Cold chain management is critical in ensuring patient benefit and safety by maintaining product quality and integrity. Cold chain management has developed into a complex science that affects all stakeholders across the pharmaceutical value chain. These stakeholders have a responsibility to make certain that the cold chain is maintained, right up until the point that the medicine reaches the patient. The importance of these issues, as well as the complexities posed by both the developing science, standards, and the infrastructure and transport variables, have inspired industry representatives to collaborate, to improve cold chain management standards in South Africa.

In 2009, RTT Medical and Strategnos delivered a presentation entitled Cold facts, to a group of pharmaceutical manufacturers and other interested parties. Following this, and considerable interest expressed by the industry in the IQPC Cold Chain Conference held earlier this year, Kirti Narsai of PIASA facilitated a meeting of all interested parties. This culminated into the establishment of the Cold Chain Forum of South Africa.

Work streams have been formed. The intention is that these will assist the industry to better manage the challenges faced during the receipt, storage, and distribution of temperature-controlled products.

Purpose of the forum

- To create a platform to share professional and technical information as it pertains to the cold chain and temperature control of pharmaceutical and related products,
- To prioritise challenges encountered throughout the pharmaceutical industry supply chain,
- To facilitate cost-effective, compliant, total supply chain solutions, including the control of last-mile distribution of all pharmaceutical and related products,
- To educate all role players, in order to continue to provide safe, effective, and quality pharmaceutical products.

Scope

- Broadly pharmaceutical, and also includes related industries
- Supply chain within the pharmaceutical and related industries
- Regulatory and standards
- Public sector
- Hospital groups
- Pharmacy groups
- Wholesale pharmacy.

Steering committee

- Chairperson: Theano Kosmas, Strategnos
- Secretary: Kirti Narsai, PIASA
- Technical Operations: Eben Zandberg, Uti Pharma
- Compliance: Sarantis Kosmas, Strategnos
- Regulatory: Brian Greenblatt, Sanofi Pasteur
- Education: Mike Harrigan, RTT Group