



MAKE SMART INJECTION CHOICES

NATIONAL DECISION-MAKING FOR SAFE AND APPROPRIATE INJECTIONS



For Ministries of Health



**World Health
Organization**

SAFE INJECTION CHOICES MATTER



Action by Ministries of Health is crucial for safe injections.

State Minister of Health for India, Ms Anupriya Patel holding a copy of the India Injection Safety Project Plan, with Mr Amitabh Bachan, Dr Henk Bekedam (WHO), Dr Gottfried Hirschall (WHO) and other dignitaries

Many injections around the world are unnecessary and often unsafe. Unsafe injections **put lives at risk** and every year cause 1.67 million hepatitis B infections, up to 315 120 hepatitis C infections and up to 33 877 HIV infections.^{1,2}

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that governments adopt the 2015 policy on rational use of injections, safe injection practice and exclusive use of safety-engineered syringes for all types of injections by 2020. Safety-engineered syringes exist for both immunization and therapeutic use and have mechanisms preventing re-use of the device and/or protecting health care workers from injuries. Development of local policies and supportive health policy decisions

at a national level are essential to reduce unnecessary injections and harm from infections.

SUPPORTIVE POLICY ACTION

How can action by Ministries of Health help to promote safe injections?

- ✓ By making the decision to shift to the procurement and use of safety-engineered syringes, supported by a national policy for ensuring safe injections which also includes training of health workers, appropriate sharps waste management and avoiding unnecessary injections.
- ✓ By putting in place measures to ensure that sufficient quantities of safety-engineered syringes are available in every health facility where injections are administered.
- ✓ By setting health system-wide procedures and standards for the purchase, use and safe disposal of syringes and needles, in situations where they remain necessary.
- ✓ By immunizing health care workers against hepatitis B.

1. Pepin et al. Evolution of the global use of unsafe medical injections, 2000-2010. PLoS One. 2013 Dec 8;12:e80948.

2. Pepin et al. Evolution of the global burden of viral infections from unsafe medical injections, 2000-2010. PLoS One. 2014 Jun 9;9(6):e99677.

HOW CAN AN INJECTION BE UNSAFE?

UNSAFE INJECTION PRACTICES

The global burden of unsafe injection practices is caused by avoidable risky situations and practices including:

- ❌ Lack of awareness of the risks of unsafe injections.
- ❌ Overuse of injections for illnesses for which oral medications are the best first-line treatment.
- ❌ Needle-stick injuries to health care workers from recapping needles.
- ❌ Lack of clean work spaces.
- ❌ Re-use of syringes, needles and other injection equipment because of shortage of supply.
- ❌ Unsafe sharps collection and health care waste management.



SAFETY FIRST

As many as 70% of injections are unnecessary, or could be replaced by oral medications that are safer and equally effective.

Formulating national policies and plans to eliminate unsafe injections will result in:

- ✅ **Savings** on health care expenditure for diagnosis and treatment of blood-borne infections.
- ✅ **Savings** through reductions in unnecessary injections.
- ✅ **Improvements** in the quality and safety of health care through the adoption of best practice.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

WORKING TOGETHER

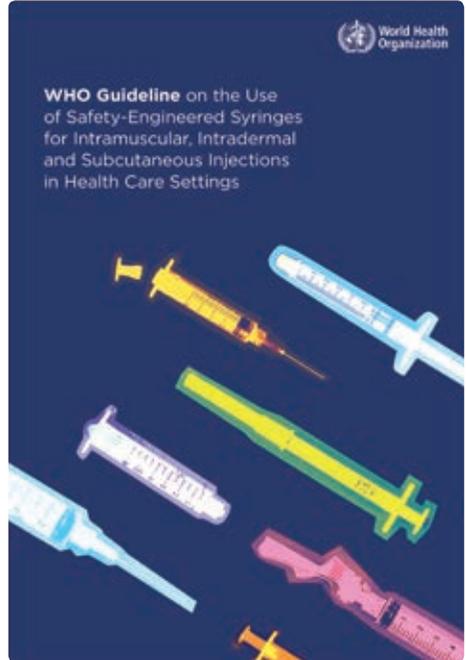
If you are a decision maker at a Ministry of Health and a policy maker you can play a critical role in making the right decisions about safe injections.

To show your visible commitment, you can help increase awareness about the risk of infections associated with unsafe injections, and change the belief that injections are more effective than oral treatments.

You can support health care workers, patients and the wider community by developing strategies for education and training to encourage smart injection choices and practices, eliminate re-use and reduce overuse.



Minister of Health, Dr Elioda Tumwesigye, and Commissioner of Clinical Services, Dr Amandua Jacinto, Ministry of Health, Uganda, are briefed on the Global Injection Safety Campaign



By forming effective partnerships with donors and other development partners, you can leverage their knowledge, expertise, resources and capacities in implementing injection safety campaigns that are appropriate for, and respond to, the experiences, need and concerns of the populations they serve.

By working together, the risks of unsafe injections can be avoided.

For further information please visit: www.who.int/infection-prevention



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