News from WHO headquarters

1. Countdown to 5 May 2021, World Hand Hygiene Day - Take your action now!

World hand hygiene Day (WHHD) is less than one week away; so now is the time to act! You can access our campaign web page to get all new campaign material in multiple languages and get involved!

The theme and ultimate goal for 5 May 2021 is to achieve effective hand hygiene action at the point of care. Accordingly, the 2021 World Hand Hygiene Day slogan and visual identity are as follows.
To achieve the campaign goal, WHO asks specific target audiences to play their roles through the following calls to action.

- **Health care workers:** Now more than ever, clean your hands at the point of care
- **IPC practitioners:** Be a champion and mentor for clean hands at the point of care
- **Facility managers:** Ensure hand hygiene supplies are available at every point of care
- **Policy-makers:** Invest now to ensure hand hygiene for all
- **Patients and families:** Help us to help you – please clean your hands
- **Vaccinators:** Clean your hands with every vaccine
- **Everyone:** Make clean hands your habit – it protects all of us

The campaign is also linked to three other ongoing WHO activities and initiatives of great importance and which are potentially of interest to you:

- Key WHO IPC guidance documents as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- the WHO and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Hand Hygiene for All Global Initiative (HH4A), which aims to achieve sustained improvement in hand hygiene practices as a whole-of-society approach to stop the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and sustain good practices beyond the current pandemic;
- designation of 2021 as the International Year of Health and Care Workers, which includes focusing on their protection through improved hand hygiene practices as part of a comprehensive package of infection prevention measures.

For your participation in the campaign, here are the critical activities that you should not miss:

- Participate in the *Faces of the campaign* initiative and send your videos/pictures while performing hand hygiene, selfie board or personalized campaign poster to https://5may.cleanhandssavelives.org. WHO will feature shots of this web wall with the *faces of the campaign* on its web page and social media on 5 May 2021;
- attend the global high-level event entitled “Effective hand hygiene at the point of care, now more than ever”, hosted by the WHO Deputy Director-General (DDG) and Professor Pittet on 5 May 2021 at 13:00-14:30 CET. Senior leaders from countries and key partner organizations will discuss how to make investments and improvement efforts to ensure effective hand hygiene action at the point of care. Find more information and register [here](#);
- participate in the 5 May technical webinar delivered by Professor Pittet and Professor Allegranzi on 4 May from 16:00 to 17:00 CET in French and again on 5 May 2021 from 15:00 to 16:00 CET in English (registrations [here](#));
- Follow WHO Facebook Live on hand hygiene on 4 May 2021 at 15:00 CET.

In addition, the WHO IPC Global Team encourages interested parties to:

- visit the [get involved](#) page and use the available posters and tools and follow further WHO’s proposals to participate in the campaign;
- review the [key facts and figures](#) and use scientific evidence to raise awareness about hand hygiene in your messages and presentations; a [campaign presentation](#) is available for you to use;
- promote registration of health care facilities in the WHO SAVE LIVES: clean your hands global campaign by signing up [here](#);
• watch and use the advocacy video from WHO DDG and Professor Pittet, with related short clips for specific target audiences.

2. International Day of the Midwife 2021
5 May is also the International Day of the Midwife and the theme this year is “Follow the data: invest in midwives”. There will be a one hour Zoom meeting (connection details below) introduced by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director General. This open event will include a short presentation on, followed by a short panel discussion of, the State of the Worlds Midwifery Report 2021. The WHO Nursing and Midwifery webpages can be found here.

Zoom: https://who.zoom.us/j/93187706382
Password: MidW0521
News from the WHO regions

WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
All the WHHD 2021 campaign materials are available here in Arabic. The WHO regional office for the Eastern Mediterranean has adapted the global theme, objectives, slogan, and campaign materials for WHHD 2021 to the regional context. Additional region-specific products and activities include a video message by the Regional Director’s (RD) and social media kits in the local languages of the EMRO countries. These resources will be disseminate through Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, EMRO Website. The RD’s video message will be circulated, with an accompanying letter, to Health ministers of all the countries of the region, other international organizations and to all WHO staff. A press release will also be shared to journalists in the Eastern Mediterranean region to improve visibility for WHHD.

Within the EMRO and country offices across the region WHHD will be promoted by displaying the main campaign poster as the background screen on all desk phones on 5 May and during the first week of May on the billboard on the front side of the EMRO premises.

Hand hygiene in Iran
A recent survey on hand hygiene performed by the Primary Health Care Management Network Center of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education gathered information from 16 COVID Comprehensive Health Centres performing triage for COVID patients with the following results:

Existence and availability of
- suitable wash basins in toilets 96%
- usable sewage system 98%
- clean running water 99%
- hand washing liquid/alcohol hand-rubs 96%
- paper towels/hand dryers 64%
- hand wash posters in toilets 90%
- suitable* and usable toilet faucets 91%

(*)pedal or lever operated)

Except for the availability of facilities or supplies for hand drying and where there is room for improvement, the level of infrastructure for hand hygiene in the 16 surveyed Comprehensive Health Centres performing triage for COVID Patients is very high. Iran has instituted, and even expanding during the pandemic, IPC measures at primary healthcare (PHC) level and hand hygiene at health care facilities at secondary and tertiary care levels.

WHO Regional Office for Europe
For WHHD 2021, the WHO Regional Office for Europe developed additional region specific materials such as social media cards (which includes a focus on Ramadan), text messages to be used on popular platforms, promotion of hand hygiene challenges for health care workers and the public, a health facility story and some myth busters.
Developed in consultation with WHO and country experts, the following three IPC improvement tools, called “aide-memoires” and describing ‘how’ to convert guidance into action, will be released on 5 May 2021 and can be found here.

- respiratory and hand hygiene
- personal protective equipment (PPE)
- environmental cleaning, waste and linen management

WHO recommends that these tools, which cover areas that are elements of standard, droplet/contact and airborne precautions, should be implemented as part of IPC improvement programmes which use multimodal improvement strategies (MMIS), according to national guidelines and under the coordination of a national IPC focal point or team.