

ICN AT THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY



International Council of Nurses
The global voice of nursing

Re-cap for 23 May 2023

YESTERDAY'S COMMITTEE DISCUSSION & ICN STATEMENTS

The following key agenda items were discussed yesterday. ICN made statements on those highlighted:

- 14.1 The Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee for the WHO Health Emergencies Programme
- 14.2 Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)
- **15.1** Strengthening WHO preparedness for and response to health emergencies: Strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience
- 15.2 WHO's work in health emergencies
- **15.3** Global Health for Peace Initiative

ICN Statement – 15.3 Global Health for Peace Initiative

ICN Consultant Nursing and Health Policy Senior Advisor Erica Burton presented [ICN's intervention](#) on the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Health for Peace initiative, which is intended to strengthen the role of WHO and the health sector as contributors to peaceful outcomes.

She said ICN welcomes the clarification of the revised roadmap and echoes what has been raised by other WHO Non-State Actors about the importance of strict adherence to the humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality under the implementation of the initiative.

She went on: "We also highlight the ICN #NursesForPeace campaign, emphasising the crucial role of nurses in advancing health equity in terms of access to health care services and the availability of health resources, which contribute to the preservation of peace.

'ICN supports the health worker training mentioned in the roadmap, however, it should avoid adding further burden on the already fragile and overworked health workforce, and promote better protection of health care delivery and health care personnel.'



Ms Burton said a strong, long-term monitoring framework is needed for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the initiative.

ICN Statement 15.1 - Pandemic prevention, preparedness and response

On 23 May, the World Health Profession Alliance's (WHPA) [intervention](#) on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response was presented to a roundtable discussion on the topic.

The intervention, presented on behalf of WHPA by Joannah C. Wengler, WHPA Secretariat Manager, highlights the severe impact that COVID-19 has had on the wellbeing of health professionals worldwide, and calls for urgent action to safeguard nurses and other health care workers.

The intervention cites evidence from WHPA's recent report about the impact of the pandemic on the wellbeing of health professionals, and argues that protecting health care workers improves the resilience of health systems and their emergency planning and response.

It points out that the health workforce is also fundamental to the delivery of essential health services and public health functions in the pursuit of the overarching goals of Universal Health Coverage, global health security and WHO's cancer initiatives.



The intervention calls on Member States to invest in strengthening mental health and psychological support for health professionals who are involved in pandemics and health emergencies, and for improved working conditions to be provided with safe, supportive working environments where qualified and experienced staff are retained and have access to continuing professional development.

It also calls for Member States to invest in systemic strategies to address violence in health care settings - particularly violence against women health workers - and to involve health professionals, especially women, in national planning, policy and finance decision-making, to help ensure that on-the-ground expertise informs decisions, and ultimately benefits both patients and health systems.

MEETINGS

ICN President Dr Pamela Cipriano met with World Health Organization (WHO) Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus at this week's World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva. They discussed why investment in nurses is essential not just to recover, but also to rebuild health systems and deliver UHC2030.

Dr Pamela Cipriano and ICN Chief Executive Officer Howard Catton held discussions about the pressing issues facing nursing and health care with senior figures from around the world who are in Geneva for the WHA meeting. Topics covered included the COVID-19 pandemic, ICN's Charter for Change, this year's International Nurses Day theme, Universal Health Coverage and noncommunicable diseases. The Geneva visitors included:



- Australian Chief Medical Officer Professor Paul Kelly
- Barbados Foreign Minister Jerome X. Walcott and Acting Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) Anastacia Jordon
- Malawi Deputy Director of Nursing & Midwifery Lucy Mkutumula
- New Zealand CNO Lorraine Hetaraka
- Salvadorian CNO Ludys Mabel Soto de Zepeda and Vice Minister of Health Management & Development Carlos Alvarenga
- Nurses Association of Thailand President Siriorn Sindhu and esteemed colleagues
- President of the Romanian Order of Nurses, Midwives and Medical Assistants Mircea Timofte and Health Minister Dr Alexandru Rafila



Malawi



Barbados



New Zealand



El Salvador



Romania



Thailand

Ms Burton attended the Member Meeting of the **WHO Civil Society Working Group to Advance Action on Climate Change** representing ICN as an inaugural and alumni member of the Working Group. This meeting was co-hosted with the Global Climate and Health Alliance (GCHA). Attendees included Dr. Maria Neira, Director of WHO Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health, Jeni Miller, Executive Director of GCHA as well representatives from member organisations and WHO representatives working in the WHO Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health.



EVENTS

Dr Cipriano and Mr Catton also attended and contributed to various meetings at the Assembly, representing the position of nurses and nursing in various discussions and round table events. This included:

- Dr Cipriano attending the **UHC2030 and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies side event *From Commitment to Action: How the United Nations high Level Meeting is key to delivering Health for all session.***
- Mr Catton attending the **Global Health Council, Frontline Health Workers Coalition, Living Goods, and Pathfinder side-event *Creating an Action Agenda: Advancing National Health Workforce Plans to Meet the Aspirations of the Global Political Declarations.***

TODAY'S AGENDA & ICN STATEMENTS

The following key agenda items are scheduled to be discussed today. ICN will make a statement on those highlighted:

- **12.** Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030)
- **13.1** Universal Health Coverage: Reorienting health systems to primary health care as a resilient foundation for universal health coverage and preparations for a high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on universal health coverage