



**Delese Mimi Darko** is a distinguished professional in the field of pharmaceuticals and health regulation, with an illustrious 28-year career dedicated to ensuring the quality and safety of food and health products. Holding a Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, she furthered her education by attaining a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Northampton. Dr. Darko's commitment to academic excellence is underscored by her Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Pharmacology from KNUST, Kumasi.

Ascending through the ranks of the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Dr. Darko made history by becoming the first female Chief Executive Officer in 2017. Under her visionary leadership, Ghana achieved significant milestones in medicine safety. Notably, the country joined the WHO Programme for International Drug Monitoring in 2001, solidifying its commitment to ensuring the safety of medicines used within its borders.

Dr. Darko's impact extended to the regulation of clinical trials, positioning Ghana as a leader in this domain within the West African sub-region. Her efforts elevated the FDA's status, prompting regulators from numerous African countries to visit Ghana for benchmarking purposes, particularly in the areas of medicine regulation, clinical trials, and pharmacovigilance.

A trailblazer, Dr. Darko spearheaded the establishment of expert Technical Advisory Committees for Pharmacovigilance and Clinical Trials. This move, coupled with her agency's global leadership, led to the WHO organizing its annual meeting of Medicine experts in Ghana in 2010, showcasing the country's expertise on the international stage.

Dr. Darko's portfolio expanded in 2012/2013 to include the regulation of vaccines, biotechnology-derived medicinal products, and blood-related items. This initiative made Ghana the sole country in Sub-Saharan Africa with a comprehensive regulatory framework for blood.

International collaborations, including a key partnership with the UK MHRA, underscore Dr. Darko's commitment to global medicine safety standards. Her innovative initiatives, such as the establishment of Patient Safety Centers and the launch of the Med Safety App, demonstrate a forward-thinking approach to enhancing patient

safety in Ghana.

Her leadership has garnered support from esteemed international partners, including the UKDFID, WHO, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, GAVI, WAHO, and the International Aids Vaccine Initiative (IAVI). Dr. Darko's strategic vision also played a pivotal role in the FDA's designation as a Regional Center of Regulatory Excellence in Medicines Safety, Clinical Trials, and Drug Registration.

Beyond her responsibilities at the FDA, Dr. Darko chairs the WHO African Vaccines Regulatory Forum and actively participates in various international and local committees, shaping global standards for vaccine safety and pharmaceutical regulation.

In recognition of her outstanding contributions, Dr. Delese Mimi Darko has received prestigious awards, including the United Nations award for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease and Glitz Africa's award for Ghana Women of the Year Honors 2019 (Excellence in Health). Her accolades also include the Ghana Business Standard Awards for Female Business Leader of the Year 2019 and the Advertising Association of Ghana Special Recognition award for her role in regulating FDA-regulated products. Dr. Darko's exemplary work has not only contributed to the growth of research and local manufacturing industries in Ghana but has also positioned her as a respected figure in global pharmaceutical regulation.