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Trump Administration Secures New Supplies of Remdesivir for the United States

On Monday, the Department of Health and Human Services announced an agreement to secure large supplies of the drug remdesivir for the United States from Gilead Sciences through September, allowing American hospitals to purchase the drug in amounts allocated by HHS and state health departments.

“President Trump has struck an amazing deal to ensure Americans have access to the first authorized therapeutic for COVID-19,” said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “To the extent possible, we want to ensure that any American patient who needs remdesivir can get it. The Trump Administration is doing everything in our power to learn more about life-saving therapeutics for COVID-19 and secure access to these options for the American people.”

HHS has secured more than 500,000 treatment courses of the drug for American hospitals through September. This represents 100 percent of Gilead’s projected production for July (94,200 treatment courses), 90 percent of production in August (174,900 treatment courses), and 90 percent of production in September (232,800 treatment courses), in addition to an allocation for clinical trials. A treatment course of remdesivir is, on average, 6.25 vials.

Hospitals will receive the product shipped by AmerisourceBergen and will pay no more than Gilead’s Wholesale Acquisition Price (WAC), which amounts to approximately \$3,200 per treatment course. Generally, patients do not pay directly for hospital-administered drugs like remdesivir; rather, for Medicare and most private insurers, the drug’s cost is incorporated into payments made by the insurer, such as Medicare paying for the drug through a diagnostic-related group.

These supplies will be allocated in the same way that Gilead’s donation of approximately 120,000 treatment courses of remdesivir were allocated: HHS allocates product to state and territorial health departments based on COVID-19 hospital burden, and health departments allocate it to hospitals. The delivery of the purchased remdesivir will be streamlined, going directly to the hospital, per the state’s allocation decision, rather than going first to the state health departments for subsequent delivery to hospitals.

Shipments will likely occur every two weeks, as they have with the donated product. The final allocation of Gilead’s approximately 120,000 donated treatment courses is being shipped today, June 29.

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