

# SCMS

## IN BRIEF



## In Ethiopia, from zero to hero in supply chain management

Seka Health Center is located in southwest Ethiopia, about 365km from the capital Addis Ababa, and has close to 1000 sites that provide antiretroviral treatment.

Two years ago, the health center faced a number of challenges when implementing the Integrated Pharmaceutical Logistics System (IPLS), which is a system that seeks to introduce new reporting methods to improve the quality and quantity of data needed for making decisions about what kinds of medicines and other supplies to purchase and deliver to sites around the country.

As with other sites, SCMS sought to support the implementation of this system by training the management and technical staff, offering follow-up supportive supervision, and providing practical demonstrations of the new requirements. However, this health center had substandard performance in implementing IPLS and failed to prepare and submit reports on time. Contributing factors to the reporting challenges were disorganized storage, congested space, and a shortage of shelving to organize pharmaceutical products.

As part of our country-wide support efforts, SCMS has organized regional and sub-regional review meetings to share best practices from high-performing sites. In organizing such a gathering, SCMS hoped that this sort of peer interaction would support low-performing sites, such as the Seka Health Center, to engage more actively in improving the implementation of the new system, which includes reporting as well as storage and management practices.

In order to assess the implementation of IPLS at health centers, SCMS has used a series of indicators covering storage, reporting, management, and ownership. In June 2011, before the meeting, the Seka Health Center was ranked as a low performer. The meeting was an eye opener for the management at the health center and was a spark for positive change. Shortly after the review meeting, Seka Health Center management instructed staff members on actions to improve performance regarding IPLS implementation.



Immediately, staff made visible improvements in storage condition, record keeping, and availability of reference materials. A standard room became the pharmacy. Five pallets and three wooden shelves allowed products to be taken off the floor and organized. Folders were opened for filing copies of reporting forms in the store. For future reference and use, the health center compiled and kept collections of different reference materials that had been provided during trainings.

From June 2012 to date, Seka health center has moved from a low grade to 100 percent in all indicators of progress regarding IPLS implementation. The reporting rate jumped from zero to 100 percent using the Report and Requisition Form (RRF) regularly and timely while management showed 100 percent commitment in running the health center efficiently from the previous 50 percent.

Not only did storage and organization improve, but the arrangement of pharmaceutical products on shelves was so neatly done that it has since served as a model for other health facilities in the zone and region. Seka Health Center further scaled up this good pharmacy practice by providing IPLS orientations to eight other health centers in the district. Seka Health Center has not only been a model of improvement, but has also radiated best practice through commitment and training at its own initiative.

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the US Agency for International Development or the United States government.

## ABOUT SCMS

The Supply Chain Management System (SCMS) was established to collaborate within country and global partners to ensure a reliable, cost-effective and secure supply of high quality medicines and health products for HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment. SCMS is funded as part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Visit us at [www.scms.pfscm.org](http://www.scms.pfscm.org).

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