



In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Message from
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to the
REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR THE PATIENT SAFETY FRIENDLY
HOSPITAL INITIATIVE: CONSOLIDATION AND REGIONAL EXPANSION
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I address this gathering in the beautiful city of Amman. It is becoming a habit to have many of our meetings that relate to quality and safety of health care in this country due to the relentless commitment of its leadership to healthcare quality and the great progress the country has witnessed over the past few years. It is a pleasure to see colleagues and experts from countries in which patient safety activities have been implemented. It is also a pleasure to meet new faces and to welcome on board some countries in which patient safety was not previously addressed.

This workshop will revolve around the EMRO-initiated Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative, an endeavor that has been commended by many organizations engaged in quality and safety of health care around the world. This initiative aims at setting standards that ensure that patients, their families and health care workers are safe in health care facilities. This is in keeping with the aims and goals of WHO. Indeed, the WHO patient safety programme aims to coordinate, disseminate and accelerate improvements in patient safety worldwide. The Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative is one of the programmes developed by WHO, with the ultimate goal of improving the safety and quality of care delivered to patients.

Safety is a fundamental principle of patient care and a critical component of quality management. Its improvement demands a system-wide effort, involving a wide range of actions in performance improvement, environmental safety and risk management, infection control, safe use of medicines, equipment safety, safe clinical practice. It embraces nearly all health care disciplines and actors, and thus requires a comprehensive multifaceted approach to identifying and managing actual and potential risks to patient safety and finding broad long-term solutions for the system as a whole. Thinking in terms of systems offers the greatest promise of definitive risk-reduction solutions, which place the appropriate emphasis on every component of patient safety. The Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative addresses these issues in a comprehensive manner and sets standards that embrace many aspects of health care delivery. The initiative brings about concerted efforts, involving all elements and sectors of the health care delivery process towards the ultimate goal of improving safety in health care facilities.

To address the issue of patient safety, WHO/EMRO joined the World Alliance for Patient Safety in its worldwide endeavor to bring together all stakeholders including health policy-makers, WHO, patient groups and organizations working in this field to advance the fundamental goal of reducing the potential unwarranted harm inflicted on patients. In its fifty second meeting, the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean formulated a resolution for enhancing patient safety. The Committee urged member states to: develop national standards for patient safety, making use of WHO guidelines, formulate national patient safety programmes in collaboration with The Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) and the World Alliance for Patient Safety (WAPS) and establish mechanisms to promote partnership between regional patient safety institutions and national health care delivery systems. The Resolution represented the commitment of the highest WHO authority together with the member states.

WHO/EMRO has developed the tools for the Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative and secured some resources for its implementation. We started in 7 countries (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen), each of which nominated one pilot hospital to test the feasibility of application of the patient safety assessment manual. The results of the pilot testing phase will be shared during this workshop. Ever since its launch in 2008, the impact of the initiative on improving safety of healthcare services has been snowballing.

Many countries have expressed their interest in pursuing patient safety and requested technical support. Some countries have been facing challenges in implementation. This workshop will address these challenges, respond to your needs and assist you to move further.

We take great pride in having this workshop focused on countries in conflict, such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine. This is in line with our commitment at WHO/EMRO to support those who are most in need.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are determined to implement patient safety in the Region by establishing research, building national capacities, conducting training on patient safety, raising awareness of health care professionals and the public, and applying evidence-based solutions, will be of paramount importance.

Today, we are joined by colleagues representing WHO country offices, and from HQ, a sign of collaboration and solidarity within WHO. Our unified vision, our adamant persistence and continuous collaboration will ensure that we will reach the goals of WHO and will move one step further towards the positioning of patient safety as a top and indispensable priority.

Before concluding, I would like to thank our experts and participants, whose efforts and commitment are highly appreciated. I would also like to thank our regional consultants, most of whom are here today. Without their support, this progress would not have been possible.

Finally, I would like to thank the International Islamic Relief Organization, Jeddah for the support of patient safety in this region. I hope the outcomes of this meeting will complement the multitude of efforts invested in several directions towards achievement of safe health care systems.

Thank you.