



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

MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST

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REGIONAL DIALOGUES HELP STRENGTHEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UKRAINE'S AFFORDABLE MEDICINES PROGRAM



Opening panel discussion during the regional Affordable Medicines Program meeting on May 4 in Khmelnytskyi

Effective implementation of a national reimbursement program depends on consistent patient access to services and medicines across all regions of the country. To support this goal, the National Health Service of Ukraine (NHSU), with support from the Safe, Affordable, and Effective Medicines for Ukrainians (SAFEMed) Activity, funded by the U.S. Government, continues a series of regional discussions focused on the practical implementation of the Affordable Medicines Program (AMP).

Regional AMP meetings took place in Khmelnytskyi and Odesa, bringing together more than 430 participants, including healthcare providers, pharmacists, local authorities, patient organizations, and NHSU representatives. Participants discussed pharmacy participation, patient access to reimbursed medicines, and operational issues affecting service delivery at the regional level.

While the AMP operates under a national framework, many implementation barriers emerge locally. Across both meetings, participants reviewed pharmacy coverage, patient pathways, access to medicines in rural communities, and the role of electronic prescriptions in supporting continuity of care. The discussions helped identify practical solutions and strengthen program implementation across different regional contexts.

Regional priorities varied across the two meetings. In Khmelnytskyi, discussions focused on limited access in rural communities, including medicine delivery services for people living in areas with limited pharmacy coverage and opportunities to simplify patient pathways for obtaining reimbursed medicines. In Odesa, where more than 324,000 patients have already benefited from the program, participants reviewed operational performance, regional pharmacy infrastructure, and practical opportunities to expand access for underserved communities. Since its launch, the AMP has already helped more than 6.2 million Ukrainians, including children, veterans, pensioners, and patients managing chronic conditions. More than 90 million prescriptions have been reimbursed, and over 17,400 pharmacies now participate in the program nationwide.

As the program continues to expand, regional dialogues help ensure national policy decisions translate into practical access to medicines for patients, regardless of where they live. By improving access to outpatient treatment for chronic and complex conditions, the program helps reduce avoidable hospitalizations, supports more efficient use of public health resources, and contributes to a stronger, more sustainable, and more predictable healthcare system.

ADVANCING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UKRAINIAN PHARMACEUTICAL AGENCY

With technical support from SAFEMed, Ukraine reached a major milestone in pharmaceutical reform on May 26, 2026, when the Ministry of Health submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers a draft decree establishing the Ukrainian Pharmaceutical Agency (UPA). Expected to be adopted in June 2026, the decree will formally establish the Agency and support its launch on January 1, 2027, as required under the Law of Ukraine on Medicinal Products.

The reform establishes a single national regulator responsible for oversight of medicines and medical devices throughout their lifecycle. Once operational, the Agency will oversee functions related to market authorization, regulatory compliance, market surveillance, and other core regulatory activities currently distributed across multiple institutions.



The establishment of the Ukrainian Pharmaceutical Agency is expected to strengthen medicines regulation and align Ukraine's pharmaceutical system with international standards

Since the launch of public consultations on the draft decree in January 2026, SAFEMed has supported this process through technical assistance, legal drafting, financial and economic analysis, organizational planning, stakeholder coordination, and facilitation of the government approval process. SAFEMed's embedded consultants also supported coordination with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice, and other government institutions to address regulatory, financial, and operational issues critical to the Agency's establishment.

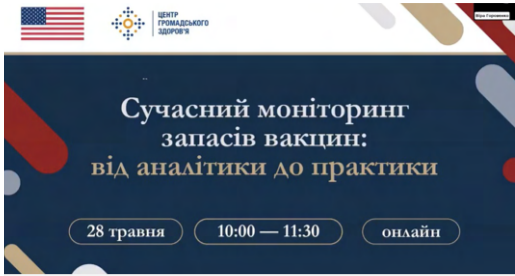
The establishment of the UPA is expected to strengthen oversight of medicines and medical devices, improve transparency and predictability in regulatory decision-making, and align Ukraine's pharmaceutical regulatory system with international standards. For patients, this means greater confidence in the quality, safety, and effectiveness of medicines available on the market.

Through its support to the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders, SAFEMed continues to contribute to reforms that strengthen pharmaceutical governance, regulatory capacity, and institutional resilience in Ukraine.

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 the U.S. Government, the MSH-led project 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 healthcare system in the wake of the war.

USING DATA TO STRENGTHEN VACCINE SUPPLY MONITORING IN UKRAINE



Promotional image for the national webinar 'Modern Vaccine Stock Monitoring: From Analytics to Practice'

On May 28, SAFEMed conducted a nationwide webinar on the Vaccine Stock Analytical Dashboard (VacBoard), bringing together 65 immunization and data specialists from regional Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The event was part of ongoing efforts to strengthen vaccine supply monitoring, improve operational visibility, and support faster, data-driven decision-making across the immunization system.

Developed by SAFEMed in collaboration with the Center for Public Health (CPH), VacBoard helps national and regional immunization teams monitor vaccine availability, forecast future needs, and improve coordination across the supply chain. The dashboard replaces

fragmented spreadsheet-based reporting processes with near real-time analytics, automated reporting, and improved visibility of vaccine stocks throughout the system.

The webinar demonstrated how the dashboard supports monitoring of stock balances, identification of potential shortages, forecasting of future needs, and assessment of redistribution opportunities. These capabilities help health authorities make more timely and informed decisions about vaccine stock management and distribution. The session also included a dedicated Q&A discussion on dashboard functionality, data interpretation, and practical applications in routine immunization management. Stronger vaccine monitoring systems support uninterrupted access to vaccines, strengthen health security, and contribute to efforts to prevent outbreaks before they spread.

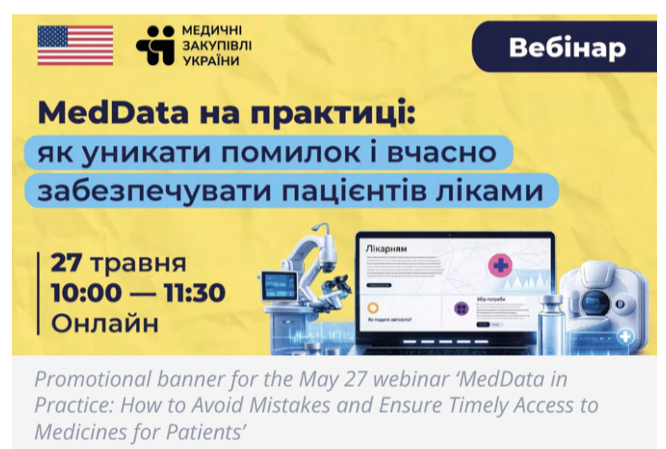
STRENGTHENING SUPPLY MANAGEMENT FOR MEDICINES AND MEDICAL DEVICES

In May 2026, Medical Procurement of Ukraine (MPU), with support of SAFEMed, conducted two national educational webinars to strengthen healthcare facility capacity to manage medical commodities and improve access to quality care. Together, the webinars attracted 1,323 registrations and 781 unique live participants from healthcare facilities, regional health authorities, and partner organizations across Ukraine, demonstrating strong demand for practical guidance on health product supply chain management.

The first **webinar**, From Procurement to Patient: How to Ensure the Quality and Safety of Medical Devices, addressed practical approaches to quality assurance and post-procurement management of medical devices. Experts from MPU, the State Service of Ukraine on Medicines and Drugs Control, conformity assessment bodies, and industry representatives discussed regulatory requirements, quality control procedures, post-market surveillance, and actions healthcare facilities should take when safety concerns arise. The webinar attracted 817 registered participants, with 564 unique participants joining the live session via Zoom. Participant knowledge and confidence increased 36%, from an average score of 3.4 to 4.6 out of 5 across key topics.

The second **webinar**, MedData in Practice: How to Avoid Mistakes and Ensure Timely Access to Medicines for Patients, focused on strengthening the practical use of the MedData system. More than 500 participants registered for the event, with 217 joining the live Zoom session and additional participants viewing through YouTube and Facebook livestreams.

During the webinar, participants received practical guidance on reporting medicine and medical device stocks, recording consumption, managing redistribution between facilities, and reducing reporting errors. Reliable inventory data improve procurement planning, strengthen accountability in commodity management, help identify shortages earlier, reduce the risk of expiries, support more efficient use of public and donor-funded medical commodities. By improving supply chain management and data use, healthcare facilities can ensure patients receive timely access to safe and effective medicines.



Promotional banner for the May 27 webinar 'MedData in Practice: How to Avoid Mistakes and Ensure Timely Access to Medicines for Patients'

REGIONS ACROSS UKRAINE EXPLORE PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGED ENTRY AGREEMENTS

Throughout April and May, Medical Procurement of Ukraine (MPU), together with SAFEMed, conducted a series of regional dialogues in Dnipro, Kyiv, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Odesa focused on the practical implementation of Managed Entry Agreements (MEAs). The visits built on a national **webinar** held in April and provided an opportunity to discuss implementation challenges and operational readiness directly with regional stakeholders.

MEAs enable the procurement of innovative, high-cost medicines through direct negotiations with manufacturers under confidential negotiation conditions. Introduced in Ukraine in 2022 following SAFEMed-supported legislative and policy reforms, the mechanism currently includes 24 agreements that support access to innovative therapies for patients with rare and complex conditions.

Recent legislative changes allowing combined national and regional financing have created new opportunities for regions and healthcare facilities to participate in MEAs and expand access to innovative medicines. For the first time, regions can contribute funding alongside national resources, creating new pathways for patients to access treatments that may not previously have been available through local budgets alone. As a result, attention is increasingly shifting from establishing the new financing mechanism to supporting its practical implementation at region and healthcare facility levels. Across all study visits, participants discussed how regions can prepare to participate in MEAs, including financing options, procurement planning, institutional coordination, data requirements, and implementation procedures. Discussions focused on practical steps needed to launch the mechanism at the regional level and ensure healthcare facilities are prepared to use it effectively.

For many patients with rare or severe conditions, access to innovative treatment depends on whether sustainable financing mechanisms are available. By enabling joint national and regional financing, MEAs can help expand access to innovative therapies while supporting more predictable and accountable use of healthcare resources. Feedback gathered during the visits is already informing the next phase of implementation support. SAFEMed will continue providing methodological and technical assistance to regions, including practical implementation guidance and FAQs for stakeholders interested in launching regional MEAs.



Workshop 'Regional MEAs: How to Join and Launch the Mechanism in Your Region,' Kyiv, May 5, 2026

EXPANDING THE REACH OF PUBLIC HEALTH MESSAGES NATIONWIDE

With support from SAFEMed, the Center for Public Health significantly expanded the reach of its public awareness efforts focused on HIV, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis, transforming a targeted communication initiative into a nationwide campaign reaching millions of Ukrainians through healthcare facilities, public transportation, and digital channels.

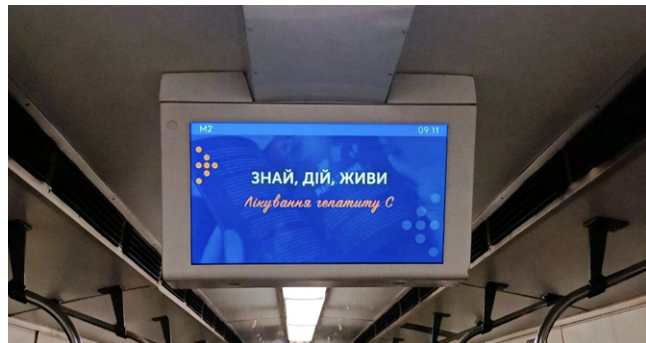
At the center of the initiative was a series of five videos featuring patient stories, healthcare professionals, and practical information on prevention, testing, treatment, and available support services. By combining personal experiences with trusted health information, the videos seek to reduce stigma, encourage timely testing, and help people better understand where and how to access care.

The campaign was initially launched in healthcare facilities across 16 regions through collaboration with the U.S. Government-funded REACH 95 Activity. Building on this foundation, the Center for Public Health expanded distribution through additional healthcare facilities, public transportation systems, and digital channels, transforming the initiative into a nationwide awareness campaign.

Public transportation became a major platform for large-scale public outreach. The videos were broadcast on 534 onboard screens across 11 Intercity train sets, generating more than 179,000 broadcasts and reaching approximately 450,000 passengers each month. In Kyiv, the campaign was displayed on 2,440 metro screens installed throughout most metro trains, generating more than 17,000 broadcasts and an estimated 1.4 million audience contacts.

For HIV, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis, awareness is often the first step toward diagnosis and treatment. By bringing information directly to people in healthcare facilities, trains, and metro stations, the campaign increased the visibility of prevention, testing, treatment, and support services in places where large audiences encounter information during their daily routines.

Early diagnosis and treatment are essential for improving health outcomes, reducing transmission risks, and lowering the long-term burden of infectious diseases. Through partnerships that extended the campaign far beyond traditional health communication channels, the initiative helped ensure that trusted public health information reached people where they live, travel, receive healthcare, and make decisions about their health.



Public health campaign video on hepatitis C displayed on screens in the Kyiv Metro as part of a nationwide awareness campaign. May 2026

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ua-safemed@safemedua.org