QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following were questions asked in the chat box during the webinar which we did not address due to time limitations. Both speakers have graciously provided their written answers as below. We hope the answers will be useful.

Question 1

Do the speakers think the effectiveness of track & trace can be improved by incorporating some methods utilised in contact tracing during this pandemic? Can the pharmaceutical supply chain tap into some of the technological infrastructure created during this pandemic?

Mr. Goh Chiang Fein: Tapping into any technological infrastructure would be helpful to the healthcare supply chain if it contains standardised and trusted data provided and submitted brand owners/supply chain stakeholders, which can be met as long as the track and trace standard identity is standardized for data sharing.

Mr. Anthony Tann: Agree fully with Mr Goh. The model is similar to contact tracing. The key here is trusted data, standardisation and a centralised data warehouse where it can be shared, traced and analysed. Once data is standardized and shared among the various stakeholders, then analysis becomes meaningful especially in leading indicators to help assess risks and plan possible proactive actions to mitigate vulnerabilities like shortages and quality issues especially substandard and falsified medicines leaking into the supply chain.

Question 2

Is this (GS1) like a digital identity/ passport for the product which is unique to the product?

Mr. Goh Chiang Fein: Yes and no, a product must first have an identity that is unique, standardised and recognised globally, to gain a unique digital identity it must be authenticated, interoperable and recognised through a digital platform or marketplace.

Question 3

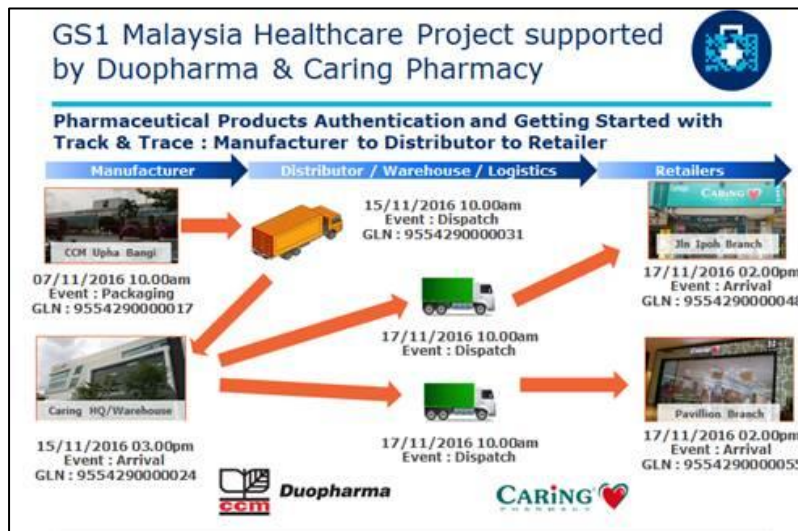**How can GS1 help in combating counterfeit products?**

Mr. Goh Chiang Fein: This is a global problem which requires a global solution. To be able to offer a global solution, we need a standard that applies globally and all parties – governments, customs, trade bodies, manufacturers – need to work in collaboration in achieving end-to-end supply chain visibility on a many-to-many basic, supported by global standard based repository, enterprise data management, continuous electronic synchronization of uniform data interoperability which would speed up responsiveness to effectively address complex integrity issues such as counterfeit and sub-standard products.

Mr. Anthony Tann: Here I will add that end to end visibility and traceability to include upstream supply chain – active and non-active ingredients, other raw materials e.g. packaging materials etc.

Question 4

To our valued speakers, what are your thoughts on the Track & Trace implementation readiness in Malaysia for pharmaceutical products? What are the aspects that we should focus on?
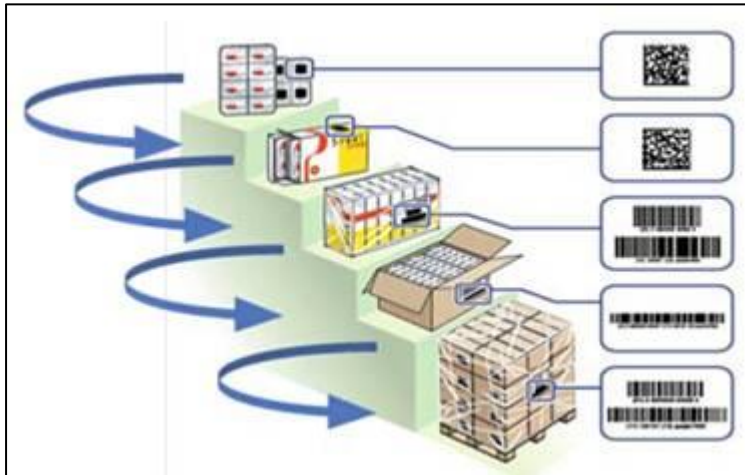
Mr. Goh Chiang Fein: GS1 Malaysia works closely with government agencies and industry associations, such as KPDNHEP, NPRA & MOH, MITI to encourage the adoption of GS1 Standards and Keys in the entire supply chain and enable efficient and seamless tracking and tracing of products. We have collaborated with notable industry leaders such as AEON, Duopharma Biotech and Caring Pharmacy who are members and partners of GS1 Malaysia to formulate and implement pilot programs that showcase the greater use of GS1 standards in traceability. Please find a few examples below:

Question 5

Is the GS1 code able to trace up to the packaging material?

Mr. Goh Chiang Fein: Yes, GS1 unique identifiers are used to uniquely identify trade items at all levels in the supply chain. Kindly see an example below or refer to slide 10 on the GS1 Malaysia's slide deck.

Question 6

How can GS1 help the country in securing only registered products? We all know that there many counterfeit products in the country.

Mr. Goh Chiang Fein: This is attainable long-term ambition through full track & trace implementation using GS1 Standards throughout the supply chain, with the inclusion of static and dynamic product information on product labelling, and the secure and seamless sharing of information between stakeholders. The goal setting has to be a dynamic and continuous process, rather than a one-off event.

Kindly refer to slide 14 on GS1 Malaysia's slide deck.

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