Asia-Pacific · Medicines, tobacco, alcohol

China

Every insured drug carries a unique traceability code. Since 1 July 2025 hospitals and pharmacies must scan it before they can claim reimbursement, and from 1 January 2026 all institutions must collect and upload the codes. Full national standardisation is planned by the end of 2026.

THE REGIME

SYSTEM	**Drug traceability code (NMPA / National Healthcare Security Administration)**
CODE ON THE PRODUCT	20-digit drug traceability code or GS1-compatible code on each unit pack
AGGREGATION	Yes, cases are aggregated.

STEPS FOR A SUPPLIER

- [ ] Register your products and GTINs in the national system: Drug traceability code.
- [ ] Print a unique serialised code on every saleable pack.
- [ ] Verify every code on the line; aggregate into cases and pallets where required.
- [ ] Report production and shipments to the national system.

ON THE LINE, BEFORE THE FIRST SHIPMENT

- [ ] The data in the code is agreed: GTIN, serial number, batch, expiry date or crypto tail, as the rules for your product group require.
- [ ] A verifier has graded printed samples (ISO/IEC 15415 for 2D codes) before the first shipment.
- [ ] A camera after the printer reads every code at line speed, and packs with an unreadable code are rejected.
- [ ] Records show which code went on which pack, case and pallet, ready for the report to the system.

DATES AHEAD

31 Dec 2026	Full national standardisation of traceability codes (plan)

SOURCES

1. Cisema: drug traceability code 2025: https://cisema.com/en/drug-traceability-code-regulation-2025/
2. China Daily: NHSA on traceability codes: https://chinadailyhk.com/hk/article/601437