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Acronyms

ART:	Antiretroviral Treatment
DoH:	Department of Health
PMTCT:	Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission
PEP:	Post-Exposure Prophylaxis
PrEP:	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
RPCS:	Repeat Prescription Collections Strategy
STIs:	Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
TasP:	Treatment as Prevention
U=U:	Undetectable equals Untransmittable
VTP:	Vertical Transmission Prevention
WHO:	World Health Organization

1. Background and Context of the Treatment Support Programme in South Africa

The South African Department of Health, with support from the World Health Organiz

HIV testing is the entry point to the prevention, treatment, and management of HIV. The above-mentioned Prevention interventions must be emphasized as primary prevention of HIV acquisition (PrEP and PEP and Condoms) and/or transmission (Condoms and ART)

U=U must be implemented in conjunction with the available HIV Prevention interventions at all times

Table below summarizes various preventative uses of ART that have been implemented.

What	Acronym	Details
Post Exposure Prophylaxis	PEP PEP (occupational PEP) Sexual PEP (non-occupational PEP)	

3. Principles

WHO Guidance based on systematic Review:

Viral loads of less than 200 copies/mL not associated with sexual transmission of HIV

WHO has defined 3 categories of viral load levels

5. Unpacking the U = U

Research has continued to examine the promise of Treatment as Prevention (TasP) as a real game-changer to affect the course of the HIV epidemic. Another prevention strategy, that has recently gained momentum has been Undetectable equals Untransmittable U=U means that if a person who is infected with HIV is on antiretroviral therapy, or ART, consistently and correctly adhering to treatment, and has a consistent undetectable HIV viral load (at less than or equal to 50 copies, the virus cannot be sexually transmitted to their sex partner.

There is currently no cure for HIV. However, taking ART consistently, every day, can reduce a viral load or the amount of HIV in their blood to undetectable levels. If the level of the virus reaches such a low level, as determined by laboratory testing processes (50 copies in SA), this affords them U=U status.

Studies of sex between HIV-positive and HIV-negative partners have found zero cases of transmission within heterosexual and homosexual sexual interactions, wherein the HIV-positive partner had an undetectable viral load. When someone receives an HIV diagnosis, it is important to get early and continuous treatment with ART to reach and maintain an undetectable viral load.

An undetectable viral load does not prevent the transmission or acquisition of other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or pregnancy. Condoms can prevent STI transmission and routine STI screening is therefore recommended. **The consistent use of condoms during every sexual encounter remains our number one defense against the spread of HIV & AIDS and STIs.**

In addition to U=U, other highly effective ways of preventing HIV transmission or acquisition include condoms and oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

6. Benefits of U=U

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9. When U=U Should not be recommended?

- a. Currently, there is no sufficient evidence to suggest that suppressed HIV viral load will prevent HIV from being transmitted when sharing needles by people who inject drugs
- b. Cases of HIV transmission from breastfeeding have been reported even when the viral load was undetectable in both blood and breast milk.

Message: 1

Message: 2



10. Role of the Health Care Workers

Health Care Workers are pivotal to the U = U campaign by:

- a. Encouraging community members to test for HIV.
- b. Encouraging People living with HIV to adhere to ARV treatment.
- c. Regularly monitoring Viral Load to PLWHIV on treatment
- d. Encouraging People living with HIV to live a

to



NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
UNDETECTABLE EQUALS UNTRANSMITTABLE U=U MESSAGING TOOLKIT

