

WHO welcomes Facebook pledge to curb anti-vaccine misinformation | Reuters

By Kate Kelland

September 5, 2019

LONDON (Reuters) – The World Health Organization said on Thursday it welcomed a commitment by Facebook that it would direct users seeking vaccine information on its Instagram, Facebook Search, Groups and other forums towards facts, not misinformation.

After several months of talks with the WHO, Facebook has pledged to direct its users to “accurate and reliable vaccine information in several languages” on the WHO’s website, the United Nations health agency said, “to ensure that vital health messages reach people who need them the most”.

“Major digital organizations have a responsibility to their users – to ensure that they can access facts about vaccines and health,” the WHO said in a statement.

“Vaccine misinformation is a major threat to global health that could reverse decades of progress made in tackling preventable diseases,” it said. Deadly infectious diseases such as measles, diphtheria, hepatitis, polio, cholera and yellow fever can all be prevented with immunization, it noted.

Facebook confirmed in a statement that it is “starting to roll out more ways to connect people with authoritative information about vaccines on Facebook and Instagram”.

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