

# 2025 WORLD SEPSIS DAY **5 FACTS x 5 ACTIONS**

## POLICY AND MEDIA BRIEF

Developed by the Global Sepsis Alliance in consultation with  
the Global Sepsis Survivors and Family Committee



Global  
Sepsis  
Alliance

# Introduction to 2025 World Sepsis Day

Since 2012, over 54,000 stakeholders from 170 countries - including policymakers, national health authorities, healthcare providers, researchers, innovators, advocates, Sepsis survivors, families affected by this devastating medical emergency, and medical students – mark the World Sepsis Day (WSD) on September 13.

World Sepsis Day was initiated by the Global Sepsis Alliance (GSA) – the largest professional and advocacy network in the fight against Sepsis. WSD campaign events are held by GSA members and partners across Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Eastern Mediterranean, Latin America and Caribbeans, and North America. These campaigns include scientific conferences, training sessions, media outreach, and the launch of national, regional or global initiatives on Sepsis literacy or advocacy.

2024 World Sepsis Day was marked by the historic launch of the 2030 Global Agenda for Sepsis at the German Parliament, the first multi-year strategy to prevent 12 million new Sepsis cases and save 2 million lives over the next 5 years.

In 2025, World Sepsis Day aims to mark a new chapter in the global Sepsis response, with a strong focus on media engagement and public awareness to highlight this largely invisible threat that causes 1 in 5 deaths globally.

## Theme of 2025 World Sepsis Day „5 Facts x 5 Actions“

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Raising Sepsis literacy is essential to achieving a whole-of-society approach against this medical emergency. The Global Sepsis Alliance proposes the 2025 theme “5 Facts x 5 Actions” as standardized brief for all stakeholders. This theme reflects:

- **Five key messages** on the global burden of Sepsis.
- **Five policy and advocacy actions** that can help save millions of lives.

We call on all policymakers, healthcare leaders, and advocates to promote the following:

### Fact 1

**Sepsis is the leading cause of death globally**

- Every 3 seconds, someone dies of Sepsis
- Sepsis affects 48.9 million people annually
- Sepsis is responsible for 1 in 5 deaths worldwide
- WHO estimates 11 million annual deaths due to Sepsis
- IHME and the University of Oxford, estimate 21 million Sepsis-related deaths in 2021, including 4 million AMR-associated deaths. Please see MICROBE viz-hub for your country estimates here

### Fact 2

**Sepsis Hits the Most Vulnerable the Hardest - Globally**

- 85% of the global Sepsis burden is concentrated in the Global South, including low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) across Africa, Asia, and Latin America
- Yet, Sepsis remains the leading cause of hospital deaths, even in high-income countries such as the United States
- Sepsis affects 20 million children under the age of five each year, including newborns.
- Women, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals are also at high risk of severe outcomes
- Across all regions, poverty and limited access to care make Sepsis more deadly – especially in areas where health systems are overstretched or under-resourced.

### Fact 3

**Most Deaths from Sepsis Are Preventable**

- Prevention of Sepsis through immunization, WASH and other infection control measures is vital.
- At the same time, early detection of suspected Sepsis is life-saving
- Every hour of delay in antibiotic treatment increases the risk of deaths by 0.4% to 7%
- Timely diagnosis and administration of antibiotics, IV fluids, immunomodulatory and other therapies save millions of lives

### Fact 4

**Only 15 of 194 countries invest in Sepsis**

- Despite affecting every country and causing 20% of deaths globally, only 15 countries have Sepsis policies and action plans
- Fewer than 10% of countries have Sepsis protocols for timely and effective treatment of children or adults
- We applaud 180 countries for their national AMR plans, and since AMR-related deaths are part of Sepsis mortality, governments should urgently align AMR and Sepsis strategies
- Sepsis care on average costs 36,000 Euro per patient and 3.65% of health sector budgets. Sepsis policies save lives and costs.
- Additional data: In the U.S., sepsis accounts for \$62 billion in hospital costs annually, with \$3.5 billion from readmissions. In Germany, with ~320,000 sepsis cases annually and 27% in-hospital mortality, direct 3-year healthcare costs are estimated at €6.8 billion (US \$7.7 billion) per year.

### Fact 5

**A stronger Sepsis response is essential for Global Health**

- 2030 Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved without stronger Sepsis response, including targets for reduction of maternal and child mortality, or deaths from non-communicable diseases and injuries.
- Sepsis is a powerful proxy indicator of national health system performance and Universal Health Coverage. Its prevention, early detection, and effective treatment reflect a well-functioning health system—from primary care and emergency response to intensive care and post-sepsis rehabilitation.
- Pandemic preparedness requires stronger Sepsis response, as 78% of COVID-19 patients in intensive care units had Sepsis
- Civilians, healthcare workers, military and humanitarian aid personnel face increased Sepsis risks during emergencies

## 5 Actions Against Sepsis

### Action 1

**Every country should prioritize and fund Sepsis response**

- Health ministries and parliamentary committees should develop and finance national Sepsis policies and action plans
- Sepsis policies and action plans should be integrated into broader health sector reforms and Universal Health Coverage, including for maternal, neonatal and child health and immunization programmes.
- Governments should seek support for Sepsis response from bilateral and multilateral donors, the World Bank, and other development banks as well as GAVI and the Global Fund.

