ETHIOPIAN FOOD AND DRUG AUTHORITY

Guidelineon Prevention, Detection and Response to Substandard and Falsified Medical products

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Definitions

For the purposes of this guideline, the following terms shall apply:

- **Product** means regulated products by the Authority which include medicines, medical device, food cosmetics and disinfectants within the territory of in Ethiopia.

- **Market surveillance and control** mean the activities carried out and measures taken by authority to ensure that products comply with the requirements set out in the relevant technical legislation and do not endanger health, safety or any other aspect of public interest protection.

- **Falsified product** is "deliberately and fraudulently mislabelled with respect to identity and/or source. Falsified product may include products with the correct ingredients or with the wrong ingredients, without active ingredients, with insufficient active ingredient or with fake packaging.

- **Substandard products** "are genuine products produced by legitimate manufacturers that do not meet the quality specifications that the producer says they meet. For example, they may contain less (or more) active ingredient than written on the package. This may not be an intention to cheat but may be due to problems with the manufacturing process.

- **Intelligence operation** means operation of gathering information about falsified, substandard and adulterated products and related illegal activities.

- **Unregistered/unlicensed products** mean products that have not undergone evaluation and/or approval or got special permission by the Authority for the market.

Abbreviations

EFDA:	Ethiopian Food and Medicine Authority
SF medicinal products:	Substandard and Falsified medicinal products
WHO:	World Health Organization
QC Laboratory:	Quality Control Laboratory
PV:	Pharmacovigilance
IITPLEO:	Intelligence and Illegal Trade Prevention Lead Executive Office
MEMALEO:	Medicine Evaluation and Market Authorization Lead Executive Office
MMIELEO:	Medicine Manufacturing Inspection and Enforcement Lead Executive Office
PVCTLEO:	Pharmacovigilance and Clinical Trial Lead Executive Office
eRIS:	Electronics Regulatory Information System

Chapter one: General provision

Introduction

The Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority (EFDA) is established by the definitions of powers and duties of the executive organ's proclamation No.1263/2021 and mandated by the Food and Medicine Administration Proclamation No.1112/2019 article 4 to ensure safety, efficacy and quality as well as rational use of medicines including control of substandard and falsified medicinal products.

Medicinal products are an integral and pivotal part of health care delivery and basic necessities of life. Ensuring the quality, safety and efficacy of medicines available for public are the primary duties and responsibilities of Ethiopia Food and Drug Authority.

To combat falsified and substandard products in the market and related malpractices, compliance to mandatory regulatory requirements may be requested at the production stage (so called pre-market control) and the post-market surveillance stage (or market surveillance).

Even though the Authority has conducted a routine a pre-and post-inspection of manufacturers, importers and wholesalers to ensure the quality of regulated products in the market, Ethiopia is prone to threats arising from the availability and use of substandard and falsified (SF) medical products. To prevent the public health, control of SF medicines circulating in the market needs to be actively addressed. Implementing system for market surveillance and control may ensure to reduce the extent of falsified and substandard products and related malpractices remain on the market.

In a study conducted on December 2022 by EFDA in collaboration with WHO on Substandard and Falsified Medicines in Ethiopia: National Survey, which covered most of the regional states and a wide range of geographical locations involving different levels of public and private health facilities. The overall extent of substandard products was 6.9% (6.5% by packaging/labeling and 5.3% by confirmatory testing). Albeit unavailability of all the selected medicines at the sampling site during sample collection, the inclusion of very few informal outlets, gaps in eRIS database in capturing important product information, and resource and capacity limitations of the QC Laboratory at EFDA, the findings would trigger further action within the framework of WHO's proposed interventions (prevent, detect and respond) to combat the problem of SF in the country. "substandard medical products" (or "out-of-specification medical products") or "unregistered or

unlicensed medical products" (products that have not undergone evaluation and/or approval in accordance with the national or regional regulations and legislation for the market in which they are marketed or distributed or used, subject to permitted conditions under national or regional regulation and legislation).

