



## **HIV activists launch survey to ensure quality health services during COVID-19**

17 April 2020, Johannesburg — HIV activists in South Africa have launched a public survey to find out if people living with HIV and TB are experiencing challenges because of COVID-19. Are people able to collect ARVs without a problem or are there stockouts? Are HIV services available at the clinic? These are amongst the 20 questions being raised. They also want to hear about the experiences people are having as a result of the lockdown, and if there has been an impact on people's health and rights.

The activists are from the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), Positive Action Campaign, Positive Women's Network (PWN), the National Association of People Living with HIV and AIDS (NAPWA) and the South African Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (SANERELA+).

People engaging in the survey will not be required to give their names and all responses will be kept anonymous. Anyone interested in responding online may access the survey here: [bit.ly/HIV-COVID-19](https://bit.ly/HIV-COVID-19).

For those people living with HIV unable to access the online survey or wishing to answer in a language of their choice on the phone, they can send a WhatsApp, SMS, or please call me to the following numbers:

*Eastern Cape: 081 064 5042*

*Free State: 073 121 0199*

*Gauteng: 076 631 9162*

*KwaZulu-Natal: 072 931 8042*

*Limpopo: 071 909 7871*

*Mpumalanga: 072 661 7611*

*North West: 073 702 7507*

*Western Cape: 072 899 4897*

All data will be collated and analysed in order to understand the challenges being faced by people living with HIV across the country. Results will be published and raised with the National Department of Health in order to highlight where urgent interventions need to be made to protect people's access to HIV, TB and wider healthcare services. Further, we will be monitoring to ensure that clinics are implementing sufficient infection control and social distancing measures to protect people attending the clinic from getting COVID-19.

The organisations further encourage people living with HIV who may have stopped taking ARVs or not started yet to go to the clinic and start HIV treatment as soon as possible. For people living

with HIV, the most important thing to protect yourself is to take your ARVs as prescribed since it will help keep your immune system strong.

***For media interviews, please contact:***

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