

GOVT DEPLOYS UGANDA-MADE HIV TEST KITS

BY JOHN MUSENZE

The Ministry of Health has rolled out a new national HIV testing algorithm across all health facilities, integrating locally manufactured rapid diagnostic test kits in a shift towards homegrown solutions.

The directive, issued to health facilities and implementing partners nationwide, aligns with the Government's Buy Uganda, Build Uganda policy, which promotes local production of essential goods.

In a statement issued by the director general of health services, Prof. Charles Olaro, the move is aimed at strengthening national health security, reducing reliance on imports and ensuring consistent access to HIV testing services.

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The rollout of HIV test kits is a crucial step towards the UNAIDS 95-95-95 global goals to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

Olaro said the rollout marks a critical step towards building a resilient and self-reliant health system, while advancing Uganda's progress towards the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets on HIV diagnosis, treatment and viral suppression.

Under the revised algorithm, facilities will use the Uganda-made Kwiq-Test HIV 1/2



Front row: The Prime Minister, Robinah Nabbanja (centre); the Minister of Health, Jane Ruth Aceng (third-left); Minister of State for Trade, Gen. Wilson Mbadi (third-right); Microhaem Scientifics founder Cedric Akwesigye (second-right) with his wife Diana Nahabwe Akwesigye (right); Dr Susan Nabadda, the executive director of Uganda National Health Laboratory Services (left) in a group photo with some of the scientists during the launch of the locally manufactured diagnosis test kits for malaria, HIV and sickle cells at Kampala Serena Hotel on April 2

kit made by Microhaem Scientifics as the initial screening test. Positive results will be confirmed using the HIV 1+2 Stat-Pak kit, while the SD Bioline HIV-1/2 test will serve as a tie-breaker in cases of conflicting results. Facilities will also use malaria and sickle cell testing kits made by the same company during the screening process.

The ministry said the selected kits underwent technical evaluation by the AIDS Control Programme, Central Public

Health Laboratories and the Uganda Virus Research Institute before approval.

Launched on April 2 at Kampala Serena Hotel, the locally produced kits are already available through National Medical Stores and have been incorporated into routine ordering systems to support nationwide implementation. Health facilities have been instructed to strictly adhere to the updated algorithm and existing national testing guidelines.