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# SASB response Counterfeit Drugs

April 2021

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## Introduction

Two billion people around the world lack access to necessary medicines, vaccines, medical devices and other health products, creating a vacuum that is too often filled by substandard, falsified products and products secured through illicit supply chains and threaten the safety of all patients, including the most vulnerable in society. The problem continues to grow as the frequency and sophistication of these threats increases.

AstraZeneca is committed to working towards a future where everyone has access to sustainable healthcare solutions. We take a holistic and collaborative approach to ensure that all our patients have access to genuine products and are not subjected to disruption caused by criminal activity. The goal of our security strategy is to protect:

- Patient access to critical medicines when they need them
- Patients from the threat of counterfeit medicines
- The reassurance that our brand brings to patients

## Impact on health

We focus on the prevention of illegal activity on any of our products by:

- Embedding and prioritising product security throughout all of our production and supply activities
- Assessing all our supplier and partner security capabilities during initial engagement and through ongoing assurance programmes
- Product Security governance oversight across the end to end supply chain

## Traceability

Through the implementation of a range of additional anti-counterfeiting measures on our packaging and products, we continue to go above and beyond compliance with serialization and traceability legislations introduced by health authorities around the globe

## Investigations

We triage and record every report of illegal trade in AstraZeneca product. We confirm cases of counterfeit product, illegal diversion or theft and report them at the earliest opportunity to domestic regulatory bodies, and the World Health Organization (WHO) and to law enforcement agencies, where appropriate. Where possible, we fully investigate confirmed incidents. In 2020, we initiated a number of seizures and legal proceedings, including in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

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## Advocacy and collaboration

We believe that by virtue of strong partnerships and good education, we can disrupt criminal activities that threaten the wellbeing of patients. We collaborate with a range of industry trade associations and non-profit organizations to educate, share intelligence and advocate for best practice. Our world leading security experts:

- Work closely with The Pharmaceutical Security Institute to identify cases of illegal trade and coordinate investigations
- Work closely with GS1 and Pharmaceutical Distribution Security Alliance to advocate for industry standards
- Support health authorities across the globe pilot traceability solutions
- Advise the WHO on key considerations for implementing affordable and effective traceability systems in developing countries
- Liaise with international law enforcement bodies such as Interpol and the World Customs Organization, as well as domestic law enforcement agencies
- Report all cases of illegal diversion, theft (within the AstraZeneca supply chain) and counterfeiting to the domestic regulatory body in which the incident took place. Reporting all confirmed incidents – wherever in the world they occurred – of illegal diversion, theft (within the AZ supply chain) and counterfeiting to the WHO for onward dissemination to Ministries of Health via rapid alerts
- Collaborate closely with our peers across industry to ensure that knowledge which may help to safeguard patients everywhere is disseminated for the greater good.

We urge patients to:

- Be alert to the possibility of illegally traded medicines. If anyone is concerned that their AstraZeneca medicine may not be genuine they can contact their doctor (physician), pharmacist (or other healthcare professional) or health authority. They can also contact AstraZeneca through our website
- Protect themselves from illegally traded medicines by obtaining their medicines only from licensed and regulated outlets and by avoiding unregulated sources on the internet
- Be vigilant when examining their medicines, paying attention to altered or unsealed packaging or changes in the product packaging
- Educate themselves on industry campaigns such as Fight the Fakes, a website designed to raise awareness among patients, healthcare professionals and regulators