

PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

HIV ADVOCACY & SERVICES SINCE 1995

The Network
News
2013
August Issue #160

OREGON HIV/AIDS CASE MANAGEMENT

**There is still time to join us at AIDS WALK!!
On Sunday, September 22nd**



Next Meeting

SEPTEMBER 10TH

Internalized
Oppression and
Mental Health And
Addictions In African
-Americans

Danette C Haynes,
LCSW
Clinical Director
Avel Gordly Center
for Healing

AIDS Walk is an important event not just because of the funds raised but also because of the awareness the events raises about HIV/AIDS.

When you raise money for our team you support both the work of both Partnership Project and Cascade AIDS Project. We retain 75% of the funds our team raises for the work specifically done at Partnership Project.

You can join our team or make a donation [here!](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

As we prepare for Open Enrollment through Cover Oregon in October 2013, there will be several Assister positions in the Portland Metro HIV/AIDS community whose role will be to assist clients in enrolling in the best health insurance plan for them.

The following agencies are currently hiring:

OHSU/Partnership Project: Hiring 1 FTE for 1 year to work with Partnership Project Medical Case Managers to help existing clients transition to appropriate health insurance. For more information and to apply go to [OHSU JOBS](#)

Cascade AIDS Project: Please see their website for information about FTE and roles [here](#)



ASK Devon– Devon Flynn, Pharm D is a pharmacist with the OHSU-HIV Clinic

New Integrase Inhibitor Approved

DOLUTEGRAVIR (Tivicay®) was approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on 12 August 2013. It is considered a “second-generation” Integrase Inhibitor (InSTI) due to its efficacy against HIV virus that has certain resistance mutations or suspected resistance to the other InSTIs, raltegravir and/or elvitegravir.

Dolutegravir is dosed ONCE or TWICE daily, depending on HIV treatment history and/or other medications that may be included in the regimen (see table below). **It is dosed with or without food.**

Patient HIV Treatment History	Dolutegravir Dose
-No previous HIV treatment OR -No previous treatment with raltegravir or elvitegravir	50 mg ONCE daily
-No previous HIV treatment -No previous treatment with raltegravir or elvitegravir AND -Also taking Efavirenz, Fosamprenavir/ritonavir, Tipranavir/ritonavir, or Rifampin	50 mg TWICE daily
-Has taken raltegravir or elvitegravir in the past and has certain Integrase mutations OR -Has suspected Integrase Inhibitor resistance	50 mg TWICE daily *avoid use with metabolic enzyme inducers whenever possible

Most Common Early Side Effects appear to be nausea, headache, and diarrhea. Liver and kidney function monitoring will be important as with other HIV medications.

Drug Interactions:

Although dolutegravir is at lower risk for drug-drug interactions, there are still some interactions to be noted. Dolutegravir is metabolized via the UGT1A1 enzyme and, to some extent, the more common enzyme CYP3A. Therefore, drug levels may be affected by other medications that may increase the clearance of dolutegravir. However, dolutegravir generally does NOT appear to affect the clearance of other medications.

One interaction to note is with over-the-counter (OTC) products containing polyvalent cations.

These include antacids, laxatives, calcium supplements, iron supplements, and ‘buffered’ medications that contain calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), aluminum (Al), or iron (Fe).

If taken with one of these products, the dose times must be spaced:

- The dolutegravir dose can be taken 2 hours *before* the other medication OR
- The dolutegravir dose can be taken 6 hours *after* the other medication.

GET YOUR BENEFIT VERIFICATION LETTER ONLINE

By Alan Edwards, Social Security Public Affairs

Do you need a letter from Social Security verifying your benefits? The fastest, easiest, most convenient way to get a benefit verification letter these days is to go online to www.socialsecurity.gov.

You may need a benefit verification letter for a number of reasons. Perhaps you need proof of income for a loan or to verify your monthly income for housing, or state or local benefits. You may need proof of your current Medicare health insurance status. In some cases, a person may need proof of retirement status, disability status, or age. For any of these situations, a benefit verification letter will provide the proof you need.

Sometimes a benefit verification letter is called a budget letter, benefits letter, proof of income letter, or proof of award letter. Don't let the different titles confuse you; they are all the same thing: a benefit verification letter. Whatever the reason you need your benefit verification letter, you can get yours immediately online for free.

