

Invest in health professionals for cost-effective, quality care, says WHPA

Geneva, Switzerland: 19 May 2025—The World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) is calling on the global health community and those who fund it to recognize the health workforce as the backbone of all health care. Despite radical funding cuts and changes to the global health landscape, the new structures at the World Health Organization (WHO) and elsewhere must continue to support investment in health professionals and ensure that they have the decent working conditions they need to provide optimal care for patients. WHO Secretary General Dr Tedros has said, “Without the health workforce, there is no health”, and this continues to be true in the face of new funding realities.

At the [WHPA side event](#) during the 78th World Health Assembly (WHA), held at 18.00 on Monday 19 May in Geneva, WHPA leaders amplified the professions’ central messaging at the WHA: Health professionals are a cost-effective way to provide safe and quality care and represent a sustainable long-term investment.

Policy makers at WHO and elsewhere may be seeking efficiencies in health financing. However, substituting health professionals for non-professional health service providers will not result in a resilient health workforce that can face a challenging future and help realize universal health coverage (UHC).

“Health professionals can ensure consistent and safe care through evidence-based practices, delivered according to strict regulatory frameworks and codes of ethics. In unregulated environments, however, there is high risk of errors and compromised patient safety,” said Otmar Kloiber, Chair of WHPA and Secretary General of the World Medical Association (WMA).

WHPA leaders at the event also called on WHO to persevere with its review of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, for which WHPA is in the Expert Advisory Group. While the Code continues to be highly relevant, its terms do not yet provide sufficient mutual benefits for sending and receiving countries, they said. Improved adherence to the Code would also yield significant impacts.

In addition to the side event, WHPA and its members will also be making several interventions in WHA debates to bring these messages to government delegates from WHO member states.

Speakers at the WHPA side event:

- Paul Sinclair—President, FIP International Pharmaceutical Federation
- Michel Landry—President, World Physiotherapy
- Pamela Cipriano—President, ICN International Council of Nurses
- Ashok Philip—President, WMA World Medical Association
- Enzo Bondioni—Executive Director, FDI World Dental Federation

Notes for Editors

The *World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA)* brings together the global organizations representing the world's dentists, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists and physicians and speaks for over 41 million health care professionals in more than 130 countries. The WHPA works to improve global health and the quality of patient care and facilitates collaboration among the health professions and major stakeholders.

www.whpa.org

The *World Health Assembly* is the decision-making body of WHO. It convenes annually in May, bringing together delegations from WHO's 194 Member States, United Nations agencies, international organizations, as well as non-State actors in official relations with WHO. WHPA's members are all in official relations with WHO.

WHO *Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel* is a voluntary WHO instrument which aims to ensure that health workforce migration contributes to strengthening the health systems of developing countries.

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