



SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND EFFECTIVE MEDICINES FOR UKRAINIANS (SAFEMed) ACTIVITY

MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST



OVERVIEW

Our work in Ukraine aims to bolster pharmaceutical governance and financing, contribute to a longer-term plan for pharmaceutical financing, and strengthen rational pharmaceutical management and the pharmaceutical supply chain, ultimately leading to better availability and use of essential medicines, particularly for those living with TB, HIV and AIDS, and noncommunicable diseases. We support the Government of Ukraine in responding to COVID-19 through technical assistance in implementing its national vaccination plan.

SAFEMED PROVIDES ACCESS TO MARKET ANALYSIS TOOLS TO GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

Access to up-to-date information on prices of medicines at the national and global level is essential for government agencies in setting policy as well as in public procurement. For example, the Medical Procurement of Ukraine (MPU) last year procured approximately 10.5 billion UAH of medicines, medical devices and equipment. MPU seeks to achieve maximum savings in its procurements through carefully designed category strategies based on accurate pricing data along with involvement of a wide range of manufacturers and suppliers in transparent competition processes.

In February, SAFEMed secured a membership to Pharma I4's global medicine and pricing database for MPU while also securing memberships to the Ministry of Health (MOH), the National Health Service of Ukraine (NHSU) and the State Expert Center (SEC). The tool provides transparent information on over 2,5 million medicines in 68 countries. It allows access to comprehensive data on ex-factory, wholesale, retail prices, reimbursement, and complete marketing authorization holder and manufacturer information. Pharma I4 also allows tracking of medicine shortages as well as parallel import of medicine in EU according to the European Medicines' Agency (EMA) and on country level. Lastly, it contains information on managed entry agreements (MEA) all over the world (non-confidential part).

To provide partners with the widest possible range of opportunities to work with modern analytical tools, SAFEMed also worked with the pharmaceutical marketing firm SMD to conduct three training courses for staff at MPU, SEC, and NHSU. The training courses, including video lessons and a manual for working with databases, were designed to build participant skills in objectively assessing the potential of the pharmaceutical market and its individual segments, as well as perform deep and comprehensive analysis of the competitive environment.

SAFEMED CONTINUES TO STRENGTH REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVED PRESCRIBING AND DISPENSING OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES AND MEDICAL DEVICES

SAFEMed, with support of its local partner Legal Alliance and in cooperation with the MOH and the NHSU, continues to develop draft regulations aimed at improving the processes for prescribing and dispensing of prescription medicines and medical devices.

Specifically, SAFEMed supported the drafting of a new version of the Rules for prescribing medicines and medical devices and the Procedure for dispensing of prescribed medicines and medical devices from pharmacies. The mentioned drafts are currently being prepared by the MOH for public discussion. The main novelties of these drafts refer to:



the launch of e-prescriptions for all prescribed medicines dispensed at the expense of a patient, active from April 1, 2023.

the launch of e-prescriptions for medical devices subject to reimbursement (anticipated to be in place once the process is technically completed in the eHealth system).

A transitional period is also foreseen, allowing paper prescriptions to be handled in parallel with e-prescriptions. This approach guarantees patients access to prescription medicines and medical devices regardless of the doctor's ability to issue an e-prescription due to the impacts of Russia's invasion in Ukraine.

SAFEMED SUPPORTS THE ASSESSMENT OF THE REGIONAL CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL ON THEIR READINESS TO TAKE OVER MANAGEMENT OF THE IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

In 2021, the Government of Ukraine began building a strong and resilient public health system guided by international best practices by creating a network of regional Centers for Disease Control (rCDCs). These regional bodies were authorized to manage communicable disease programs and vaccination campaigns including for COVID-19 and to provide rapid response to other health emergencies. While the legal framework is still under development, the MOH is planning to shift some immunization functions from regional health departments to regional CDCs, especially the supply chain component. Working closely with the USAID/Public Health Systems Resilience & Recovery Activity to synergize investments, SAFEMed supported the MOH and the Center of public health (CPH) to conduct an assessment of CDCs' readiness to perform immunization functions at regional level and the progress of the transition of these functions from regional departments of health. Along with other partners SAFEMed developed a checklist of 41 questions (multiple-choice, open-ended, and Likert-scale questions) covering two major blocks: progress of the transition and warehousing & logistics, specifically focuses on various aspect of pharmaceutical management. All 25 regional CDCs responded to the online survey between December 21-28, 2022.

The assessment revealed significant regional differences in both the transition process and related to warehousing and logistics. Specifically, only 3 regions provided at least 9 out of 12 positive responses on specific questions on the progress of transition. The remaining 22 regions are in the middle of the process. For pharmaceutical management regions are still working on getting warehouses for storage and distribution of vaccines. Regional CDCs were encouraged to provide any additional comments, requests, and share the challenges they have in the preparation to perform immunization functions. Some regions requested additional guidance on legal, organizational, and operational matters, 24 regions requested staff training, and 19 regions mentioned the need in cold chain equipment.

The MOH hosted a meeting with all regional CDCs on February 24 to present findings and plan next steps. MOH defined the priority areas such as accelerating the transition process, getting warehouses, hiring qualified personnel, verification of the need in cold-chain equipment, and creating the legal framework. The CDCs were given till March 20 to complete all needed step for effective transition and to participate in a second assessment that will be used to ensure that all regional CDCs are prepared to manage the immunization program from April 1.



SAFEMED PUBLISHED ITS VERY FIRST TECHNICAL BRIEF BASED ON THE GROWTH AND SUCCESS OF MPU

[READ THE BRIEF](#)

SAFEMED SUPPORTED THE VIDEO-BLURB CREATION THAT DESCRIBES THE AMBULANCES INSPECTION



[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

Between product procurement and its transfer to a hospital, many important processes must take place. SAFEMed supported the production of a video-blurb describing the process of procuring a fleet of ambulances and profiles MPU's head of the logistics unit. The video-blurb shared on the MPU Facebook page.

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