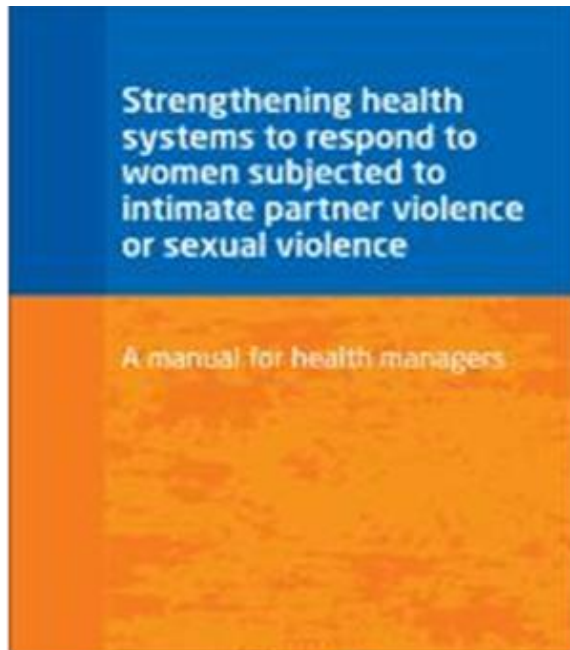
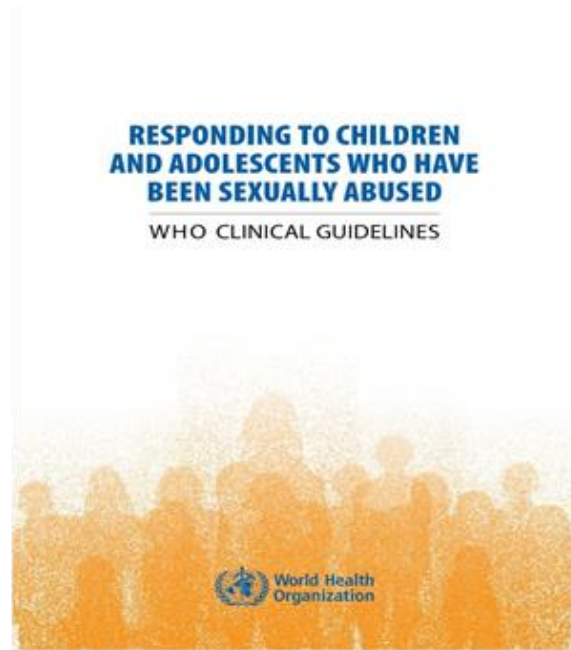


WHO Guidelines Launch Event.

Conversation with national experts in Poland on health response to women and children subjected to sexual and intimate partner violence and abuse.



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Event Summary

Four key WHO guidelines were translated into the Polish language and launched on May 23, 2023, at the University of Warsaw and May 25, 2023, at the University of Zielona Góra. The event represents a historic moment for WHO and Poland in joint efforts to ensure lifesaving healthcare for survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence.

Attended by about 200 individuals, including representatives from the government, international stakeholders, leading scholars, civil society, medical professionals, and students.

Discussions were centered on how to strengthen the health system's response to sexual and intimate partner violence at primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions. The events were held in collaboration with the University of Warsaw and University of Zielona Góra.

In the context of the Ukraine crisis, experts also discussed measures to address at-risk populations, including refugees who experienced forms of conflict-related sexual violence and required immediate health care to address the life-threatening health impacts of such violence.

Guidelines summary

The guidelines provide evidence-based recommendations for quality clinical care for children and adolescents who have, or may have, been subjected to sexual abuse, including rape in order to mitigate the negative health consequences and improve their well-being.

They also include clinical protocols for health care provider adaptable in humanitarian or similar settings and Clinical handbook for health providers on health care for IPV and SV survivors from awareness about GBV, clinical care including mental health support.

In addition to a full package training curriculum to support the health response to SV and IPV translated in the Polish language.

