



20 September 2017 – The regional launch of the third Patient Safety Challenge: “Medication without harm”, was held 17-18 September 2017, in Muscat, Oman. This high-level meeting was jointly organized by WHO headquarters, the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean and WHO country office in Oman, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Oman.

Dr Mahmoud Fikri, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, delivered a welcome address in the opening ceremony, that was attended by HE the Minister of Health of Oman, HE the Minister of Higher Education of Oman and the Minister of Health of Qatar and senior officials from the Ministry of Health of Oman and Sultan Qaboos University.

The focus of the Global Patient Safety Challenge: “Medication Without Harm” is on strengthening health systems to reduce medication errors with the goal of reducing the level of severe, avoidable harm related to medications by 50% over 5 years.

The global launch of WHO’s third challenge: Medication without harm took place in March 2017 in Germany. To take forward the initiative with the direct involvement of Member States, the launch of the Challenge is planned to take place in each WHO region. The event will encourage participants to strengthen common action for integration of medication safety issues into national health policy and practice.

The specific objectives of the regional event were to:

- introduce WHO’s Third Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm;
- share model national medication safety plans designed by the host country, as well as other participating countries, in alignment with the Challenge components;
- seek and gain pledges of commitment and support from the countries attending the

regional launch event, who will sign up to participate in the Challenge for the next 5 years;

- discuss and address country challenges and share success stories on overcoming barriers to implementation;
- develop draft national action plans for participating countries for implementation of the Challenge.

Two senior officials from 17 countries of the Region attended the regional event, including policy-makers and high-level senior officials from ministries of health in decision-making roles in the area of patient safety and medication safety.

During the meeting, Sir Liam Donaldson, the WHO Envoy for Patient safety, delivered a keynote speech on patient safety as a major challenge that faces health systems globally as well as the progress and lessons learned from the two previous WHO Patient Safety Challenges: “Clean care Safer Care” and the “Safe Surgery Saves lives”.

The meeting agenda included presentations from experts in the area of medication safety, specifically high-risk medication, catastrophic medication events, transition of care and polypharmacy. The meeting was an opportunity for participants to share their experiences in the areas of patient Safety and medication safety.

On the second day of the meeting, 15 countries participating in the meeting signed a pledge, which demonstrates country commitment to take the necessary actions to address the aims of the challenge. During the group work sessions, meeting participants were invited to actively contribute to the development of a draft action plan for the initial implementation and rollout of the Challenge.

### **Related link**

[Medication Without Harm: WHO's Third Global Patient Safety Challenge](#)

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