

Poliomyelitis – containment of polioviruses

The Seventy-first World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on eradication of poliomyelitis;¹

Recalling resolution WHA65.5 (2012) on poliomyelitis: intensification of the global eradication initiative and WHA68.3 (2015) on poliomyelitis, and in which the Health Assembly urged all Member States inter alia to implement appropriate containment of all polioviruses starting with the serotype 2;

Noting the eradication of wild poliovirus type 2 globally, declared by the Global Commission for the Certification of the eradication of poliomyelitis in September 2015;

Acknowledging the continued progress in eradicating poliovirus types 1 and 3;

Recognizing the successful globally synchronized switch in April 2016 from the use of trivalent to bivalent oral polio vaccine, active only against poliovirus types 1 and 3;

Noting the development of the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013–2018, including objective 3 – containment and certification, considered by the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly;²

Commending the work of WHO and the Global Commission for the Certification of the eradication of poliomyelitis in promoting the containment of all polioviruses, starting with type 2, the first serotype being eradicated;

Noting with alarm delays in implementation and certification of poliovirus containment for type 2 polioviruses planned for 2016, as well as the accidental release of wild poliovirus type 2 from a vaccine-production facility in 2017;

Underscoring the urgent need to accelerate globally activities to implement and certify containment of polioviruses;

Underlining that successful containment of all polioviruses will ensure the long-term sustainability of the eradication of poliomyelitis,

¹ Document A71/26.

² Document WHA66/2013/REC/3, summary records of the ninth meeting of Committee A, section 1.

1. URGES all Member States:¹
 - (1) to fully implement all strategic approaches outlined in the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013–2018;
 - (2) to intensify efforts to accelerate the progress of poliovirus containment certification as outlined in national requirements² as well as in the WHO Global Action Plan to minimize poliovirus facility-associated risk after type-specific eradication of wild polioviruses and sequential cessation of oral polio vaccine use (GAPIII);³
 - (3) to complete inventories for type 2 polioviruses, destroy unneeded type 2 materials and to begin inventories and destruction of unneeded type 1 and 3 materials in accordance with the latest available published WHO guidance;
 - (4) to ensure that any confirmed event associated with a breach in poliovirus containment is immediately reported to the National IHR Focal Point;
2. URGES all Member States retaining polioviruses:
 - (1) to reduce to a minimum the number of facilities designated for the retention of polioviruses, prioritizing facilities performing critical national or international functions;
 - (2) to appoint, as soon as possible and no later than the end of 2018, a competent National Authority for Containment⁴ that will process containment certification applications submitted by the facilities designated to store and/or handle poliovirus post-eradication and communicate its contact details to WHO by 31 March 2019;
 - (3) to make available to the National Authority for Containment all necessary resources, including technical, personnel and financial, required for the full and successful certification of implementation of appropriate poliovirus containment measures;
 - (4) to request facilities designated to retain poliovirus type 2 to formally engage in the Containment Certification Scheme⁵ by submitting to their National Authorities for Containment their applications for participation, which is the first step of the global certification process, as soon as possible and no later than 31 December 2019;⁴

¹ And, where applicable, regional economic integration organizations.

² Containment Advisory Group, see <http://polioeradication.org/tools-and-library/policy-reports/advisory-reports/containment-advisory-group/> (accessed 1 March 2018).

³ Available at http://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/GAPIII_2014.pdf (accessed 1 March 2018).

⁴ As recommended at the Special Meeting of the Global Commission for the Certification of the Eradication of Poliomyelitis on Poliovirus Containment (Geneva, 23–25 October 2017); the meeting report is available at <http://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/polio-global-certification-commission-report-2017-10-final-en.pdf> (accessed 1 March 2018).

⁵ Available at http://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/CCS_19022017-EN.pdf (accessed 26 May 2018).

(5) to initiate steps for the containment for wild type 1 and 3 materials so that, by the time of global certification of eradication, all facilities retaining poliovirus meet containment requirements;

(6) to prepare a national response framework for use in the event of a breach of poliovirus containment and risk of community exposure and to conduct a polio-outbreak simulation exercise that covers the risk of poliovirus release from a facility;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to provide technical support to Member States in their efforts to implement poliovirus containment safeguards and certify that facilities retaining poliovirus meet the requirements outlined in the WHO Global Action Plan to minimize poliovirus facility-associated risk after type-specific eradication of wild polioviruses and sequential cessation of oral polio vaccine use (GAPIII);

(2) to facilitate the harmonization of certification mechanisms for the long-term sustainability of the implementation of poliovirus containment in the post-eradication era;

(3) to update all WHO's recommendations and guidance on poliovirus containment, as and when needed;

(4) to report regularly to the Executive Board and the Health Assembly on progress and on the status of global poliovirus containment, aligned with other polio reporting requirements.

Seventh plenary meeting, 26 May 2018
A71/VR/7

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