Recommendations from Expert Panelist

National Experts Panelist from different sectors at the event agreeing to;

- Ensure continued attention to violence against women and girls as a public health issue;
- Increase collaboration across sectors to ensure a multi-disciplinary response to violence against women and children; and
- Use WHO guidance to revise existing protocols where necessary, train clinicians, and strengthen the health systems response.

Recommendations from National Academics for Clinical settings.

- Health care providers in Poland to develop the skills to recognize the signs of violence, provide frontline support, provide medical care to people who have suffered violence and refer them to other units if necessary

- Need to involve managers and directors of health facilities in holistic efforts, as the use of the manuals will strengthen the capacity of the health system to respond to cases of violence against women and girls.

- Need for training of health care providers on how to deliver assistance and on integrated care

- provide psychological first aid immediately after an incident, as well as ensuring pharmacological intervention if needed.

- Ensure persons experiencing sexual violence have "safe spaces" - i.e. interviews in a calm, secluded environment, respecting the right to intimacy and the dignity of the patients.

- Standardise guidelines across all health units

Recommendations from National Academics for Academic settings

- Universities play a key role in ensuring that future healthcare professionals have the right skills and knowledge to respond appropriately in cases of violence against women; they provide opportunities to gain and develop skills before entering practice.
- Need for health care provider to ensure a patient centered care by learning how to respond to information of violence from survivor and trust building.
- Develop communication skills and empathy.
- Raise awareness on the symptoms, consequences and recognition of sexual violence .
- Integrating the teaching of Guidelines content into university syllabuses.

What is Next?

The next phase of the project will focus on the implementation of the guidelines across Poland, including **assessing health system readiness**, **supporting clinical training** and **quality assurance frameworks** with partners to strengthen health services for survivors.

Assessing facility readiness to respond to cases of sexual and intimate partner violence offers health care providers, facilities, and program planners a straightforward way to start, strengthen or expand post-GBV health services through this minimum standards.

- A protocol or standing operating procedure exists for asking about and responding to GBV.
- Providers have received training on how to ask about IPV or SV and provision of first-line support (i.e., LIVES)
- Private setting.
- Confidentiality ensured.
- A system for referrals or linkages to other services within the facility is in place.

LIVE (Listening , Inquire about needs and concerns, Validate, Enhance safety and Support.

Publication Links.

- Światowa Organizacja Zdrowia. Udzielanie pomocy dzieciom i młodzieży, które zostały wykorzystane seksualnie: wytyczne kliniczne opracowane przez WHO
<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/367637>
- Światowa Organizacja Zdrowia. Opieka medyczna dla kobiet, które doznały przemocy w relacji intymnej i przemocy na tle seksualnym: przewodnik kliniczny
<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/367629>
- Światowa Organizacja Zdrowia, United Nations Population Fund & United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2023). Postępowanie kliniczne w przypadkach zgwałcenia i przemocy w relacjach intymnych: zasady opracowania protokołów postępowania w warunkach kryzysów humanitarnych. Światowa Organizacja Zdrowia. Regionalne Biuro dla Europy.
<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/367834>

Conclusion: It is our hope that these evidence-based guidelines will support increased access to and quality of health services to ensure life-saving care for women, girls and other at-risk groups.

Event Visibility Links.

- <https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/24-05-2023-increasing-the-capacity-of-poland-s-health-system-to-tackle-violence-against-women-and-girls-during-emergencies>
- <https://zdrowie.pap.pl/zdrowie-w-ue/sa-wytyczne-jak-system-zdrowia-ma-reagowac-na-sygnal-o-przemocy>
- <https://www.medexpress.pl/wydarzenia-kampanie/zwiekszenie-zdolnosci-polskiego-systemu-ochrony-zdrowia-do-dzialania-w-przypadkach-przemocy-wobec-kobiet-i-dziewczat-w-sytuacjach-kryzysowych/>
- <https://twitter.com/WHOPoland/status/1661036404778889216?s=20>

Thank you!

Happy to collaborate: musasa@who.int

Saratu Wakawa Musa : Gender Specialist.

Pictures from the Events.