### Action 2

**Every country should develop Sepsis protocols and train healthcare providers**

- National health authorities and professional associations must create evidence-based clinical guidelines for Sepsis care.
- These should include community and clinical pathways and first-hour Sepsis bundles for children and adults.
- Healthcare providers across all healthcare levels – from primary care to emergency medical teams and intensive care units – should be trained in Sepsis care protocols
- Sepsis prevention and management should be part of medical and nursing curricula

### Action 3

**Global Health actors should prioritize and fund Sepsis response**

- Sepsis is one of the best investment cases in Global Health.
- The United Nations should call for global investment in Sepsis Science and capacity building
- Financial Institutions (World Bank, IMF, etc.), Global Public Private Partnerships (e.g., GAVI, Global Fund, UNITAID), philanthropic foundations and research programs (e.g., EU Horizon) should prioritize Sepsis response and research.
- We need investments for new vaccines, diagnostics, AI tools, antibiotics, immunomodulatory and precision medicine approaches for saving millions of lives from Sepsis

### Action 4

**Media can play a leading role in saving lives from Sepsis**

- Sepsis kills more people than heart attacks or strokes, yet public awareness remains low
- Media can be a game changer in Sepsis literacy – making Sepsis a household term and understanding that it is a time-critical emergency and needs immediate medical care
- Journalists, influencers and communicators are vital in holding governments accountable.
- We call on all representatives of media– TV, radio, press and social - to regularly report on Sepsis and advocate for action

### Action 5

**Prioritize Sepsis in Pandemic and Emergency Response**

- Every future pandemic will increase Sepsis risks and Sepsis should be embedded in pandemic preparedness plans
- Armed conflicts, disasters and humanitarian crises also increase risks and governments should include Sepsis prevention, surveillance and clinical care in emergency plans.

## Additional Information and Resource

### Global Sepsis Alliance

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- The Global Sepsis Alliance (GSA) is the largest professional network and advocacy voice for patients and families affected by Sepsis and septic shock. It represents 120 member organizations, including patient groups and professional associations across 6 Regional Sepsis Alliances in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Eastern Mediterranean, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Canada and the United States.
- In 2012 GSA launched the World Sepsis Day (WSD) movement on 13 September, which now engages over 54,000 stakeholders in 170 countries. The WSD page also provides media and communication toolkits and resource materials for different target groups in multiple languages.
- GSA also initiated fully online, annual flagship events — the World Sepsis Congresses (WSC) and WSC Spotlights. Since 2016, WSCs have reached over 122,000 healthcare providers, researchers, policymakers, innovators, and advocates with state-of-the-art knowledge in prevention, antimicrobial stewardship, early detection, and timely and effective treatment of Sepsis.
- GSA played a central role in the adoption of the historic 2017 World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolution on Sepsis (WHA70.7). Finally, GSA led the development of the Global Sepsis Agenda 2030, the first multi-year strategy in partnership with over 70 stakeholders worldwide and the launch of the document at the German Parliament with a special video address from the WHO Director-General.

### About Sepsis

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- Sepsis is a life-threatening medical emergency, when the body's (the host's) response to infection causes injury to its own tissues and organs. This can lead to shock, multi-organ failure, disability and death, especially if it is not recognized early and treated promptly.
- Sepsis is the final common pathway to death from most infectious diseases, including bacterial, viral and fungal pathogens, as well as parasites, such as those causing malaria. Despite the advancements, 30-day septic shock mortality remains high even in developed regions of North America (33.7%) and Europe (32.5%).
- Sepsis survivors often face long-term sequelae, lifechanging effects of the critical illness, and need specialized care and rehabilitation

### 2030 Global Agenda for Sepsis

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- The 2030 Global Agenda for Sepsis is the first multi-year strategic vision aimed at alleviating the significant human, societal, healthcare and economic burden of Sepsis and its sequelae through concerted efforts of UN Member States and stakeholders at national, regional and global levels.
- The 2030 Global Agenda for Sepsis was launched at the German Bundestag in September 2024 in partnership with the Global Health Sub-Committee of the German Parliament, UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health Virchow Foundation and Sepsis Stiftung.
- The ultimate goal of the 2030 Global Agenda is to avert millions of preventable deaths and disabilities among children, women, and men by stronger positioning of Sepsis in the global health and development architecture and enhancing response capacities to this medical emergency in community and healthcare settings.