

## PRESS STATEMENT

22 June 2023

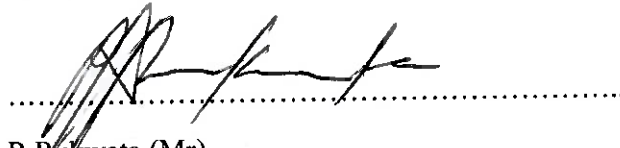
### **RE: REGULATORY ALERT REGARDING UNAUTHORISED BUYING AND SELLING OF SPECIALLY RESTRICTED PREPARATIONS AND THALIDOMIDE.**

Harare – The Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (MCAZ) is mandated to protect public health by enforcing the Medicines and Allied Substances Control Act (MASCA) and relevant regulations. The Authority notes with concern increasing reports concerning buying and selling of Specially Restricted Preparations particularly Isotretinoin and Thalidomide.

Isotretinoin and Thalidomide formulations have teratogenic effects when taken by women of childbearing age. A teratogen causes foetal abnormalities resulting in birth defects including death. Isotretinoin has major effects such as learning disabilities, psychomotor and mental retardation in children exposed prenatally. Thalidomide was used as a remedy for morning sickness between 1957 and 1961 but adversely resulted in shortening of proximal limbs in born children. Other effects included damage to the face, genitalia and internal organs including heart and kidney. Due to these severe adverse effects both medicines may only be prescribed by specialist practitioners, stored and dispensed from pharmacy departments of central hospitals or other facilities duly authorised to do so by the Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe.

The Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (MCAZ) is strongly advising members of the public against buying and selling of Isotretinoin and Thalidomide without first consulting a specialist dermatologist or oncologist respectively. If a member of the public procured any of the two medicines without consulting a specialist dermatologist or oncologist, you are required to report to the Authority for assistance as you may be at risk.

### **MEDICINES CONTROL AUTHORITY OF ZIMBABWE**



R Rukwata (Mr)  
**DIRECTOR GENERAL**  
/rsm