Substandard medical products fail to meet quality standards, specifications or both, as set by the State, but that failure is not necessarily intentional. While these products may pose considerable public health risks and States may wish to introduce criminal offences relating to their manufacture, the manufacture of unintentionally substandard medical products is beyond the scope of this Guide. It is advisable, in the interest of public health, to consider providing for incentives for the pharmaceutical industry to report any unintentional quality defects.

However, a substandard medical product can become a falsified medical product when it is manufactured intentionally below the mandated standards of quality or specifications, including where it is manufactured by an authorized, licensed or registered manufacturer. This is because the intentional manufacture of a sub-standard medical product entails a misrepresentation as to the identity or composition of that medical product. While substandard medical products may or may not be falsified medical products, depending on whether their failure to meet the relevant standards was intentional, falsified medical products will always be substandard because the fact of being falsified means that they will fail to meet the applicable quality standards or specifications or both.

Objective of the guideline

The objective of this guideline is to;

- To protect the public from SF medical products.
- To prevent the infiltration of SF medical products at all geographical locations in Ethiopia.
- To detect actively SF medical products in the market.
- To respond and act on detected SF medical products.

Scope

The scope of this guideline applies to all SF medical products across the country. This guideline is not applicable to medical device, food, cosmetics, tobacco, etc.

Chapter Two

Prevention of SF medicinal products

Regulatory authorities are the national bodies that have the legal mandate to set objectives and administer the full spectrum of regulatory activities to medical products, including issuing marketing authorizations, monitoring the use of medical products and adverse reactions, performing quality control laboratory testing, promoting the rational use of medical products, conducting good manufacturing practice and good distribution practice inspections, and licensing manufacturers, wholesalers and other entities that participate in the distribution channels of medical products.

Regulatory authorities are responsible for the regulation and control of medical products and contribute to promoting and protecting public health by ensuring that:

(a)Medical products are of the required quality, safety and efficacy;

(b)Health professionals and consumers have the necessary information to enable them to use products rationally;

(c)Medical products are appropriately manufactured, stored, distributed and dispensed;

(d)Illegal manufacturing and trade are detected and adequately sanctioned;

(e)Promotion and advertising are fair, balanced and aimed at rational use;

(f) Access to medical products is not hindered by unjustified regulatory work.

EFDA shall identify the sources of SF medicinal products and also assess their risk levels in the Ethiopian medicinal products distribution channel. Healthcare professionals across all the supply chain shall have awareness on the recognition sources of SF medical products in the market. EFDA shall encourage healthcare professionals to report any suspicious SF medical products in the market.

Prevention programs and awareness raising campaigns for the public are important in order to support consumer protection, understanding and involvement in ensuring their safety and preventing the consumption of falsified medical products. Involving civil society organizations in providing training to relevant stakeholders, supporting awareness-raising campaigns and working closely with the media could assist in achieving those goals.

Identification of sources of SF medical products

The source of SF medical products can be through;

4.1.1 Receive information from classified and unclassified sources or informant

(a) Collect, detect and get signal on SF medical product

(b) Analyzed the received or collected information

(c) Analyzed and production that include integration, evaluation and analyze all relevant data and the preparation for intelligence activities

(d) Gathering Covert data information by IITPLEO

4.1.2 Porous entry and exit ports,

4.1.3 Manufacturing, importing, distributing, supplying or selling medical products:

(a) Without registration or approval or authorization by EFDA,

(b) Using an authorization that does not exist; or

(c)Using without permission an authorization already granted to another by EFDA.

Prevention methods

Education and awareness

Education and awareness among all stakeholders is seen as the first step in preventing the use of substandard and falsified medicines. Providing accurate and balanced information on the risks of substandard and falsified medical products, how to avoid them, how to spot them and how to report them is critical to help drive consumers from informal markets to safer outlets. A raised awareness among those most threatened by substandard and falsified medical products – patients – as well as the health care workers, who treat them, can also be invaluable for detection.

