

GS1 India organised a conference on **"Harmonisation of 2D barcodes on Pharmaceutical Drugs"** at the India Habitat Center, New Delhi, on January 12, 2023, to provide guidance to the pharmaceutical manufacturers and help them comply with the regulation related to barcoding issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The conference was attended by **150+** delegates from the top **300** brands who needed to comply with the guidelines.



Mr. Swaminathan, CEO of GS1 India, set the context for the conference with his welcome address. He highlighted how harmonisation of product codes is critical to uniquely identify the pharmaceutical drug and achieve visibility in the supply chain. The industry needs to look at the implementation of the notification beyond the regulatory requirement and see how it can benefit all stakeholders like hospitals, pharmacies, and chemists.

Mr. Sudarshan Jain, Secretary General of the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), stated that the pharmaceutical industry faces inventory visibility challenges due to its complexity, and that the use of a uniform barcode will help the industry.



Dr. Girdhar Gyani, Director General of AHPI, stated that standards-based processes are essential for quality care and patient safety, and how a standardised barcode will assist healthcare providers.



Dr. A.K. Pradhan, Joint Drug Controller of India, emphasised the need for ensuring quality drugs reach the end user and how the initiative of the government to get pharmaceutical manufacturers to implement QR codes will help in track and trace and drug authentication.



Dr. Vinod Kotwal, Member Secretary, NPPA, stated that the role of the NPPA is to ensure the availability of drugs. The pharma industry, due to its fragmented, opaque, and complex supply chain, had data residing in silos. The need is to have a standardised and harmonised system to track the availability of drugs.



A panel discussion involving multiple stakeholders in the healthcare supply chain was held. Panelists included Dr. Sanjeev Sharma, senior GM and clinical pharmacologist at Apollo, Capt. Sandhya Shankar Pandey, corporate chief of nursing at Fortis Healthcare, Mr. Ashok Nayak, CIO at IPCA Laboratories, and Mr. Amit Backliwal, co-founder of Pharmarack. The panel discussion was moderated by Mr. Deepak Sharma, Director and Co-Founder of Kanvic Consulting.



time manually processing prescriptions and managing an inefficient expiry management process. Offline pharmacies and chemists have been limited in their technology initiatives because of their size, resulting in a lack of visibility of their inventory. Retail pharmacies are more concerned about margins and footfalls. Digitization and uniform product coding are important to achieve supply chain visibility.

Thus, from the various inputs by the panellists, it was concluded by the moderator that to achieve supply chain visibility and have end-to-end tracking, the use of standardised and harmonised barcodes on drugs is essential.

Panel discussion was focused around identifying industry challenges and how they are being addressed, technology and digitisation initiatives within their organizations & lastly input from the panellists on the process for catalogue and item master creation.

The discussions revealed that Pharma Companies lacked visibility beyond the stockist in the supply chain, and the data required for collaboration with multiple stakeholders was stored in silos. From the hospital's perspective, a lack of standardisation and barcoding has resulted in disconnected systems, making drug tracking impossible. Due to a lack of barcodes, pharmacies must spend a significant amount of



Technical Session

Mr. Bijoy Peter, Head Technical Services, GS1 India, presented on how the pharmaceutical manufacturers implement the notification using GS1 standards, which will benefit all stakeholders rather than being purely compliance-driven.

[VIEW PRESENTATION](#)

Virtual Session

Mr. Grant Courtney, Founder of Smarter and Safer Products, shared the experiences of the pharma industry for Traceability implementation in Europe through EFPIA and suggested ways in which the industry needs to collaborate to ensure a successful rollout.



Innovations in Packaging

Mr. Prabir Das, Head of Packaging at Mylan Laboratories, presented on the various innovations happening in the packaging of pharmaceutical products.

This was followed by presentations by solution providers.



We have created a survey, and your response will help us prepare the reference guide for implementation. We appreciate your participation in our survey.

[START THE SURVEY](#)