



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

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NEWLY DISTRIBUTED EQUIPMENT ENHANCES VACCINE SAFETY AND EFFICACY ACROSS UKRAINE

SAFEMed supports the government's efforts to provide all Ukrainians equitable access to safe and effective immunization services. To accomplish this, it's crucial that facilities are equipped with the resources they need to safely store, transport, and distribute these lifesaving vaccines. Over the past two months, SAFEMed has made significant steps forward in enhancing Ukraine's vaccine infrastructure by supplying 13 regional Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (rCDCs) with cold chain equipment.

As part of a last-mile logistics pilot, 370 temperature data loggers were delivered, marking an important step in supporting the National Strategy for Immunization Program Development. This new equipment, which adheres to WHO prequalification safety standards, ensures high-quality storage and transportation of vaccines. The insulated containers maintain safe storage conditions for up to 120 hours, even during blackouts or equipment failures which have become more prevalent during Russia's full-scale war against the country. The temperature data loggers also provide continuous monitoring of vaccine conditions to ensure manufacturers' storage requirements are kept and aim to address gaps in cold chain capacity across subregional logistics hubs and health facilities.



Viktoriia holds a new temperature data logger provided by SAFEMed for the Khmelnytskyi Regional Center for Disease Control and Prevention

This equipment will significantly improve how rCDCs monitor vaccines during the storage and transportation process. For example, the rCDC in the Khmelnytskyi Region plans to fully integrate the data loggers into their cold rooms and transportation system in the new year and looks forward to how it will advance vaccine safety and efficacy across the region.

"Because these devices record the temperature throughout the entire time the vaccine is stored, we can monitor the minimum and maximum temperature and identify any variation in temperature right away. Additionally, we can print detailed temperature logs for up to two months, providing critical insights into storage conditions," shared Viktoriia, a representative from the Khmelnytskyi Region rCDC, which received 24 temperature loggers procured and delivered by SAFEMed.

These temperature data loggers offer advanced capabilities to safeguard vaccine efficacy. "Ordinary thermometers cannot provide the detailed information we need," explained Viktoriia. "With loggers, we can ensure that vaccines remain within safe temperature ranges, preventing potential losses due to improper storage."

Thanks to USAID/SAFEMed, this new equipment will be utilized across many regions and help strengthen Ukraine's vaccine supply chain as well as ensure Ukrainians are receiving high-quality care. "These tools will significantly enhance our ability to monitor vaccine conditions, especially during transportation," said Viktoriia.

UKRAINE PREPARES TO LAUNCH MEDICINES VERIFICATION SYSTEM WITH SAFEMED SUPPORT



The Cabinet of Ministers' Decree No. 1121, adopted in September 2024 and drafted with key inputs from SAFEMed, outlined steps for implementing a national medicines verification system. This process begins with voluntary implementation in 2026 and mandatory use by 2028. On December 5, 2024, the Ministry of Health of Ukraine (MOH) met with pharmaceutical market representatives and other stakeholders to discuss implementation logistics for the system. The development of this system is a critical step in combating counterfeit medicines and ensuring patient safety. 2D coding, a major element of the system, bolsters the ability of pharmacists and patients to verify the legitimacy of dispensed medicines.

Maria Karchevych, Deputy Minister of Health for Digital Development, Digital Transformations, and Digitalization, emphasized how the verification system aligns with European standards, deepening Ukraine's European integration.

During the meeting, SAFEMed experts presented an updated implementation roadmap for the verification system, outlining how it will integrate with national systems such as eStock and eHealth and involve all market participants — manufacturers, distributors, pharmacies, and health care facilities. Dmytro Aleshko, Managing Partner of the SAFEMed subcontractor LA Law Firm, presented the legal aspects of establishment of the National Medicines Verification Organization (NMVO), which will oversee the system. The registration of the NMVO is expected in 2025. Olena Filiniuk, SAFEMed Senior Technical Advisor, introduced step-by-step actions with defined timelines for implementation. Denys Ponomarenko, SAFEMed Senior Technical Advisor, outlined the technical verification requirements, including the system's connection to the European hub.

The meeting brought together over 100 participants, including representatives from pharmaceutical associations, SAFEMed, the MOH, and USAID. Special attention was given to the pilot phase and leveraging international experience to help Ukraine align with global best practices. This initiative underscores SAFEMed's support of the MOH in developing Ukraine's health system and ensuring patients' access to safe and high-quality medicines. Due to collaboration between the MOH and the pharmaceutical sector, progress continues toward the creation of a transparent and efficient medicines verification system in Ukraine. USAID/SAFEMed remains committed to supporting Ukraine on this critical journey, helping implement innovations that enhance patient safety and strengthen trust in the country's healthcare system.

About SAFEMed

The Safe, Affordable, and Effective Medicines (SAFEMed) for Ukrainians Activity is designed to support the Government of Ukraine in its ongoing efforts to reform its health care system and expand access to affordable and reliable medicines. With support from USAID and PEPFAR, MSH provides technical and legal assistance to strengthen Ukraine's pharmaceutical sector. 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.

SAFEMED PROCURES NEW WAREHOUSE EQUIPMENT FOR THE MPU CRITICAL MEDICAL SUPPLIES



Photo credit: MPU

On December 6, 2024, in Kyiv, the USAID/SAFEMed Activity procured and delivered new equipment to the MPU warehouse. The warehouse received two electric forklifts and five hydraulic pallet trucks with a load capacity of up to two and a half tons. This equipment will significantly enhance the efficiency of supplying medicines and medical devices to hospitals across the country, as the previous equipment was outdated and in need of replacement.

"Modernizing logistics capabilities is critical to building a sustainable and efficient medical supply system in Ukraine. USAID continues to support MPU's work to achieve these goals and contribute to a more cost-effective, transparent, and quality health care system," said Ashley Greve, in her capacity as Acting Director of the USAID/Ukraine Health Office.

The new equipment will enable the warehouse to operate faster and without disruptions, which is especially important for the timely delivery of life-saving

medicines to hospitals.

"The new equipment will improve supply coordination, reduce staff workload, and optimize time management. In a situation where every minute can make a difference for patients, such modernization is not only practical but also vital," emphasized Andrii Tokarchuk, Head of the MPU Medical Supply branch

This equipment transfer marks another important step in building an efficient medical supply system in Ukraine, thanks to the close collaboration between USAID/SAFEMed and MPU.



Photo credit: MPU

The MPU and SAFEMed teams, together with USAID officials, during the ceremonial handover of equipment.

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