

Press Statement

1 October 2023

RE: The Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (MCAZ) Takes a Stand Against Drug Abuse

Harare - The Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (MCAZ) is committed to protecting public and animal health through its regulatory functions. As part of this mandate, MCAZ recognizes the urgent need to combat drug and substance abuse in Zimbabwe.

Drug abuse is a complex issue that affects individuals, families, and communities across Zimbabwe. It poses serious threats to public health, social stability, and economic development. MCAZ acknowledges that addressing this challenge requires a comprehensive approach involving various stakeholders, including government agencies, healthcare professionals, civil society organizations, and the public. The Authority is honoured to be part of the Technical Committee set up by Government of Zimbabwe which is mandated to come up with strategies to combat the vice of Drugs and Substance Abuse.

MCAZ's primary responsibility is to regulate medicines and medical devices in Zimbabwe. Through our robust regulatory framework, we ensure that only safe, effective, and quality medicines are available on the market. By doing so, we aim to prevent the circulation of counterfeit drugs and unregistered substances that can contribute to drug abuse. In this regard, the Authority, has revoked 6 permits for wholesale dealers and cancelled 4 persons licences who were promoting abuse of Histalix PP by selling at Mbare and places like Chitungwiza illegally and others were exporting to Zambia and Mozambique. No remaining stock was found when blitz inspections were carried out by MCAZ inspectors as everything had already been distributed.

In addition to our regulatory role, MCAZ actively collaborates with other government agencies and partners in implementing strategies aimed at preventing drug abuse. The Authority works closely with law enforcement agencies to combat illicit drug trafficking and ensure strict adherence to regulations governing controlled substances.

MCAZ is working with its various stakeholders, including the Police CID Drugs, National Prosecutors, ZIMRA and Port health officials to educate them on the entry of these drugs through our ports of entry or illegal channels. The Authority, hold trainings with these stakeholders on yearly basis and we have had five (5) trainings in various provinces this year. (Masvingo, Beitbridge, Zvishavane, Victoria falls and Mutare). Police had managed to confiscate some of these cough syrups, and we assist them in writing statements that have penalties.

Furthermore, MCAZ places great emphasis on public education and awareness campaigns. The Authority believe that knowledge is power when it comes to preventing drug abuse. Through various initiatives such as exhibitions, radio and television programs, and schools and

community outreach programs, we strive to educate the public about the dangers of drug and substance abuse.

The fight against drug and substance abuse requires a united front from all sectors of society. MCAZ encourages individuals who may be struggling with substance use disorders or know someone who is affected by it to seek help from healthcare professionals or support groups available within their communities. The Authority also exhorts medical professionals to adhere to pharmaceutical regulations or risk losing their licences.

Together with our partners and stakeholders across Zimbabwe, MCAZ remains steadfast in its commitment to protecting public health by combating drug and substance abuse effectively. The MCAZ urges everyone to join in this critical endeavour as the country strive for a healthier future for all.

For further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the Authority.

MEDICINES CONTROL AUTHORITY OF ZIMBABWE



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R. T Rukwata (Mr.)

DIRECTOR-GENERAL