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# THE CONTAINMENT CORNER - POLIOVIRUS CONTAINMENT NEWS

MAY 2018



## POLIOVIRUS CONTAINMENT

### Welcome...

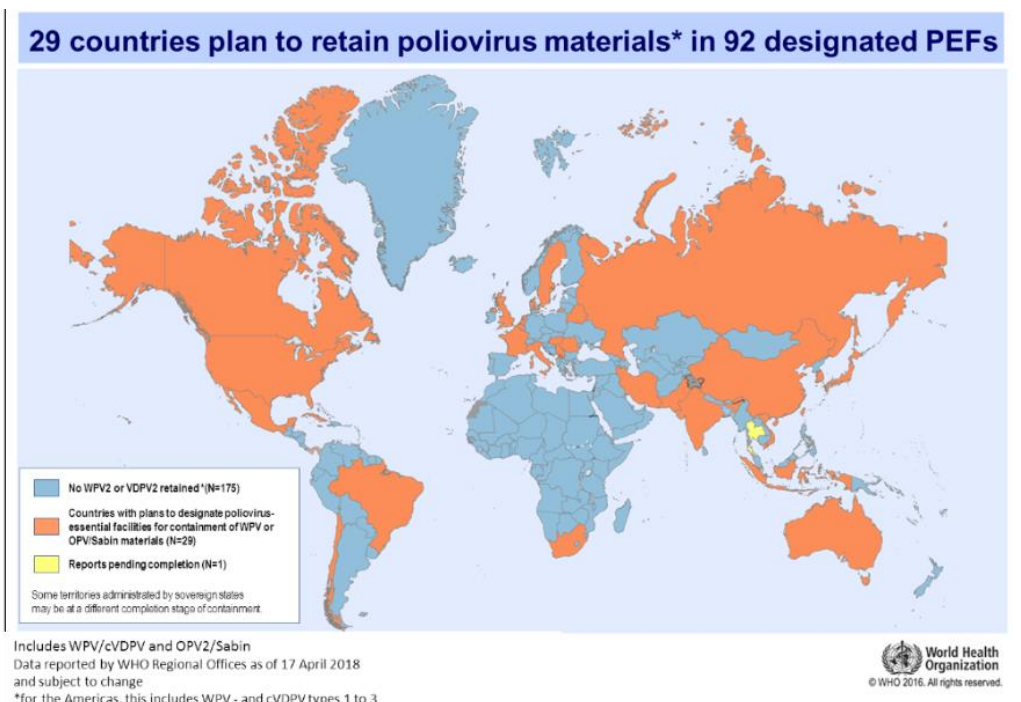
...to *The Containment Corner*, a new GPEI publication to update stakeholders on key developments in global poliovirus containment. The e-newsletter replaces *Polio Pipeline* and will be biannual in frequency. In this first edition, we give a snapshot of global progress in poliovirus containment, tip our hat to a Scandinavian country paving the way in the containment certification process, uncover new WHO guidance for non-polio facilities working with materials potentially infectious for polioviruses and take a look at WHO's draft resolution on containment to be presented at this year's World Health Assembly. Happy reading.

### Global progress in poliovirus containment

Containment includes biosafety and biosecurity requirements for laboratories, vaccine production sites, or any other facility that handles or stores poliovirus infectious materials, to minimize the risk of polioviruses being released into the environment. Containment of eradicated polioviruses is a key objective of the [Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018](#), and will be critical for maintaining a polio free world.

One of three types of the virus, type-2, was declared eradicated in September 2015. Activities are underway to ensure that all poliovirus type-2 materials are destroyed or safely and securely contained. Countries have conducted national inventories of facilities that handle or store wild and vaccine-derived poliovirus type-2, and have destroyed unneeded type-2 materials. They have designated facilities that will retain these materials, where they are needed, and are preparing to undergo the certification of these designated poliovirus-essential facilities. Similar activities for facilities that handle or store type-2 oral polio vaccine (OPV2) and Sabin2 materials are in progress.

