Letter to the Editor

Pakistan Journal of Public Health
www.pjph.org

Recent Antiviral Advancements in Pakistan: Opportunities and Future Prospects

Muhammad Abdullah Javed Malik[1], Hania Imran[1]

We would like to highlight the recent advances in antiviral drug availability in Pakistan and their potential impact on public health.

The approval of Tafenoquine for Plasmodium vivax malaria represents a major step in malaria control, offering a single-dose cure when supported by G6PD testing (1). Likewise, the local licensing of Lenacapavir for HIV, through voluntary agreements with Gilead, provides a promising long-acting option that may improve both treatment and prevention outcomes (2). The wider use of direct-acting antivirals (DAAs) such as Sofosbuvir-based regimens has already transformed Hepatitis C management, enabling highly effective interferon-free therapy (3). In addition, domestic production of Remdesivir has strengthened Pakistan's response to COVID-19 (4), while Tecovirimat access through WHO support for mpox reflects growing preparedness against emerging infections (5).

While these advances are encouraging, several further steps are essential:

1. Strengthening regulatory support to ensure timely and equitable access to new antivirals.
2. Integrating diagnostic tools into primary care (e.g., routine G6PD testing with Tafenoquine).
3. Establishing robust pharmacovigilance to monitor safety, resistance, and long-term outcomes.
4. Expanding public awareness programs to promote adherence and reduce stigma, particularly for HIV and Hepatitis C.
5. Encouraging collaborative local research to generate evidence that guides national antiviral strategies.

In conclusion, Pakistan is making meaningful progress in adopting modern antivirals. Sustained investment in infrastructure, regulation, and public health systems will be critical to maximize their long-term benefits.

Author Contributions:
MAJM: Conception, design, literature review, and manuscript drafting.
HI: Literature review, reference formatting and critical revision of the manuscript

References

1. Baird JK, Battle KE, Howes RE. Primaquine and tafenoquine for the prevention of relapse of Plasmodium vivax malaria. JAMA. 2018;320(24):2497–8.
2. Segal-Maurer S, DeJesus E, Stellbrink HJ, Castagna A, Richmond GJ, Sinclair GI, et al. Capsid inhibition with lenacapavir in multidrug-resistant HIV-1 infection. N Engl J Med. 2022;387(20):1835–45.
3. Waheed Y, Siddiq M, Jamil Z. Hepatitis C in Pakistan: a review of treatment and prevention strategies. World J Virol. 2017;6(2):54–60.
4. Usman M, Farooq A, Nawaz G, et al. Pakistan to produce remdesivir locally: a ray of hope in COVID-19 management. Pak J Med Sci. 2020;36(COVID19-S4): S123–4.
5. Adler H, Gould S, Hine P, Snell LB, Wong W, Houlihan CF, et al. Clinical features and management of human monkeypox: a retrospective observational study in the UK. Lancet Infect Dis. 2022;22(9):1153–62.

How to cite this article: Malik MAJ, Imran H. Recent Antiviral Advancements in Pakistan: Opportunities and Future Prospects. Pak J Public Health. 2026;16(2):49.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.32413/pjph.v16i2.1939

[1] Wah Medical College, Wah Cantt, Pakistan

Correspondence:
Muhammad Abdullah Javed Malik
javedabdullah507@gmail.com

Submitted: 15-10-2025
Accepted: 15-03-2026
Published: 30-06-2026