



Draft Newsletter Article (short version)

SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands

On 5 May 2010, the World Health Organization (WHO) will again issue a global call to action inviting health-care workers throughout the world to actively campaign for improved hand hygiene to reduce health care-associated infections (HAI) and demonstrate their commitment to this important global movement.

WHO Patient Safety launched this initiative on 5 May 2009, supported by more than 5000 hospitals and health-care facilities from 125 countries which had already registered their commitment.

Now WHO Patient Safety aims to double the level of commitment to 10,000 by 5 May 2010 and Professor Didier Pittet, external lead for WHO's First Global Patient Safety Challenge: Clean Care is Safer Care, is encouraging all health-care facilities to register their support now. <http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/register/en/index.html>

To mark 5 May 2010, WHO Patient Safety will:

- Broadcast a live webinar by Professor Didier Pittet from Geneva, Switzerland.
- Issue a simplified hand hygiene observation tool based on one of the WHO My 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene to focus health-care workers on taking action at the point of care by monitoring compliance. This monitoring can be undertaken on 5 May 2010 as well as on a regular basis to improve practice and ensure patient safety.
- Release data from pilot test sites around the world where hospitals have trialed the WHO multimodal hand hygiene improvement strategy using WHO evaluation tools to monitor their hand hygiene compliance as well as other areas such as their perceptions and knowledge of hand hygiene and HAI

HAI places a serious disease burden and significant economic impact on patients and health-care systems throughout the world. WHO is committed to encouraging and supporting good hand hygiene everywhere. The simple task of cleaning hands in the right way and at the right time at the point of patient care can save lives. Take action now and utilize the resources that are available www.who.int/gpsc

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During the last two years, WHO Patient Safety has established a network of countries where hand hygiene campaigns or programmes are already established. This network, WHO *CleanHandsNet*, is one of the significant ways in which local and regional advances can be made to support the reduction of HAI. Through sharing knowledge and discussing both issues and potential solutions, countries can learn from each other and benefit their patients. Acknowledging the different levels of awareness and barriers to implementing good hand hygiene from country to country is a major step forward in recognizing the changes that need to be made. Countries with established national or sub-national campaigns are encouraged to be part of WHO *CleanHandsNet* with the aim of supporting local, regional and global efforts in hand hygiene improvement. <http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/background/en/index.html>

The revised suite of practical hand hygiene tools launched early in 2009, is a critical means of support for any organization involved in providing patient care and wanting to improve their levels of quality and safety. The tools can also support local and national activities for the SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands 5 May 2010 initiative.

The 'My 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene' approach aims to streamline and simplify the number of times hand hygiene should occur within health care and has been an internationally acknowledged and important patient safety improvement aid in recent years. It is concerned with promoting hand hygiene only at these moments within care sequences which are likely to yield the maximum return in terms of patient safety and ensure risk and harm reduction.

Globally, compliance with WHO's My Five Moments for Hand Hygiene has averaged at 40 percent. With increasing awareness of the benefits of good practice, WHO Patient Safety believes this percentage can be dramatically improved and sustained worldwide. The global pandemic Influenza A (H1N1) has contributed to the promotion of hand hygiene as a means of reducing infections in environments other than within health care. This increased level of public awareness will aid all of the efforts by WHO and others.



Pledging support for SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands is a demonstration of commitment. Sign up now and help save lives. <http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/register/en/index.html> WHO welcomes health-care facilities to send their plans for 5 May 2010 to savelives@who.int

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