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WHO handover pediatric ARV drugs to Ministry of Health

Following an urgent request by the Ministry of Health, WHO Country Office Timor-Leste procured pediatric anti-retroviral medicine. Dr. Jorge Mario Luna, WHO Representative to Timor-Leste, presented 500 anti-retroviral (ARV) formulation bottles to H.E. Dr. Maria do Ceu Sarmento Pina da Costa, Vice Minister of Health on April 1st, 2014.

This medicine was requested for children in Timor-Leste living with HIV. There are currently 141 people receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV in Timor-Leste, including 17 children. ARV medicine helps to boost the immune system of those infected with HIV by suppressing the reproduction of the virus in the body. Since 2003, almost 408 people have been detected with HIV nationwide and approximately 40 people have died from AIDS.

Challenges with procurement of pediatric ARV drugs persist for Timor-Leste because of the small quantities of drugs required. However, Ministry of Health and WHO are examining ways to ensure the consistent supply and delivery of ARV medication in future.



Dr. J.M. Luna, WHO Representative, H.E. Dr. Maria do Ceu Sarmento Pina da Costa, Vice Minister of Health, Dr. Ines Theodora, Director of Communicable Disease Control, Dr. Merita Monteiro, Head of Communicable Diseases, Dr. Geeganage Weerasinghe, WHO Technical Officer HIV/AIDS and Martha Abina, HIV/ AIDS Officer

Dr. Luna said that he was pleased to be able to assist with the provision of this medicine and to continue working closely with the Ministry of Health on HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Dr. Ines Theodora, Director of Services for Communicable Disease Control, Dr Merita Monteiro, Head of Communicable Diseases Department, Dr. Geeganage Weerasinghe, WHO Technical Officer HIV/AIDS and Ms. Martha Abina, HIV/ AIDS Officer, Ministry of Health, were also present during the handover ceremony in Ministry of Health.