INFORMATION NOTE

WORLD ALLIANCE FOR PATIENT SAFETY
THE FIRST GLOBAL PATIENT SAFETY CHALLENGE
CLEAN CARE IS SAFER CARE

Background

The first Global Patient Safety Challenge, "Clean Care is Safer Care" is a flagship programme of the World Alliance for Patient Safety. The Alliance is a WHO programme in the Information, Evidence and Research cluster. The WHO "Clean Care is Safer Care" initiative works towards catalysing global commitment and action to reduce health-care-associated infections (HAI) worldwide. This challenge has contributed to mobilizing countries, organizations and individuals to launch intensified action to make health care safer, and more particularly to achieve cleaner and safer care.

At the centre of this initiative, is the newly developed WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care (Advanced Draft) and a range of novel, practical and adaptable tools to aid implementation of the recommendations of the WHO multimodal hand hygiene improvement strategy. The strategy is currently being implemented at several sites within each of the six WHO regions worldwide in order to acquire data on its feasibility and cost-effectiveness in different settings.

The first Challenge has also reached beyond hand hygiene, and attention has been focused on the promotion of clean-care practices in their broadest sense, relating to already established WHO programmes concerned with injection and immunization safety (clean equipment); emergency and surgical procedure safety (clean procedures); blood-transfusion safety (clean products); and safe water and sanitation (clean environment).

Pledged countries

At country level, ministries of health have been encouraged to make a formal political commitment to tackle HAI by signing a statement of commitment/pledge outlining their intention to take action to address the problem of HAI. Since the launch of the Challenge in October 2005, this statement has been signed by ministers of health of 87 countries representing about 80% of the world's population.

However, with only six Member States in the African Region having committed to address this problem, efforts are being intensified to ensure that African ministries of health join in
this initiative. The Member States that have already signed are: Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, and Uganda.

It is proposed that for those additional African countries that have expressed interest to sign the statement pledging their support to address HAI can do so at a special ministerial signing ceremony organized during the 58-Regional Committee meeting in Yaoundé, Cameroon, 1-5 September 2008. This ceremony will be a WHO event.

The impact of the first Global Patient Safety Challenge can be demonstrated across a number of levels:

- **Global:** 87 countries have made a national ministerial pledge to tackle HAI [http://www.who.int/gpsc/statements/countries/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/gpsc/statements/countries/en/index.html)
- **Regional:** 8 pilot sites (including 1 site in AFRO) are field-testing the implementation of the WHO Guidelines [http://www.who.int/gpsc/country_work/en/](http://www.who.int/gpsc/country_work/en/)
- **National:** Over 20 countries are running national hand hygiene campaigns [http://www.who.int/gpsc/national_campaigns/en/](http://www.who.int/gpsc/national_campaigns/en/)
- **Facility:** Over 300 individual health care facilities/networks have enrolled via the web site to become a Complementary Test Site, agreeing to test the implementation strategy and provide feedback to shape the future resources [http://www.who.int/gpsc/country_work/pilot_testing_info/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/gpsc/country_work/pilot_testing_info/en/index.html)
- **Individual patients:** a global survey of patients on their perceptions relating to HAI and hand hygiene is being implemented ([http://www.who.int/gpsc/patient_survey/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/gpsc/patient_survey/en/index.html)) the results of which will aid our ability to ensure meaningful patient involvement across a range of contexts.
Africa for Cleaner and Safer Care

The World Alliance for Patient Safety, in liaison with the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is working with WHO AFRO to build sustainable improvements in patient safety in Africa and the UK.

The Alliance is proposing the development of a sustainable 'Clean Care is Safer Care' programme, together with AFRO and representatives from African hospitals to include:

- The development of learning partnerships between African and UK hospitals with the aim of sharing knowledge, expertise and providing technical advice;
- Provision of technical assistance, guidelines, toolkits and alcohol-based handrubs for implementing a hand hygiene improvement programme in African health-care settings;
- Integration with other patient safety initiatives in Africa, including community involvement and current UK twinning initiatives;
- Measurement and evaluation of the project;
- Planned sustainability and programme expansion through the exploration of public-private partnerships and the creation and support of local networks for patient safety.