AFRICAN STANDARD

Standard

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DARS 2159:2024

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This African Standard was prepared by ARSO *Technical Committee* on African Traditional Medicine (ARSO/TC 82)

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Introduction

Herbal medicines have become a popular form of therapy. Medicinal plants constitute source of raw material for both traditional systems of medicine (e.g Ayurvedic, Chinese, USANI, Hometherapy) and modern medicine. As such, they represent a substantial proportion of the global drug market. According to WHO estimates, 80% of the world's population depends on traditional medicines for their primary health care needs and major part of traditional therapy involves the use of plant extracts or their ingredients.

Recent advancement in research on herbal medicine has shown the need for its standardization to ensure quality and consumer safety. In almost all the traditional medicine systems from where herbaldrugs have come into therapeutics, safety and quality are utmost essential which requires changes in their approaches based on modern concepts.

Major differences in the assessment of quality, safety and efficacy would hinder free circulation of herbal products and may represent a risk for consumers. The complexity of herbal drug and the inter operation of biographic data on safety and efficacy reflecting the experience gathered during long term use are best addressed by involving expertise. Safety of herbal products is directly linked to pharmaceutical details such as the way of production and the specification of the extract.

Safety of herbal products is essential. Drug safety refers to the frequency of adverse drug effects (i.e., physical or laboratory toxicity that could possibly be related to the drug) that are treatment emergent – that is, they emerge during treatment and were not present before treatment, or they become worse during treatment compared with the pretreatment.

This standard seeks to develop guidelines for ensuring safety of finished herbal products to meet international standard.

African Traditional Medicine – Technical guidelines for safety of finished medicinal products

1 Scope

This Standard specifies requirements and related procedures for ensuring the safety of Finished Medicinal Products.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

AOAC Official Method 2008.02, Aflatoxins B1, B2, G1, and G2 and Ochratoxin A in ginseng and ginger by multi-toxin immunoaffinity column clean up and Liquid Chromatographic Quantitation

3 Terms and definitions

For the purpose of this standard the following definitions apply. **3.1 Abbreviations**

3.1.1 SAE: Serious Adverse Event

3.1.2 SAR: Serious Adverse Reactions

3.1.3 SUSAR: Suspected Unexpected Serious Adverse Events Reporting

ATM: African Traditional Medicine

3.2

Herbal Drug

Herbal drug has been defined by WHO as, labelled medicinal products that contain as active ingredients aerial or underground parts of plants or other plant material, or combinations thereof, whether in the crude state or as plant preparations. Plant material includes juices, gums, fatty acids, essential oils, or any other substances of this nature. Herbal medicines may contain excipients in addition to active ingredients

Safety

A systematic examination of the extent to which an entity (part or product) is capable of meeting specified requirements. The result of safety evaluation may be used for qualification, approval and registration or accreditation purposes.' Safety evaluation may be used to determine manufacturing safety capability.

3.3

Toxicity

It is defined as the extent to which a product is poisonous or harmful.

3.4 Pharmacovigilance It is the monitoring of the effects of medical drugs after they have been licensed for use, especially in order to identify unreported adverse reactions

4.0 Safety studies

4.1 Requirements for assessment of safety

The minimum requirements for the assessment of safety are

- a. Botanical identification/authentication Latin name (genus and species) of the plant species, local names and family.
- b. Information (via Literature published research papers search/database)
- c. Information regarding the safety and efficacy of the product.
- d. In the absence of published results of toxicological studies, documented experience of long-term use should form the basis of the risk assessment

If the product has a long history of use without demonstrated harm, specific restrictive regulatory action is not necessary, unless new evidence indicates a need for a revised risk-benefit assessment. If there is a known toxicological risk, standard toxicological studies are mandatory. The absence of any reported or documented side-effects is not an absolute assurance of safety for traditional medicines; some toxicological tests may therefore be necessary.

