AIDSFree SUCCESS STORY

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Electronic Logistics System Gives Pharmacist More Time with Clients

Lusaka, Zambia—Michelo, a pharmacist, recalls the “before” and “after” of logistics management at Chainama Hills College Hospital in Lusaka. When she started at the hospital in 2014, she had to order essential medicines manually, using the paper-based logistics management information system. In February 2016, with support from the Strengthening High Impact Interventions for an AIDS-free Generation (AIDSFree) Project, the hospital switched to an electronic logistics management information system (eLMIS).

It’s a huge improvement. “The challenges I experience with the eLMIS cannot be compared to the challenges I used to experience with the manual system,” Michelo says. “The eLMIS is a wonderful tool which is second to none.”

Back in 2014, Michelo had to fill in two separate, onerous paper-based forms every month to request medicines and supplies needed at Chainama Hospital. On one form, she had to report on every medicine listed, though only two of were among the 31 “tracer drugs” that Chainama Hospital regularly ordered. To order the 29 other tracer drugs, she had to fill out a second form. With the eLMIS, health workers do not have to depend on pre-printed forms; instead, each facility develops, manages, reports on, and orders from its own list of essential medicines.

The eLMIS is a software application used to manage logistics data. It enables health facilities to automatically generate and transmit their monthly report and requisition from routine inventory management transactional data. The eLMIS can be customized to each health facility’s need. As part of a wider effort to deploy eLMIS, AIDSFree provides technical support to build the capacity of health workers.
and stakeholders to use this technology. At Chainama Hospital, for example, AIDSFree helped to configure medicines from the tracer list into the hospital system during a 2-day deployment and on-the-job training exercise.

This has greatly reduced time spent on tedious and time-consuming paperwork and freed more time for service providers to spend on other duties. These days, thanks to eLMIS, Michelo no longer has to report on drugs the hospital doesn’t use; and she doesn’t need to complete two separate reports. “As long as every transaction performed is updated in the system during the month, the only thing one needs to do, in order to report at the end of the month, is to perform a physical count of drugs, update eLMIS, and then submit the report.”

Also, Michelo says, entering transactions on drugs electronically is much faster than compiling them manually. She remembers clearly that it used to take her three days just to enter the information from the stock control card onto the government-issued order forms. Physically counting the drugs and updating the eLMIS takes her only a few hours, so that she has more time to spend directly with her clients. That makes her smile. “The eLMIS is the best thing that has ever happened to the logistics system,” she says.

Chainama Hospital is only one of 258 sites benefiting from deployment of the eLMIS Facility Edition. The eLMIS activity began as a pilot in 48 facilities in 2014, and was rolled out to 210 high-volume facilities one year later. With the support of USAID and PEPFAR, AIDSFree is currently rolling out eLMIS countrywide with a plan to expand coverage to more than 600 sites by 2019.

*The eLMIS activity began in November 2016 under the USAID | DELIVER PROJECT and SCMS, and transitioned to the AIDSFree Project in 2016. It continues to be funded by the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief through the United States Agency for International Development.*

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