Joining us in planning an event for the International lead poisoning prevention week of action, 23-29 October

The fourth International lead poisoning prevention week of action (23–29 October 2016) advocates the need for further efforts to phase out lead paint, in particular to protect the health of our children. At high levels of exposure, lead attacks the brain and central nervous system to cause coma, convulsions and even death. Children who survive severe lead poisoning may develop intellectual disability and behavioural disorders. Yet lead poisoning is entirely preventable. As of today, only one-third of Member States have implemented legally-binding controls on lead paint. This year, the campaign is making further efforts to call for all countries to have these controls in place by 2020.

In support of the campaign, more than 40 activities are registered globally to raise awareness about the health hazards linked to lead and lead paint. A WHO information and resource pack, customizable campaign materials, infographics and a video message about the importance of eliminating lead paint can be found here. To register your event, click here. To find out about events planned during the week, click here. The fact sheet can be found here.

Health as the pulse of the new urban agenda at Habitat

Health is the pulse of a city’s well-being. As the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) convenes, health needs to be at the centre of planning for the New Urban Agenda. With this aim and focus, WHO has prepared a report on Health as the pulse of the new urban agenda.

During this meeting, national and municipal leaders will join in a gala launch of the BreatheLife campaign for clean air and a healthy future. The campaign is led by WHO in collaboration with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and highlights a range of practical and affordable opportunities to reduce short-lived climate pollutants. See the latest campaign videos here to understand better how to breathe life into your city.

The Habitat III meeting was held from 16 to 20 October 2016 in Quito, Ecuador.

Health prepares for the 22nd session of the Conference of Parties (COP22) to (UNFCCC)

The world now has a global climate treaty that will become a public health treaty as countries take action. As stated in the Paris Agreement, “the right to health”, will be central to the actions taken. The agreement calls on countries to develop adaptation plans that will protect human health from the impacts of climate change, such as, heat waves, floods and droughts, and the ongoing degradation of water and food security. Through monitoring and revision of national commitments every five years, the world will begin to see improvements not only in the environment, but also in health, including reductions in the annual toll of more than seven million deaths worldwide attributable to air pollution every year.

At COP22, the public health community will showcase technical information, initiatives, lessons learned and political commitments on health, environment and climate change at key events. For more information on specific health events, click here.

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Action: SDG – All for equity

During the World Health Summit, WHO organized a panel with members from academia, government, civil society and media on the Action: SDG ePlatform that is being developed to house material relevant to actors working across policy sectors to address population health and health equity determinants. The platform, which is under development, aims to convene and support Social Determinants of Health (SDH) actors to reach the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by working across policy silos to apply a health lens. A number of new collaborators will contribute to the project in: describing evidence on what interventions work to improve health in specific policy areas; providing examples on how their work on health determinants aligns with the targets of the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda; providing examples of breaking language barriers between health and other sectors; and creating more opportunities for cross-sectoral dialogue at local and national levels.

The World Summit was held from 9 to 11 October 2016 in Berlin, Germany. For more information on the panel, click here.

Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in the European region

The Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health will be held in the WHO European Region. Member States are expected to adopt a ministerial declaration, an implementation plan for its commitments, and a reformed governance mechanism for the European Environment and Health Process. The main thematic priorities agreed upon for the ministerial declaration include air pollution, cities, chemical safety, climate change, environmentally sustainable health systems, and water, sanitation and hygiene. The ministerial declaration will affirm the European Environment and Health Process in the framework of the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, anchored in the Health 2020: European health policy framework, its values and whole-of-government and society approaches.

The conference will bring together health and environment ministers and high-level representatives of Member States in the WHO European Region, partner organizations, academia and civil society. It will be held in Ostrava, Czech Republic, from 13 to 15 June 2017. For more information, click here.

World Pneumonia Day: we can prevent pneumonia

Pneumonia is a leading cause of death for children under the age of five years around the world. The evidence shows that we need to work with integrated approaches to protect, prevent and treat pneumonia in children. WHO will join partners around the world to mark the day and will launch a web-based interactive tool to monitor country, regional and global progress on the prevention of avoidable deaths due to pneumonia and diarrhoea. The WHO integrated Global Action Plan for Pneumonia and Diarrhoea (GAPPD) aims to: (i) reduce preventable childhood deaths; (ii) improve coverage; and (iii) implement essential policies in 139 countries. WHO will also raise awareness about a www.breathelife2030.org campaign for reduced air pollution as a way to prevent pneumonia. For more information, please click here

Facts and Figures

Lead poisoning and health

- Lead is a cumulative toxicant that affects multiple body systems and is particularly harmful to young children.
- Lead in the body is distributed to the brain, liver, kidney and bones. It is stored in the teeth and bones, where it accumulates over time. Human exposure is usually assessed through the measurement of lead concentrations in blood.
- Lead in bone is released into blood during pregnancy and becomes a source of exposure to the developing fetus.
- There is no known level of lead exposure that is considered safe.
- Lead poisoning is entirely preventable.

For more information, please click here.

SELECTED HEALTH TOPICS FROM WHO'S PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT WEB SITES

- International lead poisoning prevention week of action
- Air pollution and health

REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT LINKS

- WHO Regional Office for Africa
- WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia
- WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific
- WHO Regional Office for the Americas
- WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
- WHO Regional Office for Europe

NEW PUBLICATIONS AND VIDEOS

- Health as the pulse of the new urban agenda, United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Quito 2016
- WHO: Message by Dr Maria Neira for International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action 2016

BREATHE LIFE VIDEOS

- "WHO: Message by Dr Maria Neira for International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action 2016"

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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