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

MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST

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PATIENTS IN UKRAINE WILL HAVE MORE TREATMENT OPTIONS: MINISTRY OF HEALTH EXPANDS THE AFFORDABLE MEDICINES PROGRAM

Beginning September 30, 2025, Ukraine's Affordable Medicines Program (AMP) will cover a significantly expanded list of 705 reimbursed medicines and medical products, supported by an 11% budget increase to UAH 7.45 billion.

The new list includes:
- 595 medicines
- 38 insulin products
- 30 combination drugs
- 42 glucose test strips

Expanded therapeutic areas now cover cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory conditions, mental health disorders, glaucoma, pediatric diseases, thyroid disorders, and medicines for pregnant women and mothers.

The AMP reduces the financial burden on patients, a vital support especially for internally displaced persons and people with chronic diseases.
Photo credit: SAFEMed Photographer: Oleksandr Tsybin

To ensure access to these treatments, the Government of Ukraine increased funding for the National Health Service of Ukraine (NHSU), enabling both expansion to new patient groups and continued coverage for those already enrolled.

Since 2017, SAFEMed has supported the Ministry of Health (MOH) and NHSU in shaping policies, designing reimbursement mechanisms, conducting stakeholder consultation, and training specialists—helping Ukraine build a more effective and patient-centered reimbursement system.

A HISTORIC STEP TOWARD PROTECTING PATIENTS FROM COUNTERFEIT MEDICINES: UKRAINE ESTABLISHES NATIONAL MEDICINES VERIFICATION ORGANIZATION

On September 18, 2025, Ukraine marked a historic milestone for the development of its pharmaceutical market with the founding assembly of the National Medicines Verification Organization (NMVO) in Kyiv. The NMVO will coordinate the implementation of a modern verification system that aligns with European standards.

At the heart of the new system is 2D coding of every medicine package. Each package will carry a unique code, allowing pharmacists and patients to instantly confirm authenticity and verify that the product has passed through the entire supply chain without falsification—providing vital protection against counterfeit medicines.

The Cabinet of Ministers' resolution of September 26, 2024, developed with SAFEMed's support, requires manufacturers to apply 2D codes on all medicine packages. Voluntary implementation will begin in January 2026, becoming mandatory by January 2028.

The NMVO was founded by five professional associations of domestic and foreign manufacturers and marketing authorization holders. The founding assembly approved the charter, appointed interim leadership, and agreed to hold an open, internationally supported competition for the position of Executive Director, ensuring transparency and independence in its operations.

The MOH emphasized that implementing a national medicines verification system is a crucial step toward Ukraine's integration with the European Medicines Verification System, bringing Ukrainian patients a higher level of protection against counterfeit medicines.

With five years of legal, technical, and integration support from the U.S. Government-funded SAFEMed Activity, Ukraine is now prepared to pilot, test, and scale the new system, bringing greater security and trust to the country's medicine supply.

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 U.S. Government, 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.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION TWINNING PROJECT LAUNCHES IN UKRAINE: INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS TO SUPPORT A UNIFIED PHARMACEUTICAL REGULATOR

Ukraine has become the beneficiary of the Twinning project "Support for the Establishment of the State Control Authority (SCA) for Medicines and Medical Devices," an 18-month initiative launching in fall 2025.

This project will bring leading expertise from Lithuania, Poland, and Germany to help establish a single, modern medicines and medical devices regulator, which is expected to begin operations on January 1, 2027.

On September 23, 2025, the Advisory Board for the establishment of the SCA met to discuss next steps. Participants included leaders from the Ukrainian government and state agencies, including Mykhailo Radutskyi, Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on National Health; Deputy Minister of Health Maryna Slobodnichenko; Mykhailo Babenko, Director of the State Expert Center of the MOH of Ukraine; Roman Isaienko, Head of the State Service of Ukraine for Medicines and Drugs Control; Robin Martz, Senior Health Program Manager at the U.S. Department of State; representatives of the European Commission and the European Medicines Agency; and the SAFEMed team.