A greater investment in public awareness and knowledge about medicine quality could potentially reduce the market for substandard and falsified medicines by encouraging people to be more exacting about the products they buy and the sources they buy them from. It might also make patients and health workers more likely to think carefully about their medicines, reporting any that are suspect, thus contributing to more detection.

Awareness and training shall be provided periodically to the regulators, national security officers, and other concerned stakeholders working at ports of entry and exit on identification, prevention, detection and response on infiltrating SF medical products.

Fostering partnership

Pharmaceutical industry

Has a great part to play in prevention and eradication of counterfeit of medicines. Legitimate drug manufacturers are encouraged to;

a) Develop measures such as, the introduction of security systems including the use of security tags (barcode) to prevent the introduction of SF medicines in to the market. This will help the public to identify SF medical products and protect the health system.
b) Secure their own stocks of medicine and packaging materials in orders to prevent their diversion to illegal manufacturers and packagers.
c) Survey regularly their own medicine distribution channels with a view to detect and prevent the presence of any SF medicines.
d) To share any information willingly with EFDA regarding the presence of SF medicines in the market.
e) Avoid promoting medicines in a way that results in demands that can't be met by their own supply system, there by leaving a gap which could be exploited by the counterfeiters.

Importers

The importers of pharmaceutical sector shall take the necessary steps to,

a) Insure that medicines which they import are being manufactured legitimately in the country of manufacture.
b) Establish and maintain confidence in the source of the medicines which they import and remain satisfied with the integrity and authenticity of the medicines which they import and sell.
c) Establish and maintain an audit trial of the imported drug back to the original manufacturer or supplier.
d) Obtain certificate for imported medicines that comply with the WHO certification scheme on the quality of pharmaceutical products moving in the international market.
e) Conduct visual inspection and other necessary analytical checking procedures on the medicines they import to assure themselves of their legitimacy.
f) Maintain records of supplies to wholesale distributors. to facilitate recall in the event of counterfeit drugs being detected among their own stocks.
g) Report all relevant details of any detected counterfeit drugs to EFDA.

Wholesalers

The wholesalers of pharmaceuticals should take the necessary steps to:

a) Purchase medical products from legitimate sources only avoid purchasing, selling or supplying any drug suspected of being SF medical products or of which the quality, efficacy or safety are in any way in doubt carry out visual inspection and other non-analytical methods of checking the quality of medical products, including checks on the quality of the labeling and packaging materials, and the name and address of the manufacturer.

b) Maintain an audit trail of the medical products they purchase to permit the recall of any counterfeit drugs detected; employ qualified pharmacists, to fill supervisory and managerial posts in drug procurement.

c) Report to the EFDA any suspected counterfeit drugs in the national distribution channels; the products concerned should be withheld from supply.

Health professionals

All health care providers should be drawn into the fight against SF medical products. Prescribers should be on the alert for any failure of treatment that might be attributable to a particular medicine, since this could signal the presence of a SF. The suspected presence of SF should be reported to EFDA, which should collect and analyze samples.

Associations of health care professionals should encourage their members to use only authorized sources of drug supply. They should establish effective communications with the EFAD for the purposes of exchanging information on suspect SF in the national drug distribution channels. They should also impose severe sanctions on any of their members found guilty of manufacturing, distributing, supplying or selling counterfeit medical products.

Mobilizing the community

Nongovernmental or community-based organizations, such as consumer associations, should be informed about the problem of SF medical products, and the possible presence of SF medical products in the national drug distribution channels. They should be provided with information on methods of detecting SF medical products and the procedures to follow when making reports to the relevant authorities on any

detected SF medical products.

Consumers

The general public shall be encouraged to become involved in the fight against SF medical products. Education and information campaigns directed to the public shall be established. Consumers shall be encouraged to report to EFDA or the police any suspect products and/or illegal or unauthorized medicine manufacturers and distributors they may encounter.

