WHO Infection Prevention and Control Global Newsletter

13 February 2024

News from WHO headquarters

World Hand Hygiene Day – 5 May 2024
The theme for World Hand Hygiene Day (WHHD) this year is: “Highlighting the importance of promoting knowledge and building the capacity of health and care workers through innovative and impactful IPC training and education”. The main slogan, posed in the form of a question, is “Why is sharing knowledge about hand hygiene still so important?”
Access the main WHHD 2024 page here - find more information and the campaign products. The main campaign poster (launched in December 2023) is now available in all UN languages.

Launched for you now!

- A short teaser video to share with your colleagues, to engage people in getting ready for WHHD 2024 can be found here on the WHO YouTube channel - coming soon on other UN languages.

- Target audience posters aimed specifically at health and care workers, IPC professionals, policy- and decision-makers, the public.
  - Find the posters here, for you to start planning your campaign activities.
  - The posters in the five other UN languages will be available shortly.
- New downloadable banners – one for your email and one for your web pages, both are to help you promote the campaign with your networks. Please see here
Remember to use the campaign toolkit which can help with your planning and includes a timeline up until 5 May. Please also look for recent excellent products on hand hygiene from other organizations in this newsletter section “News from our partners”.

**Hand hygiene tips for patients**
Remember that the *WHO tips for patients* also exist among the WHO hand hygiene resources. This tool highlights actions, such as:
- asking if there is an initiative involving patients or a patient participation programme for hand hygiene;
- observing whether alcohol-based handrub dispensers, as well as sinks, soap and towels are available for health workers to readily use when caring for you; and
- whenever hand hygiene products are available, to start by thanking your doctor, nurse or other health worker for using them.

**Global IPC action plan and monitoring framework adopted by the WHO Executive Board**
A resolution on infection prevention and control (IPC) was presented and adopted by consensus at the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2022. The resolution included 13 calls to Member States to improve IPC at the national, subnational and facility levels, in line with the WHO-recommended core components for IPC programmes. It also requested the Director-General to develop a global strategy on IPC (GSIPC), a global action plan, and a monitoring framework in consultation with Member States and regional economic integration organizations.

The GSIPC was developed and subsequently adopted by the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly in May 2023.

The Draft global action plan and monitoring framework on IPC are designed to support and enable implementation of the WHO GSIPC and were both developed through an extensive consultative process including global and regional consultations with Member States, international experts and across the three levels of the WHO Secretariat. The draft global action plan on IPC proposes key and additional actions at the global, regional, national and subnational, as well as facility levels. For every action, indicators are proposed for Member States’ consideration. In addition, a set of core and additional targets have been identified for each of the levels.

The “Draft global action plan for infection prevention and control, 2024–2030: draft global action plan and monitoring framework” was considered by the WHO Executive Board at its 154th session in January 2024 and a decision was taken to recommend that it be adopted at the Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly this coming May.
The draft and its four supplementary annexes can be can be found [here](#).

**Multi-level global survey on IPC minimum requirements at both the national and health care facility level – deadline extension**
At the end of November, the WHO IPC Hub launched a [global survey on IPC minimum requirements at both the national and health care facility level](#).
The survey offers countries the opportunity to assess the status of implementation of the WHO minimum requirements for IPC programmes and to gather baseline information that will support the monitoring of some of the indicators that are included in the new monitoring framework of the global action plan 2024-2030 on IPC.

The survey is based on the following WHO IPC minimum requirements assessment tools:

- **Assessment tool of the minimum requirements for IPC programmes at the national level (IPCAT-MR)**, covering a total of 25 indicators.
- **Assessment tool on infection prevention and control minimum requirements for primary health care facilities**, covering a total of 26 indicators.
- **Assessment tool on IPC minimum requirements for secondary health care facilities**, covering a total of 37 indicators.
- **Assessment tool on IPC minimum requirements for tertiary health care facilities**, covering a total of 45 indicators.

The survey can be completed through the [WHO IPC global portal](https://www.who.int/ipc). It is available in English, French, Spanish and Russian and the end date has now been extended to 10 March 2024.

We strongly encourage you to participate and promote this survey among your colleagues!

Please send any enquiries to: [ipcportal@who.int](mailto:ipcportal@who.int).

**IPC in WHO Health Emergencies (WHE)**

The WHE Country Readiness Strengthening team recently held a workshop on infection prevention and control, to enhance sub-regional IPC readiness in the context of Ebola and Marburg disease outbreaks. This was held in Monrovia, Liberia, from 4–8 December 2023 and was the result of a collaboration between the Ministry of Health of Liberia, and the three levels of WHO. In addition to participants from Liberia, four other English-speaking countries - Ghana, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and South Africa - Ministries of Health and the WHO country offices were represented for a total of 56 participants. Funding for this workshop was received with thanks from USAID and the US CDC. Workshop objectives were as follows:

1. to develop an action plan for Ebola and Marburg disease outbreak readiness and response based on current contingency plans and latest guidance from WHO;
2. to introduce the new WHO Ebola and Marburg IPC guideline recommendations;
3. to identify tools and resources available to support implementation of the IPC Ebola/Marburg recommendations.

This 5-day workshop included presentations from the participating countries, a review of new guideline recommendations, and interactive sessions including a full-day simulation exercise held concurrently at two health facilities in Monrovia. The simulation exercise included four scenarios experienced during an Ebola or Marburg disease outbreak: i) screening, triage and isolation of suspect Ebola/Marburg cases ii) inpatient surveillance and patient management iii) waste and linen management in the context of Ebola and Marburg disease outbreaks iv) health and care worker exposure risk management.
Participants’ scores improved when comparing pre- and post-workshop tests results, and there was active and enthusiastic participation from all those who attended.

