

GS1 standards help to drive patient safety in Africa



*Strategy.
Action.
Results.*

Vaccine tenders issued by UNICEF and backed by Gavi financing now require GS1 data and barcode standards.

This was just one momentous outcome announced by UNICEF at the 2nd African GS1 Healthcare Conference which took place in September in Lagos, Nigeria.

The conference, which brought together 287 participants from 34 African countries and a further nine countries around the globe, was co-hosted with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control in Nigeria (NAFDAC) and financed by the World Bank, the Global Fund, USAID and the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers (IFPMA).

Representatives from 70 regulatory bodies and 12 humanitarian organisations, like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and UNICEF, joined manufacturers and healthcare providers at this incredible event. The conference culminated in 25 African regulatory authorities and six health financing and donor organisations proclaiming their intention to pursue pharmaceutical traceability by adopting GS1 global supply chain standards. See the full text of this Call to Action [here](#).

Maria Palazzolo, GS1 Australia Executive Director and CEO, said GS1 embraces the power of standards to transform the way people around the world work and live.

“When used in healthcare, GS1 standards can help save lives and this healthcare conference in Lagos is indicative of the big step forward that has been achieved,” she said.

“The commitment, passion and dedication of all conference participants to what global standards can bring to improve health in Africa was stunning. As we have seen in working with the healthcare sector in Australia, the path will be long.

“However, something happened in Lagos to show us that anything is possible if you believe in the power of standards.”

What does this mean for Australian Healthcare?

Ms Palazzolo said that GS1 Australia continues to work with local regulators and industry groups to improve patient safety by using GS1 standards.

“Driving the implementation of traceability standards is for the benefit of everyone not only from a business perspective but for the greater cause of patient safety.

“It has been rewarding to share learnings with our colleagues globally to achieve similar outcomes, as healthcare is a truly global issue. There is much more to do, but collectively we are headed in the right direction,” Palazzolo added.

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About GS1 Australia

GS1 Australia is the Australian member of GS1, a not-for-profit global organisation that develops and maintains the most widely used supply chain standards in the world and a leader in facilitating efficient international business. GS1 Australia currently serves 22 industry sectors and supports more

than 20,000 members nationally to improve supply chain efficiency and cost effectiveness by adopting best practice GS1 global standards. In healthcare, the application of the standards delivers improvements in all aspects of the service delivery system. Tasks are carried out more safely and efficiently, while patient experience is also enhanced.

For more information visit <https://www.gs1au.org/for-your-industry/healthcare/> or follow us on <https://www.linkedin.com/company/793758/> and https://twitter.com/gs1_au.

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