Preventing shortages by assuring access

Limited access to affordable, quality medical products creates a vacuum that is frequently filled with alternatives that are falsified or of poor quality. Through encouraging the legitimate market authorization process, thereby improving the availability of authorized essential medicines in the market.

Chapter Three

Detection of SF medicinal products

EFDA is aware of particular factors that might fuel the local market for medicines and other products that do not meet quality standards, it can detect problems more rapidly by focusing on surveillance efforts on areas of greatest risk. Stock outs and other product shortages should always raise a red flag; if regulators are made aware of these by health authorities or others, they can increase their vigilance around those products, both by collaborating with customs officials at ports and through surveillance of the supply chain and retail outlets.

Risk-based post market surveillance and data collection should be employed during the exchange of information among countries, through the (WHO alert system) global network of focal points for substandard and falsified medical products. EFDA had appointed four its staff as WHO focal point for SF reporting, after provision of intensive training by WHO on SF reporting.

Method of Detection of SF medical products

EFDA receive information on illegal products and related malpractices through classified and unclassified sources/informant, intelligence operations, regular inspection at port of entry, manufacturers, importers and wholesalers, risk-based post marketing surveillance, Interpol, law enforcement bodies such as federal and state local law enforcement officials. toll-free numbers:8482, complaint from professional and patients, national or global pharmacovigilance (PV) reporting systems, medicines alert system, WHO alert system, illegal Internet online sales with social media platforms, including twitter, national drug regulatory authorities' information, stakeholders compliant, health professional and public compliant reports and professional associations compliant etc.

Verification of collected information

Collected information on suspected SF medical products shall be verified in a meeting consisting of director general of EFDA, IITPLCO, MEMALEO, MMIE LEO, PVCT LEO, port of entry, and intelligence and legal practice lead executive officer. Verification of suspected SF medical products is conducted through;

a) Checks on the registration information of suspected SF medical products against the information in the eRIS.
b) Checks on the information of suspected SF medical products against the information i-verify system.
c) Checks on the information of suspected SF medical products against the imported data

form ports of entry and exit to verify that the suspected SF medical product supply chain is valid.

Detection and Operation

Detection methods

Border control

a) There shall be designated ports for the importation and export of medical products, and a regulatory presence at those ports.

b) There shall be documented and implemented procedures for allowing the exchange of information concerning suspected substandard and falsified medical products between customs, police and the regulatory agency.

1.1.1.1. Reporting systems

Effective public reporting systems shall exist, enabling the reporting of suspected substandard and falsified medical products to EFDA.

1.1.1.2. Risk-based inspection and surveillance

A risk-based strategy shall be documented and implemented for conducting regular targeted and random market surveillance for substandard and falsified medical products within the regulated and unregulated supply chains. There shall be a documented and implemented risk-based inspection program for those entities engaged in the manufacture, importation, and distribution/wholesale of medical products.

1.1.1.3. Access to laboratories and screening technologies

There shall be national quality control laboratory and documented procedures are in place and implemented regarding the analysis and reporting of substandard and falsified medical products. There shall be access to field screening equipment (and relevant reference material), like infrared, true scan, mini labs, and so on which staff have been trained to use, and procedures are documented and implemented for the use of such equipment.

EFDA conduct the operation in collaboration with different stakeholders, such as customs, police, inter pole, regional regulatory body. The verified SF medical products shall be collected as per the approved procedure.

Response

Method of response

Alerts and recalls

A documented and implemented procedure shall exist concerning the issuing, receipt and response to Rapid Alerts concerning substandard and falsified medical products. A designated and trained focal point(s) within the EFDA has to be established to receive and respond to reports of suspected substandard and falsified medical products and has access to the WHO Global Surveillance and Monitoring System for substandard and falsified medical products.

Recall of medical product batches which are confirmed to be SF, shall be initiated immediately through official notification letter to the local agent and/or manufacturer, medical representative, etc. Recall of SF medical products shall be handled as per approved recall directive.

