Fact Sheet: World Pneumonia Day
12th November 2019

Ending preventable pneumonia deaths: a global priority

- Pneumonia is the leading cause of death in children and in the elderly.
- Each year almost 700,000 children die from pneumonia.
- Every minute, 2 children die from pneumonia.
- 80 percent of deaths are in children under 2 years.
- Almost all deaths occur in low and middle-income countries.
- Pneumonia can lead to lifelong health impairment.
- Although breastfeeding is a key preventative strategy against childhood pneumonia, only 40 percent of children less than six months old are exclusively breastfed.
- Although effective immunisations are available to prevent pneumonia, globally 170 million children in low and middle-income countries are not vaccinated against pneumonia.
- Pneumonia is treatable with antibiotics; oxygen may be needed for more severe pneumonia.
- Only 1 out of 3 children who need antibiotics for pneumonia receive them.

About the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS)

The Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) is an organisation comprised of the world’s leading international respiratory societies working together to improve lung health globally: American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST), American Thoracic Society (ATS), Asian Pacific Society of Respirology (APSR), Asociación Latino Americana De Tórax (ALAT), European Respiratory Society (ERS), International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (The Union), Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS), Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA), and the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD).

The goal of FIRS is to unify and enhance efforts to improve lung health through the combined work of its more than 70,000 members globally.

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