4.2 Toxicity studies involves the following:

- a) in vitro and in mice to assess genotoxicity
- b) *in vitro* to assess cytotoxicity
- c) in one rodent model and one non-rodent model to investigate repeat dose (1, 3, 6, 9 months) toxicological effects
- d) in a rodent model and in the rabbit to assess reproductive toxicity
- e) in the rat to assess carcinogenicity

4.2.1 Single dose toxicity: in rodents to assess single-dose acute toxicity and maximum tolerated dose

4.2.2 Acute toxicity. Suggested tests should include those for immunotoxicity (e.g. tests for allergic reactions), genotoxicity, carcinogenicity and reproductive toxicity through long-term use.

5.0 Requirements for Residuals of biological and non-biological

contaminants

Plants used as drugs, growth, collection, storage, and transportation are exposed to multitude of environmental influence which is responsible for contamination. The important contaminants considered for quality control purposes are either Non Biological Contaminants viz. heavy metal e.g. lead from exhaust etc and plant protection substances (pesticides and fumigation residues) or Biological Contaminants viz. microorganisms (bacterial moulds) and poisonous substances such as Aflatoxin produced by *Aspergillus flavus* which grows on herbs.

5.1 Determination of Heavy metal

Significance: - to prevent health hazards.

To prevent the contamination & toxicity of material (extracts & finished products) the total amount of heavy metals shall be calculated by adding up the values obtained for Lead (Annex D), Arsenic Africanstandar (Annex E) and Mercury (Annex F). The report shall be given in ppm using Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer (AAS) of (AAS

5.2 Determination of Cadmium

This test applies to crude herbal extracts & finished products. Evaluation: - Atomic Absorption.

5.3 Determination Mercury

Significance: - to prevent the contamination & toxicity of material. Extracts & Finished products Evaluation: - suitable methods e.g atomic absorption spec can be used in detection of mecury of other heavy metals

5.4: Residual Pesticides

Significance: - to prevent the contamination & toxicity of material.

Evaluation: - Chemical Analysis.

Application: - Extracts & Finished products.

Table 1 — Chemical, physical and mycotoxin requirements (WHO, 2007)

For use of pesticides, reference shall be made to the CODEX list of approved pesticides for spices and their maximum residue limits (MRLs) (WHO, 2007).

5.5 Radioactive residues

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The WHO guidelines emphasize that the health risk, in general, due to radioactive contamination from naturally occurring radio nuclides is not a real concern, but those arising from major nuclear accidents may be serious and depend on the specific radionuclide, the level of contamination, and the quantity of the contaminant consumed. Taking into account the quantity of herbal medicine normally consumed by an individual, they are unlikely to be a health risk. Therefore, at present, no limits are proposed for radioactive contamination

S/N	Characteristics	Limits(seeds)	Ref. Test methods	
1	Lead (pb), max. mg/kg	20µg per gm	USP 30, NF 25 Pg.	
			231	*
2	Cadmium (Cd), max. mg/kg	66	USP 30, NF	<u>v</u>
			25 Pg. 231	
3	Arsenic (As), max. mg/kg	66	USP 30, NF	
			25 Pg. 231	C
4	Chromium (Cr), max. mg/kg	<u></u>	USP 30, NF	
			25 Pg. 231	
5	Mercury (Hg), max. mg/kg	"	USP 30, NF, (
			25 Pg. 231	
6	Copper (Cu), max. mg/kg	20µg per g	USP 30, NE	
			25 Pg. 231 🥿 🔪	
7	Total ash (aerial parts), max. %	4 – 8%	USP 30, NF 25	
8	Total ash (roots), max. %	66	USP 30, NF 25	
9	Acid – insoluble ash (leaves), max. %	2%	USP 30, NF 25	
10	Acid – insoluble ash (roots), max. %	4 – 8%	USP 30, NF 25	
11	Foreign matter, max. %	2-3%	USP 30, NF 25	
12	Total Aflatoxin (AFB1 + AFB2 + AFG1	2ppb	AOAC 2008.2	
	+AFG ₂), ppb			
13	Aflatoxin B1 only, ppb	4ppb 🗸 💛	AOAC	
			2008.2	

Table 1 — Chemical, physical and mycotoxin requirements

The inputs and Methods are based on USP 30, NF 25 of May 1, 2007. Aflatoxin Test Method is from AOAC 2008.2

6.0 Microbiological Requirements:

Normally, a large number of bacteria and moulds are present in medicinal plants materials because of the contamination from the environment. Amongst those, the aerobic soil forming bacteria play a major role. The practices of harvesting, handling and production may cause further contamination. The main organism contaminants are *E.coli*, and other moulds. Herbal drugs contain organic constituents that are liable to microbiological contamination during harvesting, transportation, and storage if suitable environmental conditions such as proper drying, packaging storage are not maintained. Microbial load testing is carried out to ensure the absence of pathogenic bacteria and other fungi.

