

# ORION@MSH: The Use of Pharmaceutical Management Software in Resource-Limited Settings

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## Overview

Resource-limited countries often lack the necessary means to manage pharmaceutical procurement, inventory, and distribution effectively. They also lack ready access to resources needed to build this capacity. Making available low-cost software, specific to their needs, is one possible approach that might help alleviate this situation.

MSH, in collaboration with 3i Infotech, created software to address this gap. ORION@MSH incorporates pharmaceutical supply best practices for resource-limited settings, and comprises six interlinked modules spanning from accounting to warehousing. The software was successfully piloted at the Pharmaceutical Procurement Service of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (PPS/OECS) and St. Lucia's Central Medical Store in May/June 2004. Over the following nine months, it was rolled out to OECS partner Central Medical Stores of St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, and Grenada, as well as the Mission for Essential Medical Supplies (MEMS) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). Implementations in Ghana at GSMFEL (the CAREshop franchise), GSMF International, and the Catholic mission sector are currently underway. Additional installations are planned for the Central Medical Stores of Antigua and Montserrat, Pharmacie de la Santé Publique (PSP) of Côte d'Ivoire, Medical Stores Limited (MSL) of Zambia, and Central Medical Stores (PROMESS) of Haiti.

Although ORION@MSH may not be appropriate for smaller clinics and drug shops, MSH is looking at an alternative for these locations that will fit better in terms of complexity, yet still be able to give these sites the results they might expect from an enterprise software package such as ORION@MSH.

Additionally, this alternative will be able to exchange data with ORION@MSH so that these smaller locations will be able to interact with their peers who are using ORION@MSH.



## ORION@MSH Installation

The actual on-site installations usually take about five weeks and are preceded by five to six weeks of pre-installation activities.

### Post-Installation Activities

- Weekly follow-up calls are arranged through MSH and conducted with implementers from 3i, MSH, and the installation site.
- Help desk support for ORION@MSH is based out of Chennai, India, and is conducted over the Internet. Sites are set up with a Web site through which all errors and problems are logged, and responses and actions tracked. Using pcAnywhere software, 3i accesses the ORION@MSH server at a specific implementation site and corrects the error. The site then checks that the error has been corrected and indicates this on the Web site.
- A post-installation visit by 3i and MSH staff after six or seven months is recommended.

Pre-Installation Activities	
Week 1	Perform on-site assessment
Week 2	Prepare and sign MOU
Week 3	Implement required TA (if any)
Week 4	Purchase hardware/software
Week 5	Extract and prepare data from client site
Week 6	Fill out detailed process forms
Installation Activities	
Week 1	Explanation of all functionality found in each module
Week 2	Training on each module
Week 3	Finish training; practice using software
Week 4	"Go live" period for system
Week 5	Troubleshooting and transition phase

## ORION@MSH in Ghana

In April 2005, the first installations of ORION@MSH in Ghana began at the offices of GSMF Enterprises Limited (GSMFEL) and the Department of Health, National Catholic Secretariat's Catholic Pharmaceutical Service. This was followed by installations beginning in May 2005 at the office of GSMF International, the parent company for GSMFEL, the Accra Catholic Drug Centre, and the Sunyani Diocesan Hospital Pharmacy (DHP). There will be another installation of ORION@MSH in Ghana under SEAM, occurring at the offices of the NCS, which is adopting the ORION@MSH Accounting module as its organization-wide accounting package. Installations at other DHPs in the Catholic system are being explored.



ORION@MSH was developed by MSH's Strategies for Enhancing Access to Medicines (SEAM) Program, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.