



## 72<sup>nd</sup> WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

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Provisional agenda item 11.8

### **Follow-up to the high-level meetings of the United Nations General Assembly on health-related issues: Prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the over 20 million nurses worldwide.

The health workforce has an enormous contribution to make in the promotion, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and needs to be a central part of any NCD strategy. The WHO Independent High-level Commission on NCDs recommended that governments reorient health systems to include health promotion, the prevention and control of NCDs, and mental health services in their UHC policies and plans. Essential for this is strengthened primary health care and a well-equipped multi-disciplinary health workforce, especially nurses. As noted in the report, with the right knowledge, skills, opportunities, and financial support, nurses are uniquely placed to act as effective practitioners, health coaches, spokespersons, and knowledge suppliers for patients and families throughout the life course.

Nurses are increasingly taking on the management of NCDs and providing high-quality, accessible and cost-effective services. Nurses use every contact and every opportunity for health promotion, disease prevention and early detection. Prevention and treatment healthcare services for NCDs, especially primary care services, should be designed to be primarily nurse-led which will ensure high quality care that meets emerging and increasing needs of populations.

ICN calls on Member States to:

- Enable nurses to work to their full scope of practice and support the development of advanced and specialist roles. This may require modernising regulatory frameworks to support nurses broader decision-making authority.
- Include and strengthen the contribution of nursing leaders in high-level policy and planning decision-making. This includes appointing nurses to senior positions within health systems.
- Ensure the availability of safe, effective and quality diagnostics, medicines, vaccines, technologies and palliative care.

Recognising, investing in and mobilising the nursing workforce will lead to real and lasting changes.

Thank you.

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