Pharmaceuticals Supply Chain Management - Introduction

COURSE PROGRAMME

Introduction

This course is designed to introduce you to the basic concepts of the supply chain management of medicines and medical products, in the context of low and middle income countries' public health systems. Many of the issues of healthcare quality and safety are consequences of a poor supply chain management of medicines. It is estimated that, globally, an average 25% of the total health expenditure is spent on medicines, with poorer countries spending as much as 30%. Knowledge of the supply chain cycle of medicines and practical skills to enhance its management are important, not only for staff in leadership positions but also for health workers in general. Supply chain management activities are fundamental to any health programme performance and all personnel involved, whether it's an inventory manager in a warehouse, a pharmacist in a health facility or a procurement officer at the central medical store, must have a good understanding of the basic principles of supply chain management.

Course objectives

After having successfully completed the course, participants will be able to:

- Define the essential medicines concept and rational use of medicines.
- Describe the different steps and processes in the supply chain management of health commodities.
- Interpret and discuss the roles of managers and different stakeholders in supply chain management, within the overall health system.
- Be familiar with underlying principles of good storage and distribution practices of medicines.
- Underline the key issues surrounding monitoring and evaluation of supply chain management.
- Appreciate the importance and need for quality assurance of medicines along the supply chain.
- Understand and critically analyse supply chain systems in different countries to identify practical approaches and intervention strategies.

What are the target participants?

The course is designed for all health personnel, business administrators and managers involved in the health sector, development cooperation, healthcare programmes and projects in developing countries. No prior knowledge is required, although practical involvement in the health sector is an advantage.

Teaching and learning strategy

This online course requires the students to engage in self-directed learning and go through the course materials on the learning platform with the support of an online facilitator. Taking part in discussion forums, exchanging ideas with fellow participants and doing self-evaluation through online quizzes form a vital part of the learning experience.

In addition, there are several short assignments to guide the learning process of the participants, offering feedback on the submissions and an opportunity to interact with the facilitator. Assignment responses should be submitted within the respective due dates.

Assessment and grading

Participants will be graded based on their online participation and completion of activities. A certificate of completion and

an e-badge will be awarded to all those who complete a minimum of 75% of all online activities (lessons, quizzes, discussion forums). The percentage of completion will be measured automatically online as the participant goes through the course.

In addition, participants need to obtain a passing mark of minimum 7/10 on the post-test.

Course duration

6 weeks

Level of effort: 4 hours per week

Course schedule

Week 1	Health systems - an overview Access to medicines Introduction to the supply chain cycle
Week 2	Selection of essential medicines Quantification of medicines
Week 3	Basic principles of medicines procurement Inventory management Warehousing and distribution
Week 4	Rational use of medicines Quality assurance of medicines
Week 5	Human resources for SCM Monitoring and evaluation of supply chain systems
Week 6	Health systems strengthening from a SCM perspective Course completion