AIDE-MEMOIRE

Safe, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable health care facilities
Safe, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable health care facilities are essential for delivering high-quality care and achieving universal health coverage.

A safe, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable health care facility should:

- ensure the provision of safe WASH, waste management, environmental cleaning and reliable electricity services;
- be resilient to the impacts of climate change while maintaining environmental sustainability and keeping carbon emissions low;
- minimize the use of harmful chemicals, while adopting proper management practices, production and disposal, to mitigate their effects on health and environment;
- manage radiation used in health care to ensure health workers and patients are protected;
- provide a safe and healthy environment for health workers, patients and the general public, protecting them from health care-related risks.

KEY ACTIONS

WASH, waste management and electricity services

- Conduct a baseline assessment and regularly monitor WASH, waste and electricity services through existing national monitoring systems.
- Establish, implement and update standards, taking into consideration the impacts of extreme events.
- Develop, resource and implement national roadmaps.
- Improve and maintain infrastructure including through implementation of the WHO and UNICEF’s WASH FIT (Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool).
- Empower and support the health workforce, including by providing training on using and maintaining safe and sustainable WASH, health care waste management, and environmental cleaning and energy services, and proper hand hygiene.

Climate resilience and sustainability

- Conduct assessments to understand:
  - the vulnerability of health care facilities to climate hazards;
  - the GHG emissions of health care facilities.
- Develop and implement a plan for disaster preparedness, response and recovery management.
- Develop, implement, monitor and evaluate improvement plans for health care facilities to ensure they are climate resilient and environmentally sustainable.
- Procure and adopt climate-resilient technologies, products and processes with low environmental impact for delivering health care services to enhance the sustainability of health care facility operations.
- Institute procedures to implement environmentally sustainable supply chains.

Healthy and safe work environments

- Establish a programme for occupational health and safety for health care workers at the facility:
  - include a policy on safety, health and working conditions;
  - identify a responsible person for occupational health at the facility;
  - create a joint labour-management health and safety committee;
  - establish safe procedures and provide ongoing training for health workers on managing chemicals and health care waste and radiation protection measures;
  - implement action plans for the improvement of occupational health and safety and a policy for vaccinations;
  - establish procedures for identifying and reporting hazards, accidents and diseases and other data for protecting health and safety of the health workforce;
  - provide occupational health services.

The full report with more comprehensive information is to be released soon, covering definitions of safe, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable health care facilities, concrete guidance about actions and key materials, resources and tools.