6.1 Total viable aerobic count

The total viable aerobic count **(TVC)** of the herbal material being examined is determined, as specified in the test procedure below, using one of the following methods: membrane-filtration, plate count or serial dilution. Aerobic bacteria and fungi (moulds and yeasts) are determined by the **TVC**.

Usually a maximum permitted level is set for most products, but when the TVC exceeds this level then it is unnecessary to proceed with determination of specific organisms; the material should be rejected without being subjected to further testing.

6.2

Tests for Aerobic Bacteria:

Significance: - to prevent microbial contamination.

Evaluation: - Microbiologically Application: Pre-treated plant material

No	Parameter	Limits	Test method
Α	Raw medicinal plant and herbal ma	aterials	
	intended for further processing (in	cluding	
	additional decontamination by a phys	sical or	All
	chemical process)		s'
			WHO (1998) Quality control
(1)	Vegete and moulds, may not a		methods for medicinal plants
(1)	reasts and moulds, max. per g		materials. Geneva, World Health
			Organization.
			WHO (1998) Quality control
(2)	<i>E. coli</i> , max. per g	104 CEU/0	methods for medicinal plants
(2)		10° CFU/g	materials. Geneva, World Health
			Organization.
	Shigella per g or ml		WHO (1998) Quality control
(3)		Absent	methods for medicinal plants
(0)			materials. Geneva, World Health
			Organization.
В	Herbal materials that have been pr	retreated (For h	erbal materials that have been
	pretreated (e.g. with boiling water as	used for herbal	teas and infusions) or that are used a
	topical dosage forms)	1	
	6		WHO (1998) Quality control
(4)	Aerobic bacteria/g	10 ⁷	methods for medicinal plants
			materials. Geneva, World Health
	CX:O		
2	~		WHO (1998) Quality control
(5)	Yeasts and moulds, max. per g	104	methods for medicinal plants
			materials. Geneva, World Health
			WHO (1998) Quality control
(6)	<i>E. coli</i> , max. per g	10 ²	methods for medicinal plants
			materials. Geneva, World Health

Table 2 — Microbiological limits	Purity tests for herbal medicines
	i unty tests for nerbal mealemes

No	Parameter	Limits	Test method]		
(7)	Enterobacteria and certain Gram- negative bacteria / g	104	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.			
(8)	Salmonella, per g	Absent	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.	Stano		
(9)	Shigella, per g or ml	Absent	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.			
(10)	Clostridia, per gram	Absent	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.			
С	Other herbal materials for internal use					
(11)	Aerobic bacteria/g	105	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.			
(12)	Yeasts and moulds, max. per g	104	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.			
(13)	Escherichia coli, max. per g	Absent	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.			
(14)	Salmonella, per g	Absent	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.			
(15)	Enterobacteria and certain Gram- negative bacteria / g	10 ³	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.			

No	Parameter	Limits	Test method
(16)	Clostridia, per gram	Absent	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health
			Organization.
(17)	Shigella, per g or ml	Absent	WHO (1998) Quality control methods for medicinal plants materials. Geneva, World Health Organization.

7.0. Packaging and Labeling:

Refer to standard on quality of finished herbal product

7.1 Requirement of Packaging

The following guidelines are to be used to regulate the packing, storage and transport of medicinal

plants in adequate manner in order to get good quality plant material which can be granted to enable

the testing efficiency of the procedures used.

