

HOW **PHARMA PRICE HIKES** AND THE EPIC ACT **THREATEN ACCESS** TO LIFESAVING HIV TREATMENT

1 IN 4

More than one in four people living with HIV rely on Medicare.

14X

Medicare spends 14 times more per beneficiary with HIV than for other beneficiaries.

53%

Only about half **maintain** full treatment adherence (citing cost as a primary reason).

Pharmaceutical companies are raising prices on lifesaving Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) drugs while lobbying Congress to delay Medicare's ability to negotiate lower prices, forcing patients to pay more while waiting longer for relief.

More than **a quarter** of people living with HIV rely on Medicare, where they pay significantly more for prescriptions than other beneficiaries and are half as likely to follow their HIV treatment consistently.

In 2022, patient advocacy secured the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program, a long-overdue reform designed to curb excessive drug prices. Now, **industry-backed proposals like the EPIC Act threaten to postpone lower negotiated prices for many HIV drugs**, even as drug manufacturers continue raising them year after year.



HIV drug prices increased 52% (from 2013 to 2020)

KEY FACTS: HIV DRUG PRICES IN THE U.S.

- The U.S. pays the highest prices in the world for antiretroviral drugs, with median **annual costs exceeding \$35,000** and rising faster than the rate of inflation for more than a decade.
- Between 2013 and 2020, average prescription **drug spending** for people with HIV **increased by 52%**.
- Despite higher spending, the U.S. has **lower viral suppression rates** than peer nations, undermining public health goals.

MEDICARE'S CENTRAL ROLE IN HIV

- Nearly **28%** of people living in the U.S. with HIV are covered by Medicare, which accounts for 39% of federal spending on HIV care and treatment, totaling \$11.3 billion in 2022 alone.
- By 2030, nearly **300,000** people with HIV are expected to age into Medicare eligibility.

For patients, high costs translate into real barriers to care:

- **One in four** people with HIV on Medicare **experience treatment gaps of 30 days** or more.
- **Black patients are less likely to maintain continuous antiretroviral therapy** and HIV continues to **disproportionately** affect low-income communities and the Southern U.S.

RECENT HIV PRICE HIKES

Against this backdrop, even so-called "routine" price increases on widely used HIV drugs generate **hundreds of millions in new costs** for Medicare and push patients' out-of-pocket spending even higher.

In the first week of January 2026, 12 HIV drugs saw price increases. The five drugs highlighted were selected based on a combination of the size of the price increase and Medicare utilization.

RUKOBIA

New price: \$9,651.46
2026 Increase: \$371.21 (4%)
Medicare patients: 1,227



TIVIGAY

New price: \$2,394.91
2026 Increase: \$69.75 (3%)
Medicare patients: 30,088



DOVATO

New price: \$3,250.47
2026 Increase: \$154.78 (5%)
Medicare patients: 15,932



CABENUVA

New price: \$7,132.96
2026 Increase: \$173.97 (2.5%)
Medicare patients: 5,075



TRIUMEQ

New price: \$4,014.34
2026 Increase: \$116.92 (3%)
Medicare patients: 18,047



MEDICARE **DRUG PRICE NEGOTIATION UNDER ATTACK** – WHY IT MATTERS FOR PATIENTS

Medicare drug price negotiation targets older, high-cost drugs with no competition — including many HIV treatments that patients rely on for lifelong care. **Pharmaceutical companies are working to weaken the program through proposals like the EPIC Act**, which would delay negotiated prices for small-molecule drugs and allow manufacturers to continue raising prices for years, disproportionately harming people living with HIV, since most HIV drugs fall into this category. This year, one HIV drug is up for negotiation, Biktarvy. If EPIC were already law, Biktarvy would not have been eligible for negotiation.

Drug companies are raising prices on lifesaving HIV medications while pushing Congress to delay the very reforms designed to lower them. Patients living with HIV cannot afford to pay more — or wait longer — for relief.