



Yves Chartier, World Health Organization
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WHO/HCWH Mercury-Free Health
Care Partnership
c/o Salud sin Daño/HCWH International
Coordination
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Dear Mssrs. Chartier and Karliner,

Thank you for the invitation to join the Mercury-Free Health Care Partnership, co-led by World Health Organization and Health Care Without Harm.

We understand that this global partnership aims to achieve virtual elimination of mercury-based thermometers and sphygmomanometers over the next decade and their substitution with accurate, economically viable alternatives.

We also understand that this initiative is a component of the UN Environment Programme's Mercury Products Partnership, which is led by the US Environmental Protection Agency. As such, this health care initiative is contributing to a broader effort to promote environmental health by reducing the amount of mercury emitted into the global environment.

Our organization, the International Council of Nurses has been involved since the 1990s in promoting the substitution of mercury-based medical devices. ICN adopted a ***Position Statement on Medical Waste: Role of nurses and nursing*** in 1998 which was reviewed and revised in 2004 (see http://www.icn.ch/PS_E07_Medical%20Waste.pdf). In 2007, ICN published ***Guidelines on Occupational Health and Safety Management Programme for Nurses*** (see http://www.icn.ch/guideline_occupationalhealth.pdf). In 2009, ICN will be publishing a monograph/handbook on ***Health Care Waste Management***, supported by Health Care Without Harm.

I write you today to accept your invitation and express our willingness to join the Partnership.

As part of the Mercury-Free Health Care Partnership we will continue our efforts by promoting a wide dissemination of the Handbook mentioned above as well as the supporting guidelines and Position Statement. ICN has numerous development and training projects. The goal of a mercury-free health care environment fits easily within the objectives of many of these programmes, e.g. Leadership for Change, Leadership in Negotiation, Tuberculosis, Wellness Centres. Furthermore, our next Congress to be held in June/July 2009 will promote a pre-Congress workshop with Health Care Without Harm on waste management.

We look forward to collaborating with you in this most important effort.

Yours sincerely,



David C. Benton
Chief Executive Officer

Cc:

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