Deputy Minister of Health Maryna Slobodnichenko presented the project, underscoring that Ukrainian and European specialists will work together to align Ukrainian legislation with European standards, develop the structure and procedures of the future authority, and train Ukrainian professionals. She outlined 13 technical expert areas, introducing the international leadership team, and sharing the roadmap. A kick-off meeting will take place next month.

For several years, SAFEMed has been instrumental in preparing for the SCA's creation, helping to draft the Twinning concept, develop the SCA strategy and roadmap, write enabling regulations, design a fee-collection methodology, and run a communication campaign to inform the pharmaceutical sector and the public. These efforts have helped build trust in the reform, a key factor in its success.

Read more in the technical brief "Establishment and Operationalization of the State Control Authority in Ukraine": **Establishment and Operationalization of the State Control Authority in Ukraine - Management Sciences for Health**

U.S. GOVERNMENT MONITORING VISITS HIGHLIGHT PROGRESS IN PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN

On September 24 and September 26, 2025, members of the newly formed U.S. Government Assistance Coordination (ACOORD) team visited two SAFEMed-supported sites in Rivne and Lviv to observe progress in procurement and supply chain management.

At Rivne Regional Clinical Hospital, a supra-cluster tertiary care facility serving approximately 38,000 patients annually, the team learned how collaboration with Medical Procurement of Ukraine (MPU) enables timely access to centrally procured medicines and equipment. Since 2023, through the MPU-administered Prozoro Market eCatalog, the hospital procured more than UAH 88.78 million in specialized equipment, including an MRI scanner that allows for faster and more accurate diagnoses. Collaboration with MPU and active use of eCatalog has allowed Rivne Hospital access to essential medicines, supplies, and modern medical technologies. These mechanisms ensure transparency, efficiency of public spending, and timely delivery of advanced care to patients.

Dmytro Nestor, SAFEMed Technical Advisor, and Robin Martz, U.S. Government Senior Program Manager, during a visit to the Lviv rCDC, inspecting SAFEMed-procured data loggers-devices used to monitor temperature conditions.

In Lviv, the delegation visited the regional Center for Disease Control (rCDC), where SAFEMed has helped transform vaccine distribution and management. With SAFEMed's support, the rCDC contracted a private-sector logistics partner to ensure reliable vaccine delivery across the region and introduced a model for direct last-mile distribution to 170 health facilities, using specialized refrigerated vehicles to maintain the cold chain. The team toured the regional warehouse, where newly installed cold-chain equipment was in operation, and saw how staff are now trained to use data loggers (devices that continuously monitor temperature conditions) to safeguard vaccine quality. They also learned how rCDC teams are using MedData, the national platform for tracking vaccine stocks and usage, to strengthen transparency and accountability.

Together, these investments in strengthening procurement and supply chain system functions have created a safer, more efficient vaccine supply chain that ensure patients receive vital immunizations on time and in proper condition.

DIGITAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION: SAFEMED'S LEGACY FOR UKRAINE

A new technical brief highlights how SAFEMed helped build a coherent, future-ready digital health architecture for Ukraine. By moving beyond fragmented pilot tools, the project supported scalable, government-aligned solutions— now embedded in national institutions and designed for long-term sustainability.

These digital foundations—linking procurement, supply chain, vaccination management, and health data—improve transparency, efficiency, and resilience. They enable Ukraine's health sector to sustain and expand digital transformation even in times of crisis.

Read Brief "Transforming Digital Health in Ukraine: Scalable Solutions for a Resilient and Transparent Health System": **Transforming Digital Health in Ukraine - Management Sciences for Health**

TRANSFORMING DIGITAL HEALTH IN UKRAINE: SCALABLE SOLUTIONS FOR A RESILIENT AND TRANSPARENT HEALTH SYSTEM

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ua-safemed@safemedua.org

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