**Currently, 29 countries plan to retain poliovirus materials\* in 92 designated poliovirus-essential facilities.**



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

## Sweden takes important first step to demonstrate containment of type-2 poliovirus



A vaccine manufacturer in Stockholm has taken the first step towards becoming a certified poliovirus-essential facility (PEF), leading the charge in global efforts to safely and securely

contain type-2 poliovirus. This facility has been awarded a Certificate of Participation co-signed by the National Authority for Containment (NAC) in Sweden and the [Global Commission for the Certification of Poliomyelitis Eradication \(GCC\)](#). The Certificate is the first of its kind to be issued, indicating formal engagement in the global containment certification process.

Wild poliovirus type-2 was declared eradicated by the GCC in September 2015, however, there is risk of the virus resurging. Following the removal of the type-2 component from oral polio vaccine (OPV) and the discontinuation of type-2 containing OPV from routine use in April 2016, countries around the world have been asked to destroy their type-2 polio samples. As a further precaution, countries continue to immunize against type-2 polioviruses with inactivated polio vaccine. For facilities needing to retain the virus for vaccine production or for critical research, stringent containment measures need to be followed. The first step is getting a Certificate of Participation.

“We are pleased to see Sweden leading the way in demonstrating conforming with the processes to minimize the risk of releasing type-2 poliovirus into the environment. Participation in the Containment Certification Scheme shows that both the facility and the host country are serious about taking on and implementing the safeguard measures necessary to become a PEF,” said Prof. David Salisbury, Chair of the GCC and of the Commission’s European regional body.

“Handling and storing an eradicated pathogen is a risk and responsibility – a leak or breach could have devastating consequences,” said Michel Zaffran, Director of Polio Eradication at the World Health Organization. “We commend Sweden for its commitment towards ensuring safety standards are met and protocols are in place to help minimize risk, and for paving the road for the containment certification process,” he said.

“The issuance of a Certificate of Participation formally engages a designated PEF in the containment process. Provided that the facility meets the requirements outlined in Global Action Plan III for the containment of polioviruses (GAPIII) within given time frames, it can then progress to achieving an Interim Certificate of Containment and finally, a full Certificate of Containment to become an accredited PEF,” said Prof. Salisbury. “Countries planning to retain type-2 poliovirus will need to establish their NACs as soon as possible, and by no later than the end of 2018. The GCC urges all countries that plan to have PEFs to get the ball rolling in this process,” he said.

Since April 2016, most facilities around the world have opted to destroy their type-2 poliovirus materials rather than contain them. Twenty-nine countries, however, plan to continue to handle and store their materials in 92 designated PEFs.

Read [story](#) on GPEI website.



