

# “It’s in your hands – prevent sepsis in health care”; 5 May 2018 World Health Organization (WHO) SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands campaign

**Hiroki Saito<sup>1</sup>, Tcheun Borzykowski<sup>2</sup>, Claire Kilpatrick<sup>1</sup>, Daniela Pires<sup>2,3</sup>, Benedetta Allegranzi<sup>1</sup>, Didier Pittet<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Infection Prevention and Control Global Unit, Department of Service Delivery and Safety, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

<sup>2</sup> Infection Control Programme and WHO Collaborating Centre on Patient Safety, University of Geneva Hospitals and Faculty of Medicine, Geneva, Switzerland

<sup>3</sup> Department of Infectious Diseases, Centro Hospitalar Lisboa Norte and Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal

doi: 10.3396/IJIC.v14i1.001.18

**Keywords:** Hand hygiene, infection prevention and control, sepsis, World Health Organization, healthcare-associated infection, public health, global health, behavioural change, policy making, infection prevention

Sepsis is a life-threatening organ dysfunction caused by a dysregulated host response to infection.<sup>1</sup> It is estimated to affect more than 30 million people worldwide every year with high mortality and morbidity.<sup>2</sup> Sepsis was reported as a key global health issue at the Seventieth World Health Assembly (WHA) in 2017 where a resolution on sepsis was adopted by Member States.<sup>3</sup>

Sepsis can result from care practices and complicate healthcare-associated infections. Hand hygiene, a core of infection prevention and control (IPC), plays

a critical role in preventing such avoidable events.<sup>4,5</sup> Each year, the World Health Organization (WHO) SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands campaign aims to bring people together in support of hand hygiene improvement globally on or around 5 May.<sup>6</sup> In 2018, the campaign focuses on supporting the prevention of sepsis in health care. WHO urges ministries of health, health facility leaders, IPC leaders, health workers and patient advocacy groups to take action on hand hygiene to prevent sepsis in health care (Table and Figure). WHO also invites health facilities to join the global campaign to demonstrate on-going

## Corresponding Author

Prof. Didier Pittet, MD, MS, Infection Control Programme and WHO Collaborating Centre on Patient Safety, University of Geneva Hospitals, 4 Rue Gabrielle-Perret-Gentil, 1211, Geneva, and faculty of medicine Switzerland (didier.pittet@hcuge.ch).

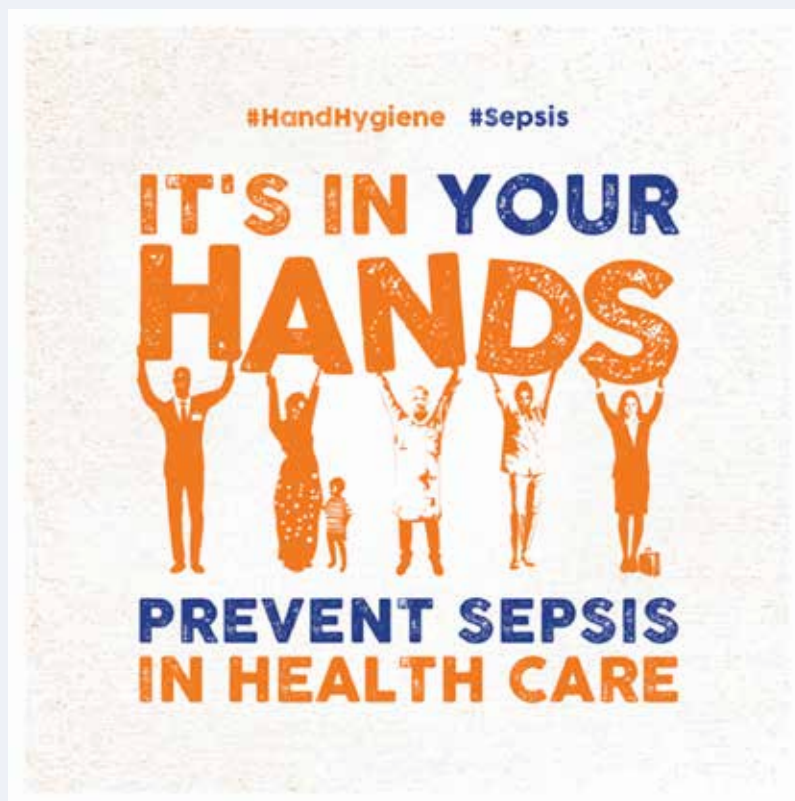
**Table 1. 5 May 2018 World Health Organization SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands campaign calls to action**

Health workers	'Take 5 Moments* to clean your hands to prevent sepsis in health care'
IPC** leaders	'Be a champion in promoting hand hygiene to prevent sepsis in health care'
Health facility leaders	'Prevent sepsis in health care, make hand hygiene a quality indicator in your hospital'
Ministries of health	'Implement the 2017 WHA*** sepsis resolution. Make hand hygiene a national marker of health care quality'
Patient advocacy groups	'Ask for 5 Moments of clean hands to prevent sepsis in health care'

\*refers to the "My 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene" as published in the WHO guidelines on hand hygiene in health care" (see ref 4)

\*\*IPC: Infection prevention and control

\*\*\*WHA: World Health Assembly



**Figure 1. 5 May 2018: "It's in your hands – prevent sepsis in health care"**

commitment to hand hygiene and IPC (<http://www.who.int/infection-prevention/campaigns/clean-hands/register/en/>).

Each hand hygiene action contributes to preventing sepsis in health care: let's act together, "It's in your hands - prevent sepsis in health care."

**Legend to the Figure**

"It's in your hands; prevent sepsis in health care"  
 5 May 2018 World Health Organization SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands campaign slogan and main promotional image (2018 hashtags: #HandHygiene #Sepsis). Campaign participants are invited to submit photos/selfies of them holding a board with the slogan and hashtags at [www.CleanHandsSaveLives.org](http://www.CleanHandsSaveLives.org)

### Funding

World Health Organization (WHO) and Infection Control Programme & WHO Collaborating Centre on Patient Safety (SPCI/WCC), University of Geneva Hospitals and Faculty of Medicine, Geneva, Switzerland; hand hygiene research activities at the SPCI/WCC are supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (32003B\_163262).

### Comment

The authors alone are responsible for the views expressed in this article and they do not necessarily represent the views, decisions or policies of the institutions with which they are affiliated.

### References

1. Singer M, Deutschman CS, Seymour CW, et al. The Third International Consensus Definitions for Sepsis and Septic Shock (Sepsis-3). *JAMA* 2016; 315(8): 801-810. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2016.0287>
2. Fleischmann C, Scherag A, Adhikari NK, et al. Assessment of Global Incidence and Mortality of Hospital-treated Sepsis. Current Estimates and Limitations. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 2016; **193(3)**: 259-272. <https://doi.org/10.1164/rccm.201504-0781OC>
3. Rhodes A, Evans LE, Alhazzani W, et al. Surviving Sepsis Campaign: International Guidelines for Management of Sepsis and Septic Shck: 2016. *Intensive care medicine* 2017; **43(3)**: 304-377. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00134-017-4683-6>
4. World Health Organization. *WHO guidelines on hand hygiene in health care: first global patient safety challenge: clean care is safer care* Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2009.
5. World Health Organization. *Guidelines on core components of infection prevention and control programmes at the national and acute health care facility level*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2016.
6. World Health Organization. SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands WHO's Global Annual Campaign Advocacy Toolkit. [http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may\\_advocacy-toolkit.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may_advocacy-toolkit.pdf?ua=1). Accessed 31 January 2018.