NEWS ITEM

SAHPRA encourages reporting side effects this MedSafetyWeek

Pretoria, 06 November 2023 – The South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) is urging patients, doctors, nurses, or pharmacists to play their part in reporting side effects using the MedSafety app. Reporting side effects is key to helping make medicines safer for the population of South Africa.

Through the #MedSafetyWeek campaign more than 80 countries will work together to improve the safety of medicines globally.

From 6 to 12 November, SAHPRA will take part in the global #MedSafetyWeek campaign, a collaboration involving more than 80 medicines regulatory agencies and several non-governmental organisations, to raise awareness about the importance of reporting side effects of medicines. With the theme **'Who can report?'**, this year's campaign will focus on the key role of every patient, doctor, nurse, and pharmacist who reports a side effect and contributes to using medicines safely.

All medicines agencies operate systems to detect and analyse side effects of medicines. The purpose of safety monitoring is to gain more information about known side effects and find out about new ones. Constantly collecting and monitoring information from the reports received helps identify risks associated with medicines and take action to minimise harm.

SAHPRA emphasises the importance of reporting side effects through the MedSafety App. All reports made to SAHPRA will be thoroughly assessed and examined to determine the right steps to be taken to protect the population from harm.

Mafora Matlala, Pharmacovigilance Manager says: “Every report is important in building more knowledge and understanding of the benefits and risks of medicines in clinical use and allows action to be taken to minimise risks.”

“Reporting suspected side effects to SAHPRA helps to make medicines safer for patients all around the world. In some cases, it can result in better prescribing advice, which can improve patient outcomes. If you, or a patient you are supporting, experience a side effect with a medicine, make sure to report it to us promptly,” she adds.

Reports about side effects can be submitted easily through the MedSafety App.

How to download the Med Safety App:

- Open the Play Store (Android) or the App Store (IOS)
- Search for *Med Safety* icon
- Tap the *Med Safety* icon
- Tap to *install* to the download the App
- Tap *Open*
- Select a region, in this case South Africa. Sometimes it selects automatically depending on the settings you already have on your phone
- Click *continue as guest* or *create an account*
- Report ADRs and/or product quality problems

More information

MedSafetyWeek

#MedSafetyWeek is an international campaign led by Uppsala Monitoring Centre (UMC), the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for International Drug Monitoring. The campaign is supported by WHO and by members of the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities (ICMRA). For more information and free social media assets, visit the campaign website.

Patients are advised to contact a healthcare professional if they are worried about their health.

About SAHPRA

SAHPRA is tasked with regulating (monitoring, evaluating, investigating, inspecting and registering) all health products. This includes clinical trials, complementary medicines, medical devices and in-vitro diagnostics (IVDs). Furthermore, SAHPRA has the added

responsibility of overseeing radiation control in South Africa. SAHPRA's mandate is outlined in the Medicines and Related Substances Act (Act No 101 of 1965 as amended) as well as the Hazardous Substances Act (Act No 15 of 1973).

SAHPRA has three pillars to ensure that medicines, medical devices and IVDs meet the requisite standards to protect the health and well-being of all who reside in South Africa:

- Safety
- Efficacy
- Quality

It is these three pillars that define the ethos of SAHPRA.