



AIDS Candlelight Memorial – **'We Remember, We Take Action, We Live Beyond HIV'**.

Firstly I'd like to acknowledge the great work the New Zealand AIDS Foundation does in promoting safe sex and educating others. It's their work that means by international standards New Zealand has a relatively low prevalence of HIV.

The challenge of Covid-19 has opened unique opportunities for significant advances in AIDs treatment. This arises as a consequence of the huge focus on Covid-19 as a virus with subsequent modalities and techniques that can also cross over to the HIV virus.

It may be that this is the step change in antivirals that was needed and hoped for to better tool up the arsenal against HIV.

Either side of the pharmaceutical approach is the ongoing importance of protective education and wrap around counselling and support post infection.

We also have responsibilities for AIDs beyond our shores and collaboration and co-operation with our pacific neighbours and engagement with international agencies positions us well.

On behalf of the National Party I send my best wishes to all those taking part in this year's AIDS Candlelight Memorial.

Judith Collins

Leader of the Opposition