

Recent news from WHO

- WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan announced a number of changes to the **structure of the organization** to take effect from November 1. The Communicable Diseases cluster of departments is renamed Health Security and Environment. The HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria cluster is renamed HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases cluster and will include the department for Control of Neglected Tropical Diseases. The Information, Evidence and Research cluster includes the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases as well as a new department on Ethics, Equity, Trade and Human Rights.
- On 8 October, the Stop TB Partnership's Global Drug Facility and UNITAID announced they are to provide 19 countries with **anti-tuberculosis drugs** and direct technical assistance. UNITAID had committed US\$ 26.8 million to the new initiative, which will cover countries for the remainder of 2007, and all of 2008.
- Anna Cataldi, a former UN Messenger of Peace, has been appointed as an Ambassador of the **Stop TB Partnership**. Ms Cataldi, who is from Italy, is the author of the book *Letters from Sarajevo*, which chronicled the effect of the 1992–95 war on Bosnia's children. She will raise awareness worldwide about the unfair burden of tuberculosis on refugees, migrants, people living in poverty and other disadvantaged groups.
- On 5 October, WHO released its first guide on planning **palliative care** services for people living with advanced stages of cancer. *Palliative care: cancer control knowledge into action, WHO guide for effective programmes* is based on consultations with more than 70 of the world's leading cancer experts. The guide, aimed primarily at public health planners, identifies highly effective low-cost public health models to care for terminally ill cancer patients, especially in developing countries. The guide can be found at: www.who.int/cancer/media/FINAL-PalliativeCareModule.pdf
- On 1 October, WHO released the first guide on **age-friendly cities** following consultations with older people in 33 cities in 22 countries. *Global age-friendly cities: a guide* is aimed primarily at urban planners and includes a checklist of age-friendly features such as sufficient public benches and well-maintained and well-lit sidewalks. The guide can be found at: http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf
- On 21 September, WHO launched *Promoting safety of medicines for children*, which examines how best to reduce **side-effects** from medicines in children. The report calls for strengthened safety monitoring and vigilance of medicinal products. The publication is part of a new drive to improve children's access to quality-assured, safe and effective medicines. The report can be found at: http://www.who.int/medicines/publications/essentialmedicines/Promotion_safe_med_childrens.pdf
- The Bloomberg Family Foundation has contributed US\$ 9 million to WHO to further international **road safety** efforts. The new funding will support the development of a global road safety report and implementation of intensive road safety activities in Mexico and Viet Nam.
- At a conference in Porto, Portugal, on 24 September WHO and its partners called for increased research to improve **patient safety**.
- On 18 September, UN health partners appealed for US\$ 84.8 million to help an estimated 2.2 million **displaced Iraqis** who have fled the ongoing violence and instability to neighbouring countries.
- WHO is to expand its basic **surgery** training programme for health-care staff in low- and middle-income countries.

For more about these and other WHO news items please see: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre>