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Dear Colleague,

WHO First Global Patient Safety Challenge, Clean Care is Safer Care

SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands

Letter of Commendation

On behalf of WHO Patient Safety's First Global Patient Safety Challenge, I am writing to thank you most sincerely for participating in this international movement to strengthen the critical role of hand hygiene in reducing healthcare-associated infections (HAI).

When we launched SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands on 5 May 2009, we were overwhelmed by the level of international support, with 5000 hospitals and health-care facilities registering their interest and enthusiasm for this initiative. By 5 May 2010 we had reached over 11,500 hospitals and health care facilities, representing 6.5 million health-care workers from 137 countries. The global reach of hand hygiene has never been demonstrated so graphically.

Statistics continue to tell us that many thousands of patients die every year throughout the world due to HAI. As part of the enthusiastic group dedicated to patient safety, you can continue to help save lives and make a difference by encouraging the use of WHO's 'My 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene' among other actions.

The suite of tools and materials based on the WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care (2009), including 'My 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene', are publicly available on our web pages (www.who.int/gpsc), and are an immediate resource for you to use.

By supporting WHO Patient Safety in our efforts to improve hand hygiene, you are contributing to a global movement that will save lives and we are grateful for this. Not only can you work in your own settings to make this happen but you can also link in with national activities if they exist in your country. Since the Challenge was launched 122 Ministries of Health have pledged to reduce HAI, and over 40 nations/subnations have run campaigns. All of this supporting information is also available on our web pages.

We welcome your involvement and commend you for the good progress you are making in your region and for supporting WHO in its global challenge. Good luck with your ongoing work to improve hand hygiene and reduce HAI and thank you again for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Didier Pittet
External Lead, First Global Patient Safety Challenge
World Health Organization, Patient Safety Programme

Dr Edward Kelley
Head, Strategic Programmes and Coordinator
WHO Patient Safety