

Poliomyelitis: intensification of the global eradication initiative

The Executive Board,

Having considered the report on poliomyelitis: intensification of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative,¹

RECOMMENDS to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:²

The Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on poliomyelitis: intensification of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative;

Recalling resolution WHA61.1 on poliomyelitis: mechanism for management of potential risks to eradication, which, inter alia, requested the Director-General to develop a new strategy to reinvigorate the fight to eradicate poliovirus and to develop appropriate strategies for managing the long-term risks of reintroduction of poliovirus and re-emergence of poliomyelitis, including the eventual cessation of use of oral poliovirus vaccine in routine immunization programmes;

Recognizing the need to make rapidly available the necessary financial resources to eradicate the remaining circulating polioviruses and to minimize the risks of reintroduction of poliovirus and re-emergence of poliomyelitis after interruption of wild poliovirus transmission;

Noting the Independent Monitoring Board's recent finding that "polio simply will not be eradicated unless it receives a higher priority – in many of the polio-affected countries, and across the world" and its recommendation that the World Health Assembly "considers a resolution to declare the persistence of polio a global health emergency";

¹ Document EB130/19.

² See document EB130/19 Add.1 for the financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of adoption of the resolution.

Noting the recent report of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization that “states unequivocally that the risk of failure to finish global polio eradication constitutes a programmatic emergency of global proportions for public health and is not acceptable under any circumstances”;

Recognizing the need for Member States to engage all levels of political and civil society in order to ensure all children are vaccinated to eradicate poliomyelitis;

Noting that the technical feasibility of poliovirus eradication has been proved through the full application of new strategic approaches;

Noting that continuing poliovirus transmission anywhere will continue to pose a risk to poliomyelitis-free areas until such time as all poliovirus transmission is interrupted globally;

1. DECLARES the completion of poliovirus eradication a programmatic emergency for global public health, requiring the full implementation of current and new eradication strategies, the institution of strong national oversight and accountability mechanisms for all areas infected with poliovirus, and the application of appropriate vaccination recommendations for all travellers to and from areas infected with poliovirus;¹

2. URGES Member States with poliovirus transmission to declare such transmission to be a “national public health emergency” making poliovirus eradication a national priority programme, requiring the development and full implementation of emergency action plans, to be updated every six months, until such time as poliovirus transmission has been interrupted;

3. URGES all Member States:

(1) to eliminate the unimmunized areas and to maintain very high population immunity against polioviruses through routine immunization programmes and, where necessary, supplementary immunization activities;

(2) to maintain vigilance for poliovirus importations, and the emergence of circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses, by achieving and sustaining certification-standard surveillance and regular risk assessment for polioviruses;

(3) to urgently make available the financial resources required for the full and continued implementation through end-2013 of the necessary strategic approaches to interrupt wild poliovirus transmission globally, and to initiate planning for the financing to the end of 2018 of the polio endgame strategy;

(4) to engage in multilateral and bilateral cooperation, including exchanging epidemic information, laboratory monitoring data, and carrying out supplementary immunization activities simultaneously as appropriate;

¹ *International travel and health*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2012 edition, in press.

4. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to plan for the renewed implementation through 2013 of the approaches for eradicating wild polioviruses outlined in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative Strategic Plan 2010–2012 and any new tactics that are deemed necessary to complete eradication, including the enhancement of the existing global polio eradication initiative within the Organization;
- (2) to strengthen accountability and monitoring mechanisms to ensure optimal implementation of eradication strategies at all levels;
- (3) to undertake the development, scientific vetting, and rapid finalization of a comprehensive polio eradication and endgame strategy that exploits new developments in poliovirus diagnostics and inactivated poliovirus vaccines, informs Member States of the potential timing of a switch from trivalent to bivalent oral poliovirus vaccine for all routine immunization programmes, and includes budget scenarios to the end of 2018 that include risk management;
- (4) to coordinate with all the relevant partners to promote the research, production and supply of vaccines, to enhance their affordability, effectiveness and accessibility;
- (5) to continue mobilizing and deploying the necessary financial and human resources for the strategic approaches required through 2013 for wild poliovirus eradication, and for the eventual implementation of a polio endgame strategy to the end of 2018;
- (6) to report to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly and the subsequent two Health Assemblies, through the Executive Board, on progress in implementing this resolution.

Eleventh meeting, 21 January 2012
EB130/SR/11

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