- a) After the repeated control and eventual elimination of low quality material and foreign bodies, the product should be packaged on a clean and dry preferably new sacks, bags or cases. The label must be clear, permanently fixed and made from non toxic material.
- b) Packing materials should be stored in a clean and dry place that has to be free from pest and inaccessible for livestock and domestic animals it must be granted that no contamination of the product take place by the use of packing material, particularly in the case of fiber bags.
- c) Reusable packaging material should be cleaned and perfectly dried before their usage.it must be granted no contamination takes place by reusing bags.

7.2 Labelling

In addition to the provisions of ARS 56, Pre-packaged foods - Labelling and Codex Alimentarius Commission (CODEX STAN 1-1985; Rev-8-2010) on General Standard for the labelling of Pre-Packaged food, the following shall be inscribed on the package:

- a) Name of the product (type of raw material).
- b) The Plant name and species (Qualitative and quantitative composition of product by unit dose or percentage)
- c) The date and method of collection (i.e. wild or cultivated) (Can be applied in the compilation of file for registration of product or marketing authorization, this is may be heavy for the primary or secondary label)
- The geographical origin of the species (Can be applied in the compilation of file for registration of product or marketing authorization, this is may be heavy for the primary or secondary label)
- e) Method of administration and posology
- f) Warning, precaution and storage if any.
- g) Name and address of the manufacturer, packer, co-packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor.
- h) Code or batch number
- i) Net weight of product in grams (quantitative composition)
- j) Manufacturing date and expiry date
- k) Producing country or country of origin
- I) Name of Non active ingredients, if present shall be declared.

m) The disclaimer of the product will be added if there is no evidence of clinical trials. Marketing authorization number or country standard registration number if any.

8.0 Pharmacovigilance

8.1 Requirement

8.1.1 Well-articulated pharmacovigilance centres should be designated and made known to the public. The centre should have well defined and publicized lines of collecting reports on suspected adverse effects from consumers or health care professionals. Where there is no pharmacovigilance centre, consideration should be given to designating other relevant organizations, such as the national regulatory authority, poisons centres, drug information centres and consumer complaints authorities as the focal point.

8.1.2 Designated relevant staff members with relevant technical training (e.g. pharmacognosy, phytochemistry, ethnobotany, ethnopharmacology) and in the use and provision of herbal medicines8.1.3 Access to suitable analytical testing facilities for analysis of potentially causative products about which there is often insufficient information for ATM

8.1.4 Relevant report forms for reporting / data collection

8.1.5 Access to reliable information support on herbal medicines

8.2 roles and responsibility

Roles and responsibilities of each staff in pharmacovigilance centre should be well define and designated.

8.3 Procedure for reporting suspected adverse reactions

All suspected adverse reaction following the use of ATM should be reported such that each case contains adequate information for identification and assessment. Information can be gathered with the help of reporting form (Annex F.9) developed to request for all relevant information expected in a case report, as follows:

- a) identification of the patient/consumer in order to avoid duplications and facilitate followup
- b) age, sex and a brief medical history of the consumer/patient (when relevant); in some countries, ethnicity may need to be specified
- c) name and common vernacular name of medicinal plant) and/or brand or ingredient name(s), including the part of medicinal plant used, preparation methods; manufacturer, country of origin, batch number, expiry date and provider
- d) dose and quantity supplied, dosage form, route, start/stop dates
- e) indication or reason for use
- f) date of first administration to onset of event, description of reaction(s)with symptoms and signs, severity and seriousness, results of clinical investigations and tests, course and outcome, and challenge/rechallenge with the same product, where appropriate
- g) all other medicines used (including self-medication), with administration details
- h) risk factors, e.g. age, impaired renal function, previous exposure to the herbal medicine(s) concerned, previous allergies, drug misuse or abuse, the social use of drugs
 i) name and address of reporter (to be considered confidential and to be used only for data verification, completion and case follow-up).

8.4 Reporting Process

Use of report forms

A single reporting form designed for ATMS should be used (example of report for is shown in Annex F.9. A standard printed or electronic reporting form can be used. These reporting forms should be widely available and easily accessible. Reports can also be sent by telephone, letter or e-mail. If possible, a sample of the herbal product and its packaging should be submitted with the report. Educational materials, including a list of simple terminology that can be easily understood, should be developed to inform and assist all parties providing information.

