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Medicines Quality Control and Surveillance Department (MQCSD)
Assuring Safe Reliable Medicines; Preserving a Healthy Caribbean
About Us

The Medicines Quality Control and Surveillance Department (MQCSD) is the sole regional ISO/IEC 17025 accredited pharmaceutical quality control laboratory. As part of the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), the Department analyses and verifies the adherence of medicines marketed in the Caribbean to international quality and safety standards.

We provide Member States with an efficient, well equipped facility for essential monitoring of imported or locally manufactured medicines marketed in the Region focusing on:

- Reliable
- Quality
- Customer-focused
- Risk-based approaches

MQCSD Testing Services

Our Work

MQCSD monitors medicinal quality in the Caribbean through the following substantive portfolios:

Routine Quality Control Testing
Conducting routine quality control testing of medicines for market approval in collaboration with National Medicines Regulatory Authorities/Ministries of Health within Member States.

Risk-Based Post Market Surveillance Programme
Conducting a risk-based post market surveillance programme in partnership with National Medicines Regulatory Authorities/Ministries of Health and CARPHA's regulatory unit, the Caribbean Regulatory System (CRS). The Department evaluates the continual quality of medicines after approval for sale in the region. Member States can report suspected substandard, falsified medicines and/or adverse medicine reactions to a regional platform called VigiCarib for analysis and action, including testing by the laboratory.

Regional Capacity Building
Provide technical and quality assurance training to counterparts in national pharmaceutical quality control laboratories upon request, to aid with capacity building and strengthening of technical competence.

Our Impact

Medicinal quality is fundamental to the preservation of public health. From minor ailments to critical illnesses, patients and medical professionals rely on medicines for curative treatment and/or management. Through our routine quality control testing, comprehensive risk-based post market surveillance programme and regional partnerships, the Medicines Quality Control and Surveillance Department is a key component in establishing regional confidence in medicines by:

- Safeguarding access and sale of safe, effective, reliable medicines for consumers and medical professionals.
- Detect harmful, substandard, counterfeit medicines to reduce potential adverse effects and mismanagement of treatment for patients
- Strengthen regional and national medicines regulatory systems
- Reporting essential data and information to support evidence-based strategies in Member States to warn, reduce and manage national public health risks

Quality Policy

The Medicines Quality Control and Surveillance Department is committed to providing testing services of the highest standard that satisfy the needs of clients, the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 and continually improving the effectiveness of the quality management system; ensuring test results are accurate, reliable, interpretable and defensible.
Why Choose Medicines Quality Control and Surveillance Department

Product quality and safety are critical to you as a National Medicines Regulatory Authority/Ministry of Health, manufacturer, supplier, exporter or consumer. Confirmation of product quality by competent and accredited laboratories is becoming a legal and regulatory requirement globally.

Our Department provides you with the following benefits:

- Minimised risk of producing or supplying a faulty product
- Tested Once
- Avoidance of expensive retesting for entry into global markets
- Reduced Costs
- Reduced costs of testing
- Global Acceptance
- International acceptance of product and certificate of analysis
- Enhanced customer confidence
- Consumer Satisfaction

The Department also offers:

Non-accredited Chemical/Physicochemical Testing

- Loss on Drying
- Water/Moisture Content
- Thin Layer Chromatography
- Potentiometric and Volumetric Titration
- Specific Gravity/Weight per mL
Post Market Surveillance Programme

The quality of any medicine is determined by its effectiveness, safety and ultimately the health outcome of a patient. If that quality is questionable, then any efforts and investment into public health systems and medicines regulatory systems will be compromised.

The Medicines Quality Control and Surveillance Department functions as a critical part of robust mechanisms for regulating medicines in CARICOM. This includes post-market surveillance, in close cooperation with the Member States, CARPHA/CRS and other partners such as Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization.

Sample Submission

Samples are submitted to the Department for pre-registration, pre-tender, routine analysis, questionable efficacy or surveillance purposes by Member States through the responsible National Medicines Regulatory bodies and medicines procurement authorities. Further guidance for the submission of samples can be on the CARPHA website—http://carpha.org. You may also contact the Department directly for further information.

Customer Service and Performance Standards

Requests for Analysis
A technical review of client requests for analysis is performed to determine the Department’s capability (facilities, instruments and equipment, reference standards, reagents and personnel expertise) to conduct testing.

- **Routine Requests**: Will receive responses within five (5) business days of receipt of the Request for Analysis
- **Emergency Requests**: Will be answered within 24 - 36 hours

Analysis of Samples
Certificates of Analysis will be issued for routine samples within 30 - 45 working days (time taken from receipt of the sample to issuance of a Certificate of Analysis).