



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

MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST

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NINE YEARS OF SAFEMED: BUILDING FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

As SAFEMed approaches the end of its nine years of work in Ukraine, I find myself looking back with a real sense of pride – and, perhaps even more, gratitude.

During my time with SAFEMed, I have had the privilege of seeing how much Ukraine's health system has changed. I have seen new institutions take shape, reforms move from ideas to practice, and systems become stronger and more resilient.

What I will remember most are the people I have had the opportunity to work with – Ukrainian colleagues, partners, health professionals, and decision-makers whose commitment has kept these reforms moving forward.



From the COVID-19 pandemic to Russia's full-scale invasion, Ukraine's health system has faced challenges that few could have imagined. Yet even in the most difficult circumstances, it continued to adapt and find ways to keep medicines within reach for people across the country. That is what matters most: that Ukrainians continued to have access to safe, affordable, and effective medicines when they needed them.

I am also encouraged by what these changes can mean for Ukraine's future. Stronger institutions, more transparent processes, and more predictable market rules not only support better access to medicines today; they also create the conditions for a more stable and sustainable pharmaceutical sector – one that can attract new partnerships and investment over time, including from U.S. companies.

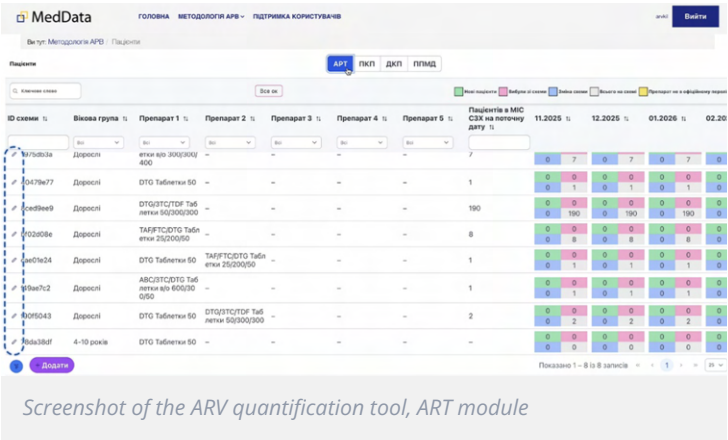
Nine years is a significant milestone, but it does not feel like a finish line. The foundations built over these years create space for greater Ukrainian ownership, new ideas and partnerships, and continued progress. There is still much to do, and I am excited about what comes next.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this journey. It has been an honor to be part of it.

Rebecca Kohler
SAFEMed Chief of Party

UKRAINE COMPLETES ARV QUANTIFICATION TOOL TO STRENGTHEN DEMAND FORECASTING

Ukraine now has a fully operational digital tool for forecasting demand for antiretroviral (ARV) medicines at the national, regional, and healthcare facility levels. The ARV quantification tool enables more transparent, standardized, and data-driven estimation of medicine needs using patient, treatment, stock, delivery, and epidemiological data. This supports more precise supply planning and helps maintain continuity of antiretroviral therapy.



The completion of the tool's development was formalized through a tripartite Development Completion Protocol signed by the Center for Public Health (CPH), the Medical Procurement of Ukraine (MPU), and the SAFEMed Activity. The protocol confirms that the agreed development work has been completed and that the tool is ready for its intended use.

The tool was tested with regional users in Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, and Khmelnytskyi, with their feedback incorporated into subsequent refinements. Development also included adjustments to account for medicines dispensed to patients in advance during the full-scale war, user training, pre-release testing, and updates to technical documentation.

SAFEMed provided technical and expert support throughout the development process, working with CPH and MPU to refine the tool, prepare users for its implementation, and support its transition into routine use. In August 2025, SAFEMed, CPH, and MPU conducted training for 40 regional specialists involved in ARV quantification and planning, and SAFEMed updated the tool's video instruction based on user feedback and the latest version of the platform.

The completed tool is now available for routine ARV forecasting and planning, strengthening Ukraine's capacity for evidence-based demand planning and more sustainable medicines supply management as the country moves toward greater ownership of ARV financing and procurement.

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.

NEW SAFEMED REPORT: UKRAINE'S MEDICINES MARKET REMAINS RESILIENT AS NEW RISKS EMERGE



Ukraine's medicines market continues to adapt and endure despite the pressures of war

Ukraine's pharmaceutical market has remained resilient through four years of full-scale war, reaching an estimated \$4.6 billion in 2026. But by mid-2026, signs of strain were emerging: retail medicine sales fell 9% in volume in January–April as household purchasing power weakened, even as government financing of medicines continued to grow.

In collaboration with the SMD data firm, SAFEMed finalized **Resilience Under Pressure: Ukraine's Medicines Market, 2022–2026**. The report highlights two critical supply-chain vulnerabilities as well as important strengths. Two distributors supply roughly 75% of the retail market, creating a highly concentrated distribution system, while both have already sustained more than \$300 million in war-related damage. At the same time, continued reforms and a strong domestic manufacturing base could position Ukraine as a future exporter of generics and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs).

The report also examines Ukraine's relevance to international pharmaceutical companies. U.S. companies currently participate primarily through imports and distribution partnerships, with the United States ranking eighth among source countries for imported medicines by value. Looking ahead, Ukraine's recovery and continued regulatory reform could create opportunities for foreign investment, joint ventures, and acquisitions in local pharmaceutical manufacturing.

SAFEMED CONTRIBUTES TO UKRAINE'S SHIFT TOWARD INTEGRATED CARE FOR HIV, TB, AND VIRAL HEPATITIS

Ukraine is strengthening its ability to prevent, detect, and treat HIV, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis by moving toward a more integrated model of care. Better connecting prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and support across health services can reduce gaps in care, improve continuity for patients, and strengthen the country's ability to respond to infectious diseases.

These priorities were at the center of the national **forum** "Integrated Care for TB, HIV, Viral Hepatitis, and Substance Use Disorders," held in Kyiv on August 20–21, 2026. The forum brought together national and regional health authorities, healthcare providers, civil society and community representatives, international partners, and U.S. Government representatives to discuss how Ukraine can strengthen continuity of care across its health system.

Discussions focused on reducing fragmentation between disease programs and levels of care by better connecting prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and social support. Participants also examined the role of stronger provider coordination, multidisciplinary teams, sustainable financing, electronic systems, and data-informed decision-making.

SAFEMed's participation reflected the project's complementary role in strengthening the systems that make integrated care possible, including data-informed planning, quantification, and management of the medicines and diagnostics needed to sustain integrated TB, HIV, and viral hepatitis services.

For Ukraine, these efforts can strengthen both continuity of care and the broader resilience of the health system – helping essential services withstand crises while building stronger systems for preventing, detecting, and responding to infectious diseases.



SAFEMed team members at the national forum on integrated care for HIV, TB, viral hepatitis, and substance use disorders in Kyiv

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