8.5 Confidentiality and accuracy in reporting

Unless by written permission, the identity of both patient and the reporter of suspected adverse reactions should remain confidential. Under no circumstances should information obtained during pharmacovigilance activities be divulged for commercial purposes.

Reporting on herbal medicines should be as accurate and complete as possible however, the fact that information is less than optimal should not in any case prevent reporting.

8.6 Procedure for Assessing case report Approach to Assessing Report Data

standari Standard approach should be adopted in assessing each data element captured in a report. It is most important to determine whether a reaction is caused by the way a herbal medicine has been used. prepared or sourced. Each assessment should be based on the following:

- a) the association in time between administration of the herbal product and the event
- b) the outcome of de-challenge and re-challenge
- c) known pharmacology (including current knowledge of the nature and frequency of adverse reactions)
- d) medical or pharmacological plausibility (the sequence of symptoms, signs and laboratory tests and also pathological findings and knowledge of mechanisms)
- e) likelihood of other causes or their exclusion
- f) testing for adulterants or contaminants that could be the source of adverse events.
- g) In appropriate use.

Note: all consumer/patient and reporter information will remain confidential.

- 8.7 Investigation and analysis of the cause of suspected adverse event Serious Adverse Reaction, Suspected Unexpected Serious Adverse Reaction in particularly should be further investigated scientifically. The investigations may include the following:
 - i. medical investigation of the adverse reactions: pathology, clinical pharmacology, clinical toxicology, pharmacogenetic studies
 - ii. pharmaceutical investigation of the adverse reactions: pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics and pharmaceutical, pharmacological and toxicological analysis
 - iii. pharmacognostical/phytochemical investigation (including authentication) of the herbal medicines
 - iv. physicochemical analysis to identify the constituents of the herbal medicines
 - v. pharmacoepidemiology.

8.8 Procedure for Data Management

8.8.1 Data quality

Strenuous efforts should be made to ensure that there are quality controls on data processing and that the data elements of reports are as complete and accurate as possible. Mechanisms to check for duplications should be instituted.

8.8.2 Data storage.

Computer databases should be managed at very high standard to facilitate access to and use of the data. Software should be selected with expert advice so that analytical needs can be met.

8.8.3 Data analysis

Programmes should be developed to provide for regular analyses and data output appropriate for local needs.

8.9. Procedure for communicating results of assessment of SAE, SAR or SUSAR

The successful safety monitoring of herbal medicines depends on good communication. Transparent communication is essential to ensure that all players collaborate to meet the goal of the safe and effective use of ATM.

Effective and timely communication of results of monitoring is essential so that pharmacovigilance activities can have positive impact on the health of the people and so that manufacturers can take

appropriate action regarding their products. Communication between the following levels is suggested:

- i. the national pharmacovigilance centre and health professionals
- ii. the national pharmacovigilance centre and providers of herbal medicines
- iii. health professionals and providers of herbal medicines, and consumers and patients
- iv. providers of herbal medicines and those for other medicines
- v. the national pharmacovigilance centre and consumers
- vi. the national pharmacovigilance centre and the regulatory authority
- vii. the national pharmacovigilance centre and such centres in other countries, within the region or in other regions ted as African
- viii. the national pharmacovigilance centre and UMC
- ix. the national pharmacovigilance centre and the mass media.

The development of effective communication needs to be adequately resourced.

8.10 Procedure for risk communicating

8.10.1 Risk communication

Communication strategies should be established to effectively reach all relevant target audiences, such as providers of ATMs, other health professionals, manufacturers and patients/consumers. Communication of safety information is a shared responsibility between national pharmacovigilance centres, national regulatory agencies, manufacturers, health professionals and patients/consumers. Different risk communication vehicles can be considered, including:

- i. adverse reaction bulletins or articles distributed in reputable journals
- ii. public advisories or warnings
- iii. "Dear Health Professional" letters.

Various methods of information dissemination can be considered, such as:

- a) Internet posting
- b) direct mass mailing to providers of ATM and health professionals
- c) briefings to the mass media
- d) briefings to patient/consumer associations
- e) education sessions at health professional society meetings.

