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**Development of a draft global action plan and monitoring framework on
infection prevention and control, 2024–2030**

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2022 adopted a resolution on infection prevention and control.¹ Through the resolution, Member States requested, inter alia, the Director-General to develop a draft global strategy on infection prevention and control in both health and long-term care settings, in consultation with Member States and regional economic integration organizations. They also requested the Director-General to translate the global strategy into an action plan for infection prevention and control, including a framework for tracking progress, with clear measurable targets to be achieved by 2030, for consideration by the Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly in 2024, through the Executive Board at its 154th session. The resolution also included 13 calls to Member States aimed at improving infection prevention and control at the national, subnational and/or facility levels.
2. In response to resolution WHA75.13 and building on the content of the *Global report on infection prevention and control*,² the Secretariat developed a draft global strategy on infection prevention and control through a wide consultative process involving several departments at all three levels of the Organization and in consultation with Member States and stakeholders, including members of the Global Infection Prevention and Control Network and of civil society. Two global meetings with experts and stakeholders and three additional global consultations with Member States were held between June and October 2022. Regional offices gathered specific inputs from Member States through either bilateral meetings or regional consultations (four regional consultations were held).
3. At the 152nd session of the Executive Board in January 2023, Member States considered the draft global strategy on infection prevention and control and the Board adopted decision EB152(7) in which it decided that informal consultations with Member States on the draft WHO global strategy on infection prevention and control would continue to be facilitated by the Secretariat prior to the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly in May 2023.

¹ Resolution WHA75.13 (2022).

² Global report on infection prevention and control. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2022 (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/354489>, accessed 26 July 2023).

4. After the Board's session, the Secretariat held three Member State consultations to reach consensus on changes to be made prior to discussions at the Health Assembly. A final revised draft of the global strategy was discussed and adopted¹ at the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly in May 2023.

NEED AND RATIONALE FOR A GLOBAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN ON INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

5. The decision to propose the resolution on infection prevention and control to the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly, was driven by lessons learned from major outbreaks, such as those of Ebola virus disease and Middle East respiratory syndrome, and the pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which, over the past decade, have demonstrated how epidemic-prone pathogens can spread rapidly through health care settings.

6. Furthermore, other less visible health emergencies – such as the silent burden of endemic health care-associated infections, most of which are caused by antimicrobial-resistant pathogens – harm millions of patients every year across all health care systems and can also affect health and care workers and anyone accessing health facilities. Health care-associated infections are mostly caused by bacteria, but emerging viruses – such as novel influenza viruses and coronaviruses, or other viruses such as hepatitis viruses and HIV – as well as antimicrobial-resistant fungi, can also spread as a result of poor health care practices.

7. Infection prevention and control consists of evidence-based practices and interventions with demonstrated impact and cost-effectiveness to decrease transmission and acquisition of infectious agents in health care facilities, among patients, health and care workers and visitors. It is foundational to patient safety and delivering high-quality care to each person who is served by health services, including at the first point of entry of the patient into the health system, that is, primary care facilities. It is also critical to maintain the population's trust in the health system and to encourage people to use health facilities.

8. In light of the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and the data included in the 2022 *Global report on infection prevention and control*² and the briefing paper on infection prevention and control in G7 countries,³ it has become clear that many countries do not have a sufficiently strong infection prevention and control programme, and that many gaps and inefficiencies in implementation of infection prevention and control exist, especially in low- and middle-income countries. However, based on the momentum created by the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been clear country engagement and progress in scaling up improvements in infection prevention and control, which is being strongly supported by WHO and other key players.

9. Sustaining and further expanding this progress in the longer term is a critical need that requires urgent attention and investments, by ensuring that there are adequate financial and human resources as well as continuous improvements globally in logistics, infrastructure and practices, in resource-limited settings as well as in high-income countries.

¹ Two Member States dissociated themselves from the wording in paragraph 6 of the guiding principles of the draft global strategy on infection prevention and control (page 9 of the English version).

² Global report on infection prevention and control. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2022 (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/354489>, accessed 26 July 2023).

³ OECD-WHO briefing paper on infection prevention and control. Addressing the burden of infections and antimicrobial resistance associated with health care. Focus on G7 countries. 18 October 2022. (<https://www.oecd.org/health/Addressing-burden-of-infections-and-AMR-associated-with-health-care.pdf>, accessed 31 July 2023).

DEVELOPING A DRAFT GLOBAL ACTION PLAN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK ON INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

10. The global strategy provides Member States with strategic directions to substantially reduce the continuing risk of health care-associated infections in both health and long-term care settings, including those that exhibit antimicrobial resistance and are caused by epidemic- and pandemic-prone microorganisms. The present document outlines the next steps for the development of the draft global action plan and monitoring framework on infection prevention and control, based on the global strategy.

11. The Infection Prevention and Control Technical and Clinical Hub at WHO headquarters is responsible for coordinating the development of the draft global action plan and monitoring framework, supported by a cross-cutting working group drawn from all three levels of the Organization, which provides multidisciplinary strategic thinking and support for the development of the draft.

12. Consultations with infection prevention and control regional focal points, the three-level working group and the Global Infection Prevention and Control Network started in May 2023 and are continuing to develop an outline of the draft global action plan and monitoring framework.

13. A Delphi survey will be conducted in September and October 2023 to identify and prioritize indicators and targets to be included in the monitoring framework, involving Member States' national focal points for infection prevention and control, international experts and WHO staff members across the three levels of the Organization.

14. At the regional level, Member States will be invited to provide input on the outline of the draft global action plan and monitoring framework at the meetings of the regional committees (August–October 2023) or through regional consultations in September and October 2023. Global consultations will be held in September and October 2023.

15. The Infection Prevention and Control Technical and Clinical Hub will incorporate the input from both regional and global consultations into the draft global action plan and monitoring framework, which will be submitted to the Executive Board at its 154th session in January 2024 for its consideration. This draft will serve as the basis for final consultations with Member States, experts and stakeholders, leading up to the Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly in May 2024, at which the final draft will be considered.

16. Based on the consultations conducted to date, the outline of the draft global action plan and monitoring framework on infection prevention and control has been structured around the eight strategic directions that provide the overall guiding framework for country actions to implement the global strategy, which are as follows:

1. Political commitment and policies
2. Active infection prevention and control programmes
3. Infection prevention and control integration and coordination
4. Infection prevention and control knowledge of health and care workers and career pathways for infection prevention and control professionals
5. Data for action
6. Advocacy and communications
7. Research and development
8. Collaboration and stakeholders' support.

17. In a continuing consultative process, for each strategic direction, critical actions have been identified that are necessary at the global and regional and country levels in order to achieve the objectives of the global strategy. For each action, draft indicators and targets, when appropriate, have been identified to measure the progress made towards achieving the targets by 2030, at the global, regional and country levels.

NEXT STEPS

18. This paper is provided for information to the Regional Committee. The draft global action plan and monitoring framework will be shared with Member States prior to the regional and global consultations. At the consultations, planned for September and October 2023, Member States will be invited to provide input on the outline of the draft.

19. Member States will be invited to consider the following questions when providing their feedback.

- (a) Are there any actions that are missing or that need major revision in the draft global action plan?
- (b) Are there any indicators that are missing or that need major revision in the draft monitoring framework?
- (c) Are the draft global action plan targets considered relevant and acceptable?

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