The workshop concluded successfully with each country presenting their roadmap for inclusion of IPC in contingency plans for emergencies and in particular, adoption of the WHO IPC guideline and key activities for Ebola and Marburg disease outbreaks.

A follow-up workshop in 1-2 years is anticipated to update on progress to date and continue with peer-to-peer learning, which the participants identified as one of the most valuable components of the workshop.

International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife 2023 evaluation report
A WHO evaluation of the IYONM from mid-2019 to mid-2021 was published on 11 December 2023 and can be read here. The 72nd World Health Assembly (in 2020) had designated The International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife (IYONM), so throughout 2020 and into 2021, WHO spearheaded a global campaign with key partners to celebrate the two professions and drive investments in nursing and midwifery towards strengthened health systems. A rapid online evaluation to try to understand some of the outcomes was undertaken primarily using web searches and reaching out to regional focal points.
News from WHO’s regional offices

WHO Regional Office for Europe (EURO)
WHO EURO has launched a new advocacy brief on IPC and its relationship with AMR. Find out more here about how efforts on these topics are progressing together in the European region.

WHO training event on infection prevention and control, Ukraine, December 2023. The Government of Ukraine has recently made considerable progress in strengthening national and facility level IPC programmes. Currently, each health care facility in Ukraine should have an IPC programme in place and at least one IPC specialist for every 250 inpatient beds. Since 2024, the WHO IPC minimum requirements will become mandatory for all health care facilities within with National Health Service of Ukraine. Although the national IPC programme has been improved over the past five years, the least implemented core components according to the results of IPCAT2 assessment are “education and monitoring”. To improve the knowledge and skills of IPC professionals, the WHO Country Office in Ukraine launched a training event for IPC professionals.
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia

IPC in Timor Leste

National IPC guidelines – The WHO Timor-Leste Country Office is providing technical support to the Ministry of Health in the development of context-specific national infection prevention and control guidelines for the prevention and management of infections in the health care settings of Timor-Leste. The guidelines will cover the eight WHO-recommended core components of IPC, with a set of standardized recommendations and protocols, including hand hygiene, disinfection, sterilization, waste management, strategies to prevent the transmission of health care-associated infections, etc. The guidelines will serve as a crucial tool to ensure uniform and effective infection prevention practices across the health care system, promoting the safety of both health care workers and patients in Timor-Leste.

WHO Global survey on minimum requirements of IPC – WHO Timor-Leste has been supporting the Ministry of Health in conducting a survey on the minimum requirements for IPC. The national-level survey was completed, and the facility-level survey is on-going in all the thirteen municipalities, and which covers more than sixty-five health care facilities across the country. The data will be used to assess the status of implementation of the minimum requirements for IPC programmes at the national and facility levels. A country report and action plan for improvement will be published. The survey results will also be entered into the global IPC portal.

Advocacy actions – In 2023, WHO Timor-Leste actively contributed to the strengthening of infection prevention and control infrastructure within health care facilities.
News from our partners

UN General Assembly resolution
A new UN General Assembly resolution entitled Sustainable, safe and universal water, sanitation, hygiene, waste and electricity services in health care facilities, was adopted in 2023. It emphasizes the critical role these services play in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and identifies the gaps in current global services. It also encourages Member States to integrate these services into national health planning and calls for improved international cooperation to support developing countries in this area. The resolution also highlights the need for cross-sectoral engagement, national roadmaps, adequate resourcing and regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure the provision of these essential services. It is available in English, 中文, Français, Español and Русский.

Africa Centres for Disease Control (Africa CDC)
Africa CDC has been hosting country-level workshops and visits and conducting scoping studies to support implementation of the IPC legal framework in several Member States including Cameroon, Liberia, Malawi and Nigeria. The African Union (AU) IPC Legal Framework was adopted and endorsed by the Heads of States and Government during the AU summit in 2022 and aims to provide guidelines and regulations for preventing and controlling infectious diseases. The Framework also aims to strengthen health care systems and safeguard public health. By empowering countries to improve their legal frameworks and effectively implement the IPC Legal Framework, Africa CDC aims to enhance infection prevention and control measures continent-wide. Through these efforts, laws can save lives by promoting pro-active measures, swift responses to outbreaks, and safeguarding the well-being of African individuals and communities.
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)
APIC have produced a toolkit for patient hand hygiene. This toolkit was developed by members of APIC’s 2023 Practice Guidance Committee as a resource for health care providers to help improve patient hand hygiene in different settings. With the importance of hand hygiene compliance by health care workers’ well established, this initiative has now been extended to patients. The objective is to provide a user-friendly toolkit that equips health care providers with essential tools and educational materials to educate and engage patients in the critical importance of hand hygiene.

The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA)
SHEA published updates to its Compendium of Strategies to Prevent Healthcare-Associated Infections in Acute Care Hospitals and which can be found here. The Compendium: 2022 Updates document provides acute-care hospitals with up-to-date, practical expert guidance to assist in prioritizing and implementing HAI prevention efforts. It is the product of a highly collaborative effort led by SHEA with IDSA, APIC, AHA, and The Joint Commission, with major contributions from representatives of organizations and societies with content expertise, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Association for Perioperative Registered Nurses (AORN), the Paediatric Infectious Disease Society (PIDS), the Society for Critical Care Medicine (SCCM), the Society for Hospital Medicine (SHM), the Surgical Infection Society (SIS). It was reviewed and endorsed or supported by fifteen national medical organizations. To note, the Compendium includes the “SHEA/IDSA/APIC Practice Recommendation: Strategies to prevent healthcare-associated infections through hand hygiene: 2022 Update” which can be used to support knowledge sharing activities associated with the WHO WHHD – 5 May 2024.