The objectives of WHO's essential medicines and pharmaceutical policies programme are to save lives and improve health by ensuring the quality, efficacy, safety and rational use of medicines, including traditional medicines. It promotes equitable and sustainable access to essential medicines particularly for the poor and disadvantaged.

Ensuring that quality essential medicines and health products are available in sufficient quantities and affordable to the population requires functioning regulatory and procurement system, as well as legal provisions for universal health coverage, governance and efficient management of resources. WHO is working with countries to promote and strengthen these functions.

WHO supports countries to formulate evidence-based policies and ensure good practice and good governance throughout the supply chain from selecting the right products to using them correctly. It also develops tools to assess situations, monitor and measure progress on access to quality health products.

WHO Model Lists of Essential Medicines

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