To get your benefit verification letter, simply visit us online at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount and set up a *my Social Security* account. To create an account, you must provide some personal information about yourself and give us answers to some questions that only you are likely to know. They are the same types of questions you would encounter if you were trying to open an online account at a financial institution or obtain your credit report.

Next, you create a unique username and password that you will use to access your online account. This process protects you and keeps your personal Social Security information private.

Once you've established your account, it will be simple for you to come back and transact business with Social Security in the future. For example, in addition to getting another benefit verification letter in the next year or two, you can check your benefit and payment information as well as your earnings record. You also can change your address, phone number, and direct deposit information.

So remember: there's no need to fight traffic and visit a busy government office in order to obtain proof of your benefits. Simply visit www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount and establish a *my Social Security* account so you can obtain your benefit verification letter online in a matter of minutes.

--

LET SOCIAL SECURITY HELP GUIDE YOU TO WORK

By Alan Edwards, Social Security Public Affairs

September is National Guide Dog Month. The celebration of the work that guide dogs do each day was inspired by actor Dick Van Patten, who wanted to raise awareness and money to help guide dog schools.

Many people who depend on guide dogs also depend on disability benefits. People who receive Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) due to a disability suffer from severe ailments that make them unable to work and provide for themselves. However, sometimes it is possible — with a little help — for people with disabilities to become self-sufficient through work.

If you are getting disability benefits, we understand how difficult the prospect of trying to work can be. We also understand that the possibility of having medical and financial benefits cut off can be frightening. But rest assured, Social Security has some great work incentives in place that allow people with disabilities to “test the waters” and prove that they can work before any benefits are stopped. That makes it inviting to try. Even if things don’t work out, the benefits will still be there for you.

These work incentives include continued cash benefits for a period of time while you work, continued Medicare or Medicaid while you work, and help with education, training, and rehabilitation to start a new line of work. The rules vary depending on whether you receive Social Security or SSI.

Although the ultimate goal of work incentives is to help bridge the gap between a dependence on monthly benefits and self-sufficiency, we cast a large safety net to make sure you do not find yourself in dangerous waters. You may continue to receive benefits while working, and medical benefits can sometimes continue to provide coverage for years.

When a person who receives Social Security or SSI disability benefits works, there are certain impairment-related work expenses that we deduct from your countable income, making it possible to earn more and remain eligible to receive benefits. For SSI, these excluded expenses can allow you to receive a higher benefit payment. Examples of these impairment-related work expenses include wheelchairs, certain transportation costs, and specialized work-related equipment. Blind work expenses can include guide dog expenses, meals consumed during work hours, and income used to pay income taxes.

You can learn all about the different rules for both Social Security and SSI by reading our publication, *Working While Disabled — How We Can Help*, available to read or listen to at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs. From that page, type the title in the box at the left side of the page. The online booklet will tell you about the work incentives you may be able to use.

You also can put the word “work” in the publications search box to find out more about how Social Security’s work incentives can help you. Pay special attention to the publications entitled *Incentives To Help You Return To Work* and *Your Ticket To Work*. These publications, which you can read or listen to, will guide you as you consider your options.

Members needed for Oregon HIV/Viral Hepatitis/Sexually Transmitted Infection Integrated Planning Group

Interested in being part of a statewide advisory group that impacts the work of prevention and care around the needs of persons living with HIV, viral hepatitis and other sexually transmitted infections?

Then consider [joining the Integrated Planning Group](#). Information about the group and an application is available online [here](#)

The group is looking for new members now!

This newsletter is published by
[OHSU/ Partnership Project](#).

Our thanks to Kim Lewis and Myrna Walking Eagle for their patient proofreading , Barbara Danel for website posting and Annick Benson for distribution of the newsletter.

The editor is Julia Lager-Mesulam.

Comments/questions about this publication should be directed to:

Julia Lager-Mesulam at lagermes@ohsu.edu,
or call (503) 230-1202, FAX (503) 230-1213,
5525 SE Milwaukie Ave. Portland, OR 97202

This issue, and issues from Feb 2002 on, can be found electronically [here](#)