

## **156th WHO Executive Board Meeting 3 – 11 February 2025, Geneva**

### **Item 6 Universal Health Coverage**

The International Council of Nurses (ICN), representing over 28 million nurses worldwide, reaffirms that nurses are central to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). As the largest and most widely distributed health workforce, nurses play a vital role in strengthening primary health care (PHC), ensuring care continuity, and addressing health inequities globally.

ICN's recent *Primary Health Care Report* highlights the effectiveness of nurse-led models, such as rural clinics and community mental health and vaccination programs, in expanding access to high-quality, cost-effective care. Yet, chronic underinvestment in the nursing workforce impedes the full potential of these models and hinders progress toward UHC.

ICN urges governments to make bold, sustained investments in nursing and PHC. UHC will not be achieved unless urgent action is taken to strengthen the nursing workforce through education, protection, and retention. There is no health for all without investing in nurses for all.