



**Meeting on improving water, sanitation and
hygiene in health-care facilities**

EUPCR1611921/3.3/64555/02

**Bonn, Germany
27–28 September 2017**

**28 June 2017
Original: English**

Scope and purpose

The provision of adequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in health-care facilities (HCFs) is central for achieving universal and equitable access to WASH for all. Safely managed WASH services in HCFs are essential to patients' health and in ensuring quality of care, the prevention and control of infections, tackling anti-microbial resistance (AMR) and improving the environmental sustainability of health systems. Improving and maintaining WASH in HCFs is a building block in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, and SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Recent global evidence suggests that there is a severe lack of access to basic WASH services in HCFs. In the WHO European Region, the limited data available tend to confirm the global estimates, specifically in lower middle income countries. However, WASH associated infections in HCFs are a concern in all countries in the Region.

At the global level, a clear framework for prioritizing WASH in HCFs is provided by the WHO/UNICEF Global action plan on WASH in health care facilities, launched in 2015 to support the achievement of the SDGs. Improving WASH is also among the five objectives in the WHO Global Action Plan on AMR.

At the regional level, strengthening WASH in institutional settings, including in HCFs, has been recognized as a priority area under the 2017–2019 programme of work of the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. The Ostrava Declaration adopted at the recent 6th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health also calls on Member States to ensure and sustain the provision of adequate WASH services in HCFs and safe disposal of wastewater.

This meeting will promote progressive implementation of global and regional commitments and the prioritization of WASH in HCFs in national policy agenda.

The specific objectives of the meeting are to:

- position WASH in HCFs as a priority in the context of the SDGs and the Protocol on Water and Health;
- appraise the available evidence on WASH in HCFs in the WHO European Region;
- review the country situations, policies and best practices on WASH in HCFs, including disposal of wastewater;
- introduce the WHO global action plan on WASH in HCFs and discuss ways to translate them into national action;
- introduce the set of indicators of global monitoring on WASH in HCFs and discuss the linkages with national monitoring;
- discuss the linkages between adequate WASH and health-care service provision with regard to child and maternal health, environmental sustainability of health services and AMR; and

- discuss possible future actions to strengthen WASH in HCFs at national and regional levels, including possible activities under the Protocol on Water and Health.

The expected outcomes of the meeting are an increased awareness and understanding of the relevance of WASH in HCFs and strengthened commitment of national policy makers in improving the situation through pursuing the achievement of the SDGs and the implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health. The meeting will form the basis of future activities on WASH in HCFs in the WHO European Region.