

U.S. Ambassador pledges continuous support for strengthening the public health supply chain in Côte d'Ivoire

“USAID’s Supply Chain Management System project is a crucial piece of the American Government’s efforts to serve patients living with HIV/AIDS in Côte d’Ivoire through the PEPFAR initiative,” said His Excellency Terence McCulley, the U.S. Ambassador to Côte d’Ivoire during his visit to Supply Chain Management System (SCMS) regional offices in the district of Man in the Tonkpi region in November 19, 2014. “Every aspect of PEPFAR’s response depends on a reliable, responsive and sustainable supply chain system.”

SCMS has been in Man since the beginning of 2014 with the Decentralized Supply Chain Management (D-SCM) project, which is working to improve supply chain management at the local level. D-SCM provides technical assistance to reduce stockout rates, delivery delays and logistical challenges, and to improve the product distribution system from district depots to service delivery points (SDPs).

The SCMS office in Man is one of five sub-offices (the others are in Abengourou, Abidjan, Bouaké, and Gagnoa) implementing the D-SCM project, covering



Dagnogo L. Amara, District Health Officer for the Man district, explains to U.S. Ambassador McCulley the challenges being faced by health facilities in the Man district

four regions and 16 districts. These offices work closely with regional and district pharmacists to increase the availability of HIV/AIDS products and essential medicines at SDPs by building supply chain management capacity of regional pharmacists, health district pharmacy managers, regional and general hospitals and health centers.

The Ambassador also visited the Ministry of Health’s (MOH) regional health office. SCMS assisted in improving the infrastructure of the health office (air conditioning, Wi-Fi, IT equipment), which significantly

improved the quality of work.

The Tonkpi region “is one of the regions most affected by HIV, with a prevalence rate of 3.6 percent,” said Dr. Inza Seydou Doumbia, Director of the MOH regional health office. “The support of PEPFAR and USAID to the region through SCMS significantly improved access to antiretroviral therapy for people living with HIV. Since the engagement of SCMS, there has been a noticeable improvement in supply chain management for health products that considerably reduced stockouts. SCMS provides us with support on data validation, supervision and logistics,” he added.

Despite the significant supply chain management improvements, the district pharmacy in Man is experiencing significant storage challenges. Currently, boxes of products are stocked in the lobby of the local health office under poor conditions. SCMS introduced improvements such as use of stock cards and charts for expiring products, which is increasing efficiency, but more space and process improvements are needed.

To address space limitations, SCMS developed a proposal for increasing the storage capacity of the Man district pharmacy by renovating an existing garage structure on-site. This will increase total space from 201 square meters to 309 square meters and will provide the district pharmacy with storage space equipped to modern standards. This is the first of 15 planned renovations to be completed by June 2015.

During his visit, the Ambassador assured regional and district representatives that the U.S. government will continue to support efforts to increase availability of drugs and other pharmaceuticals in the Tonkpi region’s hospitals and health centers, and will continue to strengthen the logistics management information system for health products. He confirmed that after installing the regional pharmacists as an intermediary level of supervision to bridge the gap between the 82 district pharmacies and the central level there will be ongoing support from the U.S. Government to build their capacity to better manage their activities.

“While there still is more to be done, we are already seeing some early successes with USAID’s work to improve the supply chain systems, like helping to reform the central medical store’s organizational structure and breaking ground on an innovative ‘Warehouse-in-a-Box’ facility,” said the Ambassador. “If there is a sustainable and reliable commodity supply chain all the way to the clinic and patient level, any sort of pharmaceutical and medical commodity can be provided. The American Government’s aim is that this will bring lasting benefits to all patients in Côte d’Ivoire, whether HIV positive or those seeking care for other illnesses.”



The district pharmacy in Man

