



□ – On the occasion of Hand Hygiene Day, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) of Sudan called on health workers, patients and public to practise good hand hygiene.

At the event organized at Khartoum Dental Hospital, the status of hand hygiene practices in Sudan and main challenges in this area were highlighted by federal and state health officials.

It is estimated that health workers and general public in Sudan have sufficient level of awareness regarding the importance of the hand hygiene practice. However, the lack of appropriate infrastructure such as sinks, running water, soaps and the high expense of the alcohol-based hand rub makes the best hand hygiene practices difficult to achieve. In addition the high turn-over of health workers in facilities requires repeated training. The first Sudanese hand hygiene campaign was launched in 2009 with training and awareness-raising as its key components.

Every year, hundreds of millions of patients around the world are affected by health care-associated infections. These lead to significant physical and psychological suffering and sometimes death of patients, and financial losses for health systems. More than half of these infections could be prevented by caregivers properly cleaning their hands at key moments in patient care.

Health care-associated infections usually occur when germs are transferred by health-care providers' hands touching the patient. The most common infections are urinary tract and surgical site infections, pneumonia and infections of the bloodstream. Of every 100 hospitalized patients, at least 7 in developed and 10 in developing countries will acquire a health care-associated infection. Among critically ill and vulnerable patients in intensive care units, that figure rises to around 30 per 100.

The Nursing School of the University of Medical Sciences and Technology in Khartoum also took part in celebration of Hand Hygiene Day. Nursing staff conducted practical sessions demonstrating correct and effective hand hygiene practices for students and patients.

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