

ZAMRA LAUNCHES THE SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC) NETWORK AGAINST SUBSTANDARD, FALSIFIED AND ILLEGAL MEDICAL PRODUCTS ON THE ZAMBIAN MARKET.

Substandard and Falsified medical products have continued posing a health threat, exposing patients, communities, and governments to increased disease burden and social-economic challenges worsened by out-of-pocket spending by patients and their families.

These products also continue contributing to the rise in Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), with 155,000 children dying annually due to falsified anti-malaria drugs and a similar number dying from acute pneumonia after treatment with substandard and falsified antimicrobials.

In response to the above, the Zambia Medicines Regulatory Authority (ZAMRA) and its partners on the 11th of September 2025 established a Single Point Of Contact (SPOC) Network aimed at providing a platform for real-time collaboration between law enforcement agencies, civil society as well as the public in the prevention, detection and response to proliferation of substandard, falsified and illegal medical products in Zambia.

In his officiating remarks, ZAMRA Director-General Mr. Makomani Siyanga said Zambia recognizes the risk the production, trafficking and use of substandard and falsified medical products poses on human and animal health, and is optimistic that the SPOC will aid in curbing this problem.

“This network will allow for swift evaluation of incoming reports, enforcement, national and international collaboration, as well as public communication on consequences of consuming substandard, falsified and illegal medical products.”

Representing the Drug Enforcement Commission, Mr. Choolwe Kaliba

also applauded the establishment of the SPOC, saying it will bring public confidence that medical products on the Zambia market are safe, further calling for enhanced public awareness.

“This is a commendable and long overdue move, however, publicity in Zambia is one of the challenges we still have, people need to understand that these efforts are meant to protect them.”

Zambia is part of the member state mechanism of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Surveillance and Monitoring System, which was established to prevent and control substandard and falsified medical products and associated activities.

Factors that have contributed to the increase in substandard and falsified medical products include lack of access to quality medical products, weak technical capacity, fatal levels of wrong active ingredients or other toxic chemicals, and sometimes deliberate poisoning.

The SPOC includes, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Livestock and fisheries, the Ministry of Justice, the Zambia Medicines and Medical Supplies Agency, the Zambia National Airports Corporation, the Zambia Revenue Authority, and the Drug Enforcement Commission, to mention but a few.

The meeting took place at the Mulungushi International Conference Center in Lusaka, Zambia.