## Searching for every last poliovirus in global sample collections: new guidance for non-polio facilities

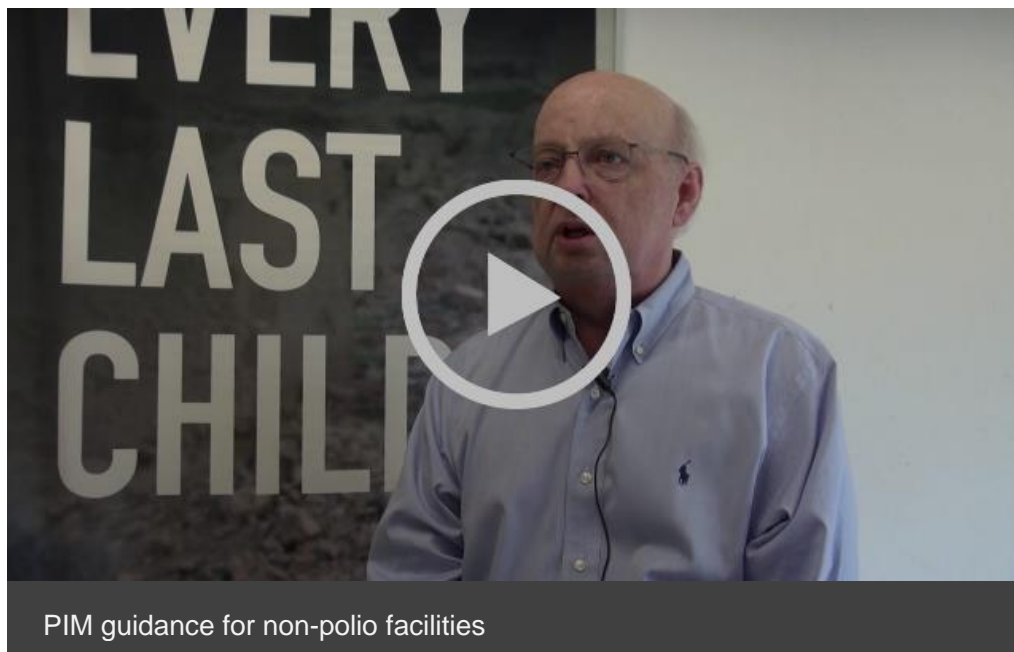
The containment process for facilities which need to retain poliovirus for critical national and international functions, such as vaccine production or research, will be rigorous. Countries must establish national authorities for containment (NACs) and register these facilities as designated poliovirus-essential facilities (PEFs), formally engaging them in the [Containment Certification Scheme](#). Facilities then need to comply with requirements set out in [Global Action Plan III for the containment of polioviruses](#) within certain time frames to become certified PEFs. This is all so that protective measures are in place to minimize risks of facility workers becoming infected with polio and the pathogen being released back into the environment following its eradication. Makes sense. But what about facilities that could be/don't know if they are working with polioviruses?

WHO has released new [Guidance for non-poliovirus facilities to minimize risk of sample](#)

[collections potentially infectious for polioviruses](#). Poliovirus potentially infectious materials (PIM) include fecal, nasopharyngeal, or sewage samples collected in a time and place where wild/vaccine-derived polioviruses, or OPV-derived viruses were circulating or oral polio vaccines were in use. Non-polio research facilities with a high probability of storing such materials include those working with rotavirus or other enteric agents, hepatitis viruses, influenza/respiratory viruses, and measles virus. Other facilities could include those conducting nutrition research or environmental facilities.

The guidance aims to help these facilities identify PIM and eliminate or minimize risks of handling and storing such materials.

In the video below, Dr Mark Pallansch from the guidance drafting group explains what the document means for facilities worldwide.



## **Accelerating global action: WHO proposes poliovirus containment resolution for review at World Health Assembly**

Poliovirus transmission levels are currently at the lowest point in history and the feasibility of eradication in the short-term is realistic. In light of this, an intensification of containment activities by all parties is needed. WHO is therefore proposing a resolution for consideration by

the World Health Assembly in May, seeking international consensus on accelerating efforts and activities to ensure that containment requirements are rapidly and fully implemented across the world.

The resolution contains recommended actions for all Member States and WHO's Director-General, and actions specifically for Member States planning to retain poliovirus for critical functions.

Read the draft resolution [here](#).

## Key dates in 2018

- **21-26 May** Seventy-first World Health Assembly, Geneva
- **9 October** WHO/UNICEF consultation with OPV and IPV manufacturers and NACs from vaccine producing countries, Geneva
- **10-11 October** GCC and Containment Working Group meeting with all NACs, Geneva
- **29-31 October** GCC meeting focusing on poliovirus containment, Amman
- **31 December** Deadline for NAC establishment in PEF hosting countries

## Quick links

[More on poliovirus containment](#)

[Key points on poliovirus containment](#)

[Global Action Plan III for the Containment of Polioviruses \(GAPIII\) and GAPIII Containment Certification Scheme \(GAPIII-CCS\) tools](#)

[Potentially Infectious Material \(PIM\) guidance for non-polio facilities](#)

## Polio this week

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