

The Republic of Korea appreciates WHO for the efforts and achievements made to develop and disseminate the INSPIRE framework aimed at ending violence against children around the world. We agree that in order to eliminate violence against children, WHO called for member states to strengthen the capacity of health systems to early spot the signs of and effectively respond to child maltreatment.

Healthcare workers can easily detect the signs of child maltreatment when providing health care services such as medical check-up and vaccination. Accordingly, the Korean law prescribes them as a person who has a duty to report child abuse and mandates them to report any suspected cases identified during the work.

The law and system protects confidentiality of the reporter's identity. However, with the reports made after healthcare facility visit, their identity is likely to be disclosed and exposed to the threats from the perpetrators, which is a challenge that we are facing. Therefore, rather than individual healthcare workers, we can consider encouraging healthcare institutions to pay attention to and fight against child abuse. To this end, it needs to elaborate details of implementation plan to support and incentivize the healthcare institutions, which reflects the context and reality of the current health systems.

The Korean government has recently designated local healthcare institutions working at the forefront of the fight against child abuse as 'broad-area healthcare institution dedicated to child maltreatment

response', and support them to set up 'Child Protection Committee' consisting of specialists from various fields, clinical psychologists and, social workers. On behalf of healthcare institutions, the Committee reports suspected child abuse cases, provides specialized care to the maltreated children, and serves as a medical advisory group for police or government officials who are responsible for child maltreatment response. In addition, the Committee provides local healthcare institutions with the training to teach the process of child abuse reporting and response, and medical characteristics of abused children, which improve recognition and expertise about child maltreatment when healthcare workers provide routine health services.

And as part of its efforts to effectively prevent and respond to violence against children, the Korean central and local authorities have developed consultation groups, which enables multi-sectoral collaboration across various areas including not only health, but also welfare, parenting and education, investigation and trial. Consultation group members share the status on abuse prevention and response, and discuss the entire process ranging from prevention, early detection, initial response, protection and supporting recovery of abuse victims.

There are a few measures that WHO can take into consideration and disseminate among member states, such as the development and operation of central and local-level consultation groups consisting of relevant organizations, linking those consultation groups together, and the establishment of incentive system available for healthcare institutions responding to child abuse. With these measures, we believe that WHO can support the implementation of child abuse prevention policy more effectively.