



LAUNCH

GLOBAL PATIENT SAFETY CHALLENGE: Clean Care is Safer Care

13 October 2005

World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

Health care-associated infection is a major issue in patient safety as it affects millions of people worldwide and complicates the delivery of patient care. Infections contribute to patient deaths and disability, promote resistance to antibiotics and generate additional expenditure to those already incurred by the patients' underlying disease.

The World Alliance for Patient Safety addresses the problem of health care-associated infection through the Global Patient Safety Challenge programme with the theme "Clean Care is Safer Care".

The Launch

The launch of the Global Patient Safety Challenge will be held on Thursday, 13 October 2005. The morning session will take place at WHO Headquarters in Geneva and the afternoon session at Geneva's University Hospitals. As part of the launch, the WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care (Advanced Draft) will be made available.

The event will build on the momentum generated by the Briefing to introduce the Global Patient Safety Challenge during the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly.

The launch aims to strengthen the commitment of interested Member States to the Global Patient Safety Challenge and the critical role of hand hygiene in controlling the spread of health care-associated infection and multiresistant pathogens. The launch proceedings will be chaired by Sir Liam Donaldson, Chair of the World Alliance for Patient Safety.

The central launch site at WHO Headquarters in Geneva will connect via video-links to several sites in the African, South-East Asian, European, Eastern Mediterranean and Western Pacific Regions of WHO.

Participants

The launch will bring together around 250 participants representing interested parties at the highest level, including senior government officials, representatives from international and governmental agencies and professional associations, civil society organizations, academic and medical institutions, and WHO departments.

Sir Liam Donaldson, Chair of the Alliance and Chief Medical Officer of England, and Chief Medical Adviser of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern

Ireland will chair the launch of the Global Patient Safety Challenge. The morning session will include keynote speeches by high-level country representatives, academics and WHO.

Following these presentations, the event site will connect via video-link to several sites in the African, Eastern Mediterranean, European, South-East Asian and Western Pacific Regions of WHO.

During the afternoon session at Geneva's University Hospitals, the event will connect via video-links to sites in North and South America, including sites of major associations of health-care professionals.

The launch will be open to journalists and foreign correspondents in Geneva.

Video-links

The overall objective is to encourage countries to organize a national event with the theme "Clean Care is Safer Care" with a focus on addressing health care-associated infection. It is proposed that ministers of health or their representatives express their support for WHO's *Global Patient Safety Challenge* programme theme "*Clean Care is Safer Care*".

It is proposed that the national event links via videoconferencing with the launch of the Global Patient Safety Challenge that will start at 8:45 AM (Geneva time). The national event would participate with a high-level speech, a statement pledging support to "*Clean Care is Safer Care*".

National video-linked events should actively encourage the participation of their local press and media to cover the event in their country.

Countries pledging

The implementation of the Global Patient Safety Challenge comprises three major strategies:

- global and national "Clean Care is Safer Care" campaigns
- country statements pledging to address health care-associated infection
- testing implementation in districts

As part of the implementation strategies, WHO Member States will be invited to make a formal statement pledging their support to implement actions to reduce health care-associated infection within their country and to share results and learning internationally.

The pledge will be a clear statement by the minister of health of a country interested in addressing health care-associated infection. The statement drafted by the country is likely to cover some of the following areas:

- acknowledge the importance of health care-associated infection,
- share with the WHO World Alliance for Patient Safety available information on this problem including surveillance data if appropriate,
- consider the adoption of WHO strategies and guidelines to tackle health care-associated infection,
- develop campaigns at national or sub-national levels for improving hand hygiene among health care providers.

The statement may also urge health professional bodies and associations to ask their members to promote the highest standards of practice and behaviour to reduce the risks of health care-associated infection.

Background on the Global Patient Safety Challenge for 2005-2006

The Global Patient Safety Challenge is a core element of the Alliance's work. A key component of the Challenge has been the development of the new WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care.

With hand hygiene as the cornerstone, the challenge aims to integrate a set of interrelated actions aimed at infection control and prevention drawn from existing WHO interventions, strategies and guidelines on infection control and prevention. These are: blood safety, injection safety, safe clinical practices, and safe water and sanitation in health care. Together, this package of interventions will be promoted by the Alliance to encourage its use in all Member States.

Hand hygiene, a very simple action, remains the primary measure to reduce health care-associated infection and the spread of antimicrobial resistance, enhancing safety of care across all settings, from advanced health care establishments to community health posts across countries. The new WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care are being developed in collaboration with experts from research and academic institutions worldwide and technical experts from WHO.

Venues:

Morning launch: World Health Organization, Executive Board Room, 20 avenue Appia, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland

Afternoon session: Geneva's University Hospitals, Marcel-Jenny Auditorium, 24 rue Micheli-du-Crest, 1211 Geneva 14, Switzerland