

SHORT TAKES

CLARIFICATION

Letter from Lionel Lee, executive director, Action for Aids Singapore

I refer to the report "HIV testing, treatment in Singapore should be free: Nobel laureate" (March 8).

In the report, I was quoted as saying that "free treatment subjects the healthcare system to abuses and 'may not translate to long-term economic benefits'". The statement has been quoted out of context. The intended meaning should be that: "Completely free medication could possibly lead to carelessness and increase the practice of unsafe sex. We have always supported the provision of affordable treatment with some form of co-payment scheme by patients."

We feel that affordable and accessible anti-retroviral treatment is crucial to overall management and control of HIV/Aids in Singapore. We believe that treatment is also prevention, and that keeping HIV-infected persons in good health will lead to positive effects for infected individuals, their families and for the community.