

AIDS Drug Assistance Program emergency fix unlikely to come this week

By [Marcos Restrepo](#) | 02.01.11 | 10:30 am

[Tom Liberti](#), director of the state Department of Health's [Bureau of HIV/AIDS](#), told The Florida Independent Monday that an emergency solution for the funding crisis facing the AIDS Drug Assistance Program will probably not be signed this week.

Liberti said that if an agreement is signed, approximately 6,500 Florida Drug Assistance Program patients would receive their anti-retroviral medications through Welvista for the months of February and March. The medications would be donated by pharmaceutical companies.

“We are ready to go, but Welvista is not ready to handle the amount of patients,” Liberti said. The Drug Assistance Program is suffering from a [financial crisis in Florida](#) and in other states.

[Welvista](#) is a nonprofit organization based in South Carolina and founded in 1993 that “provides a single source through which healthcare providers, healthcare facilities and pharmaceutical companies can donate their resources.”

Florida's AIDS Drug Assistance Program has the longest waiting list in the nation — with more than 2,800 HIV/AIDS patients.

An unknown number of patients are getting their drugs through pharmaceutical assistance programs.

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