



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

MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST

SEPTEMBER 2023



SAFEMED PROJECT LEADERS JOIN MEETINGS WITH EU COMMISSION ON PHARMACEUTICAL GOVERNANCE



Photo credit: Maryna Slobodnichenko

With support from USAID's SAFEMed Activity, a delegation of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine (MOH) visited Brussels and Amsterdam to participate in meetings with representatives of European Union (EU) institutions in the field of pharmaceutical governance from September 11-15. Led by Deputy Minister for European Integration Maryna Slobodnichenko, the Ukrainian delegation consisted of representatives from the MOH, State Expert Center (SEC), and USAID's SAFEMed Activity.

These meetings provided an opportunity for the Ukrainian delegation and EU authorities to exchange experiences and strengthen collaboration as Ukraine moves toward attaining EU membership.

The successful discussions focused primarily on the following activities:

- Harmonization of Ukrainian pharmaceutical regulations with EU legislation
- Establishment of a new unified regulatory agency in the area of pharmaceutical market
- Simplification of regulatory procedures and mutual recognition of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and certificates
- Inclusion of Ukrainian representatives into EMA working groups on GMP inspections and good clinical practice
- Establishment of the national verification system and further connection of Ukrainian verification agency to European Medicines Verification Organization (EMVO)

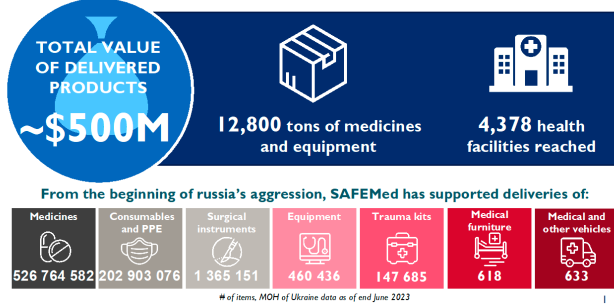
In addition to meeting with EU authorities, the delegation met with Medicines for Europe and European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). By meeting with these business associations, which include the manufacturers of innovative medicines, the delegation was able to discuss issues regarding the clinical trials program expansion, joint collaboration in scientific research, harmonization with digital platforms and alignment of legislation standards. SAFEMed will continue to provide technical and expert assistance to the MOH and key government counterparts to streamline Ukraine's efforts toward obtaining EU membership in the coming years.

SAFEMED HELPS TRANSITION MANAGEMENT OF LOGISTICS TO DELIVER MEDICAL HUMANITARIAN AID TO THE GOU

Since the very beginning of the war, SAFEMed has provided comprehensive support to help the MOH establish and roll out a system for managing and distributing medical humanitarian aid on behalf of the Government of Ukraine (GOU). SAFEMed worked closely with the MOH, Center of Public Health (CPH), and Medical Procurement of Ukraine (MPU) to ensure medical humanitarian aid was processed, distributed, and delivered to hospitals in need, helping health care professionals provide lifesaving care to civilians suffering from the war. Now, after 15 months of SAFEMed's support, CPH will undertake sole supervision of this effort, allowing the activity to continue while giving SAFEMed the capacity to focus its efforts where needed.

About SAFEMed

Our work in Ukraine aims to boost transparency, improve cost efficiency, and strengthen the pharmaceutical supply chain, ultimately leading to better availability and use of essential medicines and health commodities for TB, HIV and AIDS, COVID-19, and noncommunicable diseases. We support the Government of Ukraine in its ongoing efforts to reform its health care system in the wake of the war.



Throughout the past year, SAFEMed set up and coordinated with national warehouses across the country to store, sort, and ship tons of items donated to the Ukrainian people from all over the world. Working with MPU and SAFEMed, the project helped enhance the MedData platform to track demand and deliveries of each health facility that was approved as a medical humanitarian aid recipient. Throughout project implementation, SAFEMed provided technical assistance to not only maintain but strengthen the national supply chain system and improve processes for distribution approval, demand tracking, and deliveries.

SAFEMED ORGANIZES TRAINING EVENTS FOR MPU STAFF

MPU aspires to become a state-of-the-art, full-cycle procurement agency, responsible for meeting demands at the facility level and distributing medical goods to the last mile.

To achieve these goals, SAFEMed supported the implementation of several training events for MPU staff. This included a two-day supply chain training for MPU, hosted by the SAFEMed-contracted Kyiv School of Logistics on August 4-5. Training materials covered general approaches to supply chain organization based on global best practices, contextualized with the Ukrainian public health sector realities. The goal was to provide a common understanding of PSM across all departments of the enterprise, including accounting, lawyers, category managers, and digital staff.

In addition, several SAFEMed-selected vendors organized a series of soft skills trainings throughout September. These were held to strengthen emotional intelligence and mentoring skills across the team, as well as offer performance management training. These practical workshops were held for about eight days and helped 50 MPU team members improve their communication skills and goal setting abilities. Providing managers with this mentoring and coaching guidance will help them pass these skills along to their team members and build competencies across the organization in various areas.

SAFEMED SUPPORTS "AFFORDABLE MEDICINES-2023" FORUM HELD BY NHSU AND MOH

The National Health Services of Ukraine (NHSU) hosted its biannual National Reimbursement Forum on September 14 in Kyiv, gathering more than fifty in-person and approximately 500 online participants. Attendees included representatives of key state partner institutions and international organizations, as well as medicines manufacturers, pharmacy chains, patient and public organizations, and mass media. During the forum, speakers discussed the success of the SAFEMed-supported Affordable Medicines Program over the last five years. The Minister of Health, Viktor Liashko, emphasized the important role the program has played in ensuring chronic patients have uninterrupted access to medicines, even in wartime conditions. NHSU Head, Natalya Husak, said that despite challenges, the program continues to function and expand with SAFEMed's ongoing support and also noted that NHSU and SAFEMed plan to expand the medicines available for mental health next year.



Photo credit: SAFEMed

The three forum panels covered the following topics:

- **Results of the Affordable Medicines Program and future development strategy**, covering the key indicators and statistics of the past year, the preliminary results of a national sociological survey on user satisfaction with the program, and the agency's strategic vision for 2024.
- **eTools that make medicines accessible**, highlighting the implementation of national level cyber audits of the reimbursement program and successes of the work in automating key processes.
- **Affordable medicines in communities**, demonstrating the increase in the number of dispensing points under the reimbursement program in territorial communities, the expansion of tools for patients, and the importance of expanding people's access to the reimbursement program in rural areas and in frontline territories.

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