In order to reach consumers and the wide range of providers of ATM successfully, messages should be tailored to suit the recipients, including translation into local languages where appropriate. Watt African Standar

ANNEX

Annex F (informative)

Pharmacological properties and applications of Plant material

F.1 Pharmacological properties

F.1.1 Pharmacodynamic properties

Not to be cited as African Standard The following is a summary of pharmacological activities of *Plant material*

- F.1.2 Anti-inflammatory action
- F.1.3 Hypoglycaemic and Anti-diabetic activities
- F.1.4 Antioxidant and hepatoprotective activity
- F.1.5 Hypolipidemia activity
- **F.1.6** Anti-microbial properties
- F.1.7 Antimalarial
- F.1.8 Anti-hypertensive Activity
- F.1.9 Anthelmintic activity
- F.1.10 Molluscicide and anti-schistosomiasis activity
- F.1.11 Antifertility activity
- F.1.12 Phytoestrogen effect
- F.1.13 Anti-cancer Activity
- F.1.14 Oxytocic property
- F.1.15 Anticoagulant and antithrombic activities

and 200 mg/kg induced 40 and 50% inhibition against thrombosis in mice. (Awe et al., 1998)

F.1.16 **Analgesic and Antipyretic activities**

Safety data

F.2

- **F.3** Key (proposed) usage
- F.3.1 **Therapeutic indications**
- F.3.2 Dosage/posology
- F.3.3 Contraindications
- F.3.4 Special warnings and precautions for use

- F.3.5 Interactions
- F.3.6 **Pregnancy and lactation**

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F.9 Example of Reporting form for suspected adverse reaction to medicines, including herbal medicines and vaccines (WHO, 2004)

	Patient/consumer identification (please complete or tick boxes below as appropriate)						
]	Last name	First name(s)	Patient/record number				
	Ethnicity						
1	Address (place and region, or he	Date of birth					
		Sex DM DF					

List of all medicines/vaccines/herbal medicines used by the patient. Please indicate suspected medicines with an asterisk (*) (please complete boxes below)

Patient/consumer identifica	tion (pleas	e complete or tick bo	xes below a	s appropriate)	
Last name	First	name(s)	Pat	ient/record nu	mber
Ethnicity					
Address (place and region, o	or health fac	cility may be used)	Dat	te of birth	
			Sex	OM OF	
List of all medicines/vaccir with an asterisk (*) (please of	nes/herbal : complete bo	medicines used by t oxes below)	the patient.	Please indica	te suspected medic
Medicine(s)Vaccine(s) +	Daily	Route of	Date	Date	Reason for use
batch no.	dose	administration	started	stopped	
For herbal medicines place	a mine datai	lad information on t	the product		
Product name:	e give detai	red information on t	ne product		
How was the product obtain	ned?				
List of product ingredients;	attach proc	duct label if availabl	e:		
	•				
Name and address of the m	anufacture	r;			
Name and address of the di	stributor				
the sub-	and the second second				
Other relevant information	:				
Description of the suspecte	d adverse r	eaction (please comp	olete boxes b	oelow)	

Date of onset of reaction (dd/mm/yy): Description of reaction (please include results of laboratory tests if available):

Outcome of the suspected adverse reaction (please tick boxes as appropriate)						
Recovered 🛛	Not yet recovered 🛛	Unknown 🛛	Fatal 🗆	Date of death		
Severe? Yes 🗆	No 🗆	Rechallenge?	Yes 🛛	No 🗆		
		Result:				
Was the patient ad	mitted to hospital?		Yes 🗆	No 🗆		
If yes, give name a	nd address of hospital:					

Other factors (please tick box or describe as appropriate)

Kidney disease	1	Liver disease 🛛	Allergy (please describe)		
Other illnesses (pl	ease	e describe):		Malnutrition	٥

Reporter identification

Draft Africa

Type (please circle): nurse/doctor/pharmacist/other health worker / manufacturer/ distributor/supplier	
Name:	
Address:	Ī
Telephone:	
E-mail address:	

Signature of reporter: Date:

Please send completed form to:

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