

The availability of medicines and vaccines is critical to the provision of quality care. Essential medicines need to be of assured quality, regularly available and affordable to those who need them, especially the poor and disadvantaged who are the most vulnerable to illness.

An appropriate use of medicines, especially antibiotics, by IMCI-trained health providers has been described in the Region, similarly to that shown in the IMCI multi-country evaluation. This contributes to reducing waste and improving drug availability for those cases which really need them. It ensures that limited resources are properly used, whether they are provided by the health system or come from the household.

As with medicines, vaccines also need to be regularly available, together with the equipment and supplies required to store and deliver (cold chain) and administer them (syringes, needles) properly.

In addition, the list of other supplies required for IMCI at primary health care is short. It includes basic items, such as items required to weigh the child and take his or her temperature, count the respiratory rate, prepare oral rehydration salts solution, counsel the mother (home care counselling card) and record and report information.

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