Seventy-forth session of the Regional Committee for Africa

Provisional agenda Item 9
Framework for the implementation of the Global Diabetes Compact in the WHO African Region (Document AFR/RC74/5)

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the over 28 million nurses worldwide. ICN fully supports the recommended interventions and actions outlined in the report. Given the high burden of diabetes and premature mortality in the African region, there is an urgent need for localized, cost-effective programmes to prevent and control diabetes.

Nurses play a critical role in the prevention, management, and care of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes. They are on the front lines, providing essential care, ensuring person-centered diabetic management, and reducing risk factors through education and early intervention. ICN emphasizes the importance of involving nurses in the implementation of the Global Diabetes Compact (GDC) within the African region, as their involvement is key to addressing the growing burden of diabetes.

To move forward, it is essential to integrate diabetes prevention, early diagnosis, and management into primary health care systems and to invest in specialist nurse roles for diabetic care. There is strong evidence that nurse-led interventions in diabetic care significantly reduce the burden of rising comorbidities, improve patient outcomes, and prevent complications.

ICN advocates for strategically placing nurses across both rural and urban areas to ensure equitable access to high-quality diabetic care. Their expertise is crucial in developing effective care models that address the complexities of NCDs. By empowering nurses and positioning them at the core of NCD prevention and control, we can achieve better health outcomes and enhance global well-being. Mobilizing the nursing workforce to address diabetes is a powerful strategy to tackle the disease's growing impact, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes across the region.