PQM Medicines Quality Database

The Promoting the Quality of Medicines (PQM) Program, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention (USP), provides technical assistance to developing countries in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen their medicines quality assurance and quality control systems.

One important means of safeguarding the public from counterfeit and substandard medicines lies in the vigilant oversight of products circulating in the marketplace. Through systematic screening of the quality of medicines collected from various regions, further testing in the laboratory, and subsequent analysis of the data, a country can better ensure the quality of medicines in its markets, particularly those essential to national health programs treating endemic diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis. A key component of the technical assistance PQM provides to USAID-assisted countries is establishing this type of Medicines Quality Monitoring program.

National Medicine Regulatory Agencies (MRAs), as well as international agencies and programs involved in procuring medicines and managing the supply chain, usually do not have access to a continuously updated source of reliable information on poor quality medicines. In addition, considering the global nature of today's pharmaceutical markets, ensuring the broad dissemination of data on the quality of medicines is equally important.

To address these needs, PQM created the **Medicines Quality Database (MQDB)**, a free, publicly available, online database that contains medicines quality testing results from various countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Standardization of sampling and analytical procedures, as well as thorough assessment of the data generated, are unique features of this database.
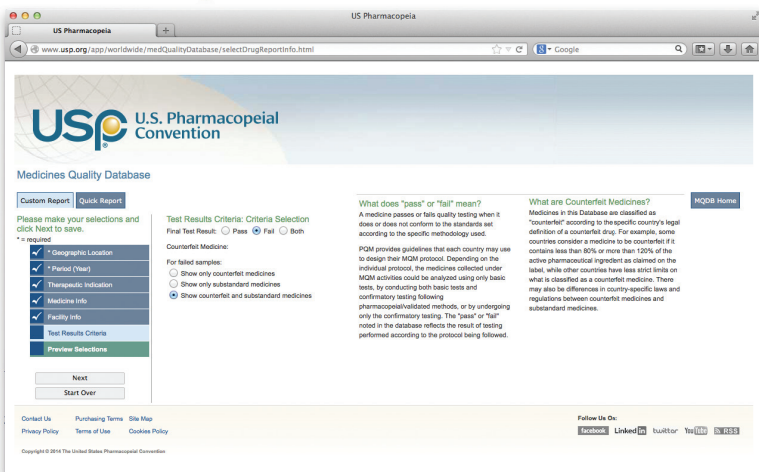
The MQDB contains the following information on medicines collected and tested for quality:

- **Geographic location:** Country, and province or state within the country
- **Date of sampling:** Year
- **Facilities from which samples were collected:**
  – Sector: Public, private, or informal
  – Type: Pharmacy, hospital, clinic, etc.
- **Medicine information:** Product name, manufacturer's name, therapeutic indication, active pharmaceutical ingredient, dosage form, and batch or lot number
- **Final test result:** Passed or failed
- **Counterfeit:** Yes or no (based on the country's classification)

Data reports can be easily generated from the MQDB—directly online or exported into MS Excel for creating charts and graphs.

The ultimate objective of the MQDB is to enable country MRAs and other international health organizations to access current and reliable data, helping maintain the quality of medicines circulating in the market and allowing a quick response when poor quality medicines are identified.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about the **MQDB**, please contact Dr. Victor Pribluda at **vsp@usp.org** or **mqdb@usp.org**; or, about **PQM activities**, please visit **www.pqmusp.org**.

The MQDB is available at: www.usp.org/worldwide/medQualityDatabase.