

WHO programme for ear and hearing care



World Health
Organization

World Health Assembly resolution on prevention of deafness and hearing loss

May 30 2017

WHA70.13 unanimously adopted

Need for a resolution? The Assembly acknowledged the:

- Growing prevalence of hearing loss globally and the fact that 90% of people with hearing loss live in low- and middle-income countries where they lack access to required services;
- Persistently high incidence of ear diseases and noise exposure;
- High impact of unaddressed hearing loss at level of the individual, family and society as a whole;
- Fact that many causes of hearing loss are preventable and that successful, cost-effective interventions are available, which if administered in a timely manner can mitigate the adverse impact of hearing loss;
- Importance of addressing hearing loss in order to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDG).

The resolution calls upon all WHO Member States to:

1. Integrate strategies for ear and hearing care within the health systems of countries
2. Collect high-quality population-based data on ear diseases and hearing loss
3. Establish suitable training programmes for HR development
4. Ensure vaccination coverage against rubella, measles, mumps and meningitis
5. Develop, implement and monitor screening programmes in high-risk populations
6. Make high-quality, affordable hearing technologies accessible
7. Implement regulations for control of noise and ototoxic medicine use
8. Improve communication access through sign language and captioning
9. Ensure that people with hearing loss are included in the achievement of SDGs

The resolution asks WHO to promote ear and hearing care (EHC) through:

THE WORLD REPORT ON HEARING

A WHO initiative for prioritisation of ear and hearing care at global, regional and country levels.

The first national WHO-led call to action (WHO) to promote a World Report on Hearing, based on the fact that worldwide, the report will provide health officials to address hearing loss through:

- Address to mobilise a coordinated and sustained global response.
- Development and implementation of national strategies.
- Alignment of international partners to generate plans for prevention of avoidable hearing loss and to secure leadership in hearing care in the spirit of a common goal.

Rationale

There is a need to provide a consistent narrative on hearing care to global health leaders. This report will provide a global call to action to the global development community to address hearing loss.

Target Audience

- Policymakers in governments and international organisations.
- Civil society, user groups and professionals.
- Media.

Launch date: 3 March 2020

As a part of this initiative by:

- Providing results and outputs on the WHO which will be shared online.
- Organising launch events in person/online. Partner with relevant stakeholders to increase visibility and reach of the report.
- Organising activities to share the key messages of the report.
- Using the report as an evidence base to guide regional and country-led action on hearing loss.
- Leveraging the report for increased awareness.
- Engaging media as much as possible to support the dissemination strategy.

WORLD HEARING DAY

held on 3 March each year, World Hearing Day is an advocacy event that aims to raise awareness on the relevance of hearing loss as well as to promote ear and hearing care across the world. Each year, a theme is developed through evidence-based data, and advocacy materials are made available on the WHO website.

2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021

2018

HEARING LOSS, SDGs AND UHC

Addressing hearing loss will significantly contribute to meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reduce poverty by:

- Promoting healthy lives (SDG 3)
- Promoting employment and economic growth (SDG 8)
- Hearing care will be accessible to all in an integral part of universal health coverage.

What can you do?

- Participate in the social media campaign and register your event on World Hearing Day on WHO.
- Organise events in your country, organisation, or community.
- Share events reports with WHO.
- Use and promote WHO advocacy materials.
- Promote and share WHO's messages.

Want to get involved?

Contact us at ehc@who.int or www.who.int/teams/ear-and-hearing/world-hearing-day/

MAKE LISTENING SAFE

1.3 billion teenagers and young adults are at risk of developing hearing loss due to the unsafe use of personal audio devices and exposure to damaging levels of sound in noisy recreational venues. Since 2013, WHO has been leading a multi-stakeholder initiative 'Make Listening Safe' to address this rising problem. Partners include the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and a number of organisations, experts in the field of audiology, otology, public health, occupational, industrial and sound engineering, representative of professional organisations, NGOs, professional bodies, academic groups, and the private sector.

Make Listening Safe

VISION

To ensure that people of all ages do not suffer hearing loss due to their hearing.

AIM

To reduce the risk of hearing loss caused by unsafe listening practices.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

BEFOREHAND

- Reduce volume level.
- Make awareness about the harmful effects of loud music and other noise.
- Encourage regulations to implement the WHO's standards for safe listening devices (SLDs).
- Reduce noise while driving, operating, repairing, maintaining and other noise.

WHILE

- Ensure that personal audio systems comply with the safe listening standards.
- Take messages to safe listening through social, advertising, education, awareness and other means.
- Undertake awareness campaigns to inform users about the importance of hearing and safe listening.

AFTER

- Inform users about risk of unsafe listening and raise awareness on safe listening.
- Inform people about the importance of regular hearing checks and give them access where and how they can get them.
- Advocate with governments and manufacturers for implementation of the safe listening standards.

GOAL

- Reduce the global risk of unsafe listening and raise awareness on safe listening.
- Inform people about the importance of regular hearing checks and give them access where and how they can get them.
- Advocate with governments and manufacturers for implementation of the safe listening standards.

IMPACT

- Reduce the global risk of unsafe listening and raise awareness on safe listening.
- Inform people about the importance of regular hearing checks and give them access where and how they can get them.
- Advocate with governments and manufacturers for implementation of the safe listening standards.

EAR AND HEARING CARE TOOLKIT

What is the Ear and Hearing Care Toolkit for?

The Ear and Hearing Care Toolkit is a package of complete guidance for Member States and other partners to develop national and sub-national strategies for ear and hearing care. The toolkit will provide a ready-to-use manual that will aid in the development and implementation of ear and hearing care services.

Toolkit five boxes:

- Planning**
 - A planning and monitoring manual
 - An ear and hearing care situation analysis tool (EHCAT) for country assessment
 - Best practices and case studies to inspire country progress
 - An advocacy handbook and generic materials available to Member States for policy-making
 - Concrete monitoring measures and tools for raising awareness in communities
- Awareness and Advocacy**
 - Individual for early identification through screening in high-risk populations/children
 - Teachers and parents
 - Pre-school and primary school children
 - Addressed to best practices in occupational and recreational settings
 - Three existing national regulations
 - Addressing 85 years of age
- Survey and Screening**
 - Individual for early identification through screening in high-risk populations/children
 - Pre-school and primary school children
 - Addressed to best practices in occupational and recreational settings
 - Three existing national regulations
 - Addressing 85 years of age
- Training and Capacity Building**
 - EHC training modules and supporting digital materials
 - Information on the minimum standards requirements for ear and hearing services
 - Training standards and methods of performance monitoring
- Rehabilitation and Assistive Devices**
 - Individual for early identification through screening in high-risk populations/children
 - Pre-school and primary school children
 - Addressed to best practices in occupational and recreational settings
 - Three existing national regulations
 - Addressing 85 years of age

What can you do with the EHC Toolkit?

- Start your planning process and conduct an ear and hearing care assessment of your country or region
- Advocate for hearing care with policy makers
- Undertake health worker training

Want to learn more about the Ear and Hearing Care Toolkit?

Contact us at ehc@who.int

Follow us @WHO

1. A World Report on Hearing

2. Advocacy on the World Hearing Day

3. The Make Listening Safe initiative to prevent noise-induced hearing loss

4. A toolkit of technical support to Member States in planning and implementation of EHC

5. A multi-stakeholder engagement to prevent and address hearing loss globally