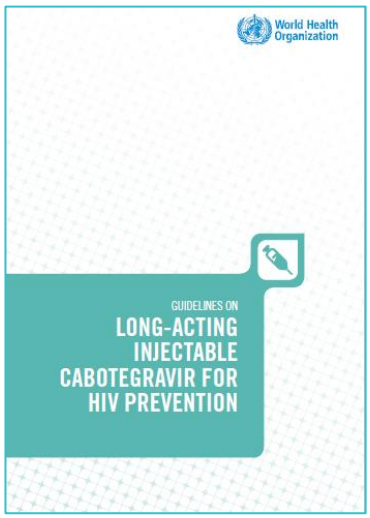
AIDS 2022

This new weekly newsletter will summarise key developments relating to long-acting injectable cabotegravir (CAB-LA) and HIV prevention.

There were several notable moments over the past week, with key announcements and research updates taking place in conjunction with the 24th International AIDS Conference taking place in Montreal.

CAB-LA Voluntary License and Partnership to Accelerate CAB-LA access

- On 28 July, MPP and ViiV announced an agreement to license CAB-LA to three generic suppliers. This is a critical step for ensuring affordable, equitable CAB-LA access in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). However, **more work remains to ensure generic companies rapidly, effectively develop and register CAB-LA and to ensure countries are able to gain experience with ViiV's product while the generic is being developed**. Donor support is critically needed for both of these areas.
- At AIDS 2022, ViiV and several other organizations announced a partnership to accelerate access to CAB-LA. However, this partnership does not include any organizations from the Global South. Successful introduction will not be possible without meaningful community engagement.



WHO publishes new CAB-LA guidelines

- On 28 July the WHO published guidelines, which recommend CAB-LA "as an additional prevention choice for people at substantial risk of HIV infection, as part of combination prevention approaches" due to its safety and strong efficacy.
- This recommendation is a "conditional recommendation with moderate certainty of evidence" and the guidelines outline the critical research and implementation gaps that should be addressed during introduction.
- Donor and partners must work with communities to address these evidence gaps with ViiV's product while generic CAB-LA is being developed so countries can quickly scale-up once affordable, generic CAB-LA is available. The WHO guidelines are an important first step, but **achieving an affordable price with ViiV's product and ensuring donors support rapid generic development will be critical for access.**

"We hope these new guidelines will help accelerate country efforts to start to plan and deliver CAB-LA alongside other HIV prevention options, including oral PrEP and the dapivirine vaginal ring."
- Dr Meg Doherty, Director of WHO's Global HIV, Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infections Programmes

Key Research Updates

New HPTN 084 study results revealed

- New data were presented[1] at the International AIDS Conference from the 12-month unblinded stage of the HPTN 084 study, one of the first studies to demonstrate the effectiveness of CAB-LA in cisgender women in Sub-Saharan Africa[2].
- The new data showed there was an 89% lower risk of HIV acquisition in participants receiving CAB-LA compared to participants who received daily oral PrEP. New pregnancy safety data were also presented, which demonstrated that no congenital abnormalities occurred in participants who became pregnant whilst receiving CAB-LA, further demonstrating the safety of the product.

Update from Project HOPE's 'What women want' study

- Researchers from the 'Project HOPE' study presented their findings at the AIDS 2022[3]. The study surveyed adolescent girls and young women aged 10-24 years in Namibia on their preferences for HIV prevention products.
- The study found that CAB-LA was the most preferred prevention option (followed by oral PrEP and then the dapivirine ring). Participants favored the discrete and long-lasting characteristics of CAB-LA.

CAB-LA use found to be safe and effective at preventing HIV in transgender women taking hormonal therapy

- Researchers from the HPTN 083 study gave an update on their data analysis[4] of HIV acquisition risk between transgender women receiving CAB-LA. Half of participants receiving CAB-LA also received gender affirming hormonal therapy.
- CAB-LA was found to be safe and highly effective, with a 66% reduced risk of HIV acquisition for participants receiving CAB-LA compared to participants receiving daily oral PrEP.
- Gender affirming hormonal therapy had no impact on either the safety nor efficacy of CAB-LA, highlighting the importance of ensuring that transgender women have access to this prevention tool.

Next CAB-LA Forum meeting:

9th August 3-4pm CAT/4-5pm EAT

[1] Delany-Moretlwe, S. et al. Long acting cabotegravir: updated efficacy and safety results from HPTN 084. Presented at the 24th International AIDS Conference, Montreal, 2022.
[2] Delany-Moretlwe et al. (2022) Cabotegravir for the prevention of HIV-1 in women: results from HPTN 084, a phase 3, randomized clinical trial. The Lancet, 399 (10337): 1779-1789
[3] Melese, E. et al. What women want - results from discrete choice experiment about preferred PrEP method from Khomas region of Namibia. Presented at the 24th International AIDS Conference, Montreal, 2022.
[4] Grinsztejn, B. et al. Transgender Women (TGW) in HPTN 083: An Evaluation of Safety, Efficacy, and Gender Affirming Hormonal Therapy (GAHT) Interactions with Long-acting Cabotegravir (CAB-LA). Presented at the 24th International AIDS Conference, Montreal, 2022.