



SAHPRA acknowledges World Patient Safety Day and World Pharmacist Day

The South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) commemorated “World Patient Safety Day” and “World Pharmacist Day” (observed annually on 17 and 25 September, respectively). The World Health Organization’s (WHO’s) theme for the 2023 World Patient Safety Day is *“Engaging patients for patient safety”*, with slogan *“Elevate the voice of patients!”* The day aimed to influence healthcare stakeholders, including patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals to work collaboratively towards safety interventions that truly reflect the needs and preferences of patients, ultimately enhancing healthcare safety globally.

World Pharmacist Day provides an opportunity for the pharmaceutical industry to celebrate its achievements in supporting societies, but also to make its value and further potential in improving healthcare. This year’s theme, developed by the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), is *“Strengthening health systems”*. At a time when health systems around the world are recovering from the COVID-19 crisis, the general consensus is that urgent action is needed for health services to meet future needs. This year’s World Pharmacists Day presented opportunities to increase awareness of pharmacists as an intelligent solution.

It must be noted that SAHPRA is mandated by law to oversee the safety, quality, efficacy, and performance of all health products it regulates. In implementing our mandate, SAHPRA launched the Med Safety App in 2021 that allows consumers and healthcare professionals to report adverse events experienced by patients, which can be downloaded into a smart mobile phone through Google Play or App Store.

SAHPRA shares all the adverse events reports received with WHO VigiBase®, which is a global database for all adverse events submitted by member states. Furthermore, SAHPRA ensures that all adverse events are investigated, monitored, analysed, and acted upon. Reporting of adverse events to SAHPRA assists in, among others, the identification of new adverse events and gaining of further information about novel adverse events. Additionally, this enables SAHPRA to communicate and recommend remedial actions to implicated manufactures, so as to mitigate the experienced adverse events and most importantly, promote/improve public safety.