Regulatory strengthening

The competency of EFDA personnel shall be improved and rigorous training on prevention and detection of SF medical products shall be provided in order to strengthening the regulatory process. Adequate resources shall be allocated to strengthen the regulatory activities.

Transparent legal process

The use of regulatory or criminal law sanctions shall be justified and applied in a consistent and proportionate way.

Evidence-based policy

Each incident involving substandard and falsified medical products shall be reviewed with a view to identifying weaknesses in the system, vulnerabilities in the supply chain and making appropriate changes to improve the safety of patients.

Annexes

Annex 1: Falsified, substandard and adulterated products and related illegal activities signal registering logbook.

						000.001
Title		Falsified, substandard and adulterated products and related illegal activities signal registering logbook.				Revision No.001
SN	Date signal Received	Case number/Reference number	Detail of report on product or activity in question	Case handler	Case Closed date	Final Result/decision

Annex 2: List of confirmed falsified, substandard and adulterated products and related illegal activities recording log sheet.

						000.002
	Title	Confirmed Falsified ,substandard and adulterated products and related illegal activities registering reporting logbook.				Revision No.001
SN	Product or activity in question	Case confirmed	Date of measure	Measure taken	Measure taken by:	Remark

Annex 3: Cheek list for onsite investigation of Product Quality Defect

EFDA ETHIOPIAN FOOD & DRUG AUTHORITY	Ethiopian Food and Drug Administration (EFDA)	FORM-IIPPLEO EFDA-000.003

Title	Cheek list for onsite investigation of Product Quality Defect	Revision No.001
	Name and Address of Institution of Product Quality Defect	
1.	**Name Of Inspector** _____Signature_____ _____Signature_____ _____Signature_____	
2.	**Product Under Investigation** Brand Name_____Generic Name_____Bach Number Manufacturer name_____ Country of Origen _____Exp date_____	
3.	**Category Of Complaint or Malpractice or Detected**	**a. Critical** **b. Major** **c. Minor**
4.	**Observation onsite** _____ _____ _____ _____	

	Defect	
	Interview About the product, malpractice and incident with the responsible person onsite	
5.	**Name of Inspector** _____ _____	
6.	**a. Action under taken** Total Quality Imported/Purchased_____ Total Distributed/Dispensed_____ Bach on Hand _____ b. Sample Total Quantity of sample collected_____ c. Picture/record of the premises and product storage d. Quarantine	
7.	**Name and Signature of persons on site** Name_____ Signature_____	

Annex IV: Visual Inspection Cheek List for Suspected Falsified and Substandard regulated product

EFDA	Ethiopian Food and Drug Administration (EFDA)	FORM-IIPPLEO EFDA-000.005
Title	Cheek list for visual Inspection for Suspected Falsified and Substandard regulated product	Revision No.001

	Observe Packaging	Yes	**No**
1	Is there an external Packaging?		
2	Is the external Packaging intact?		
3	Is the internal packaging intact?		
4	Does the internal and external packaging clear information on the storage conditions of the product?	Yes	No
IDENTIFICATION (does the external packaging carry the following information on the outer side)			
1	Name of the active ingredient(s)		
2	The amount of active ingredient per dosage unit or package?		
3	The expiry date		
TRACEABILITY		Yes	No
Does the external and internal packaging carry the following information on the outer side			
1	The mane and address of the manufacturer or the company?		
2	The batch members?		
PHYSICAL APPEARANCE		Yes	No
Powder for suspension and syrups			
1	Is the colour of the powder /Solution homogeneous /		
2	Is it homogenous, free form lumps, clots, foreign particles?	Yes	No
TABLETS /BLISTERS			
1	Have the tablets the same page, dimensions, colour , and marks ?		
2	Are the tablets being free from cracks, foreign particles, erosion, stains?		
STERILE LIQUIDS OR POWDER FOR INJECTION		Yes	No
1	Is the closure of the internal container intact and airtight t?		
2	Is the colour of the liquid or the powder homogenous?		
3	Is the texture homogenous /free from lumps or clots or foreign particles?		