



Ministry of Health

Guidance for HIV Services during COVID-19 pandemic

1 st Edition	3 rd April 2020
2 nd Edition	17 th April 2020
3rd Edition	15th June 2020

This 3rd edition circular provides updated implementation guidance to ensure continued effective HIV service delivery in Malawi while following COVID – 19 preventive precautions.

General technical guidance in Context of COVID-19 Pandemic

A. Resume normal HIV services delivery each day of the week **only when full infection prevention procedures for COVID – 19** listed below are in place.

1. All health providers have put on full personal protective equipment (PPE)
2. Screen all patients before entering the facility for cough and fever. Provide a face mask to all clients with cough and investigate and manage them in a separate area as appropriate.
3. Provide a hand-washing facility at all waiting areas. Enforce thorough hand washing with soap for at least 20 seconds for anyone before entering the facility.
4. Wipe all objects and surfaces that are touched by many people such as doors, desks, chairs, etc. with disinfectant on a regular schedule several times per day.
5. Minimum distance between patients in queues should be 1 metre.

B. All HIV related training sessions can be conducted only when preventive precautions are followed and limit to 20 participants per session in well ventilated spacious room. The recommendation excludes initial HTS training that remains suspended.

The HIV program recommends general measures to avoid crowded facilities, to reduce client time at the facility and to suspend non-essential services. This will contribute to minimizing the spread of COVID-19 and free up health worker capacity for screening and management of potential COVID-19 patients.

The table below indicates HIV services that will **resume**, **remain suspended** and those **provided with additional measures**

HIV Service	Resume normal service	Suspended	Provide with Precautions	Comment
HIV TESTING SERVICES (HTS)				
Provider-initiated HIV testing and counselling (PITC)				
Quality Controls, Proficiency Testing, RTCQI and ECHO sessions				
Routine VCT & active partner notification (AIT)				Also includes group pre-test education and HIV Recency testing
Community mobilization, testing and tracing services				
Use of HTS screening tool				
Opening of new HTS sites				This involves suspended community mobilization activities
Community distribution of HIVST kits				Only to KPs through Drop in Centers (DICs) and AGYW through peer educators upon client's request
VOLUNTARY MEDICAL MALE CIRCUMCISION				
VMMC services in static clinics				Provided on routine basis
VMMC post op care				
Out-reach mobile or campaigns models				
Demand creation				Only activities that do not need community gatherings
CONDOMS (MALE AND FEMALE) AND LUBRICANTS				
Facility distribution				
Community distribution				
PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS				
Demand creation				
PrEP initiation				
CERVICAL CANCER				
Screening and treatment				Limit daily bookings to 15-20 clients
HIV TREATMENT, CARE AND SUPPORT				
Prioritized 6 months dispensing				For regimens 13A, 15P & 15A Contact DHA for stock refill
Routine and targeted viral load testing				
TB preventive therapy (TPT) initiation – IPT and 3HP				Align dispensing intervals with ART and CPT refills
Advanced HIV Disease screening using CD4, TB LAM and CrAg test				
Active defaulter tracing				Use phones
Teen clubs				Also patient support groups