



World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) statement on Israel and Palestine conflict : all parties must respect and protect access to healthcare

Geneva, Switzerland; 13 October 2023 – The World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) is calling for all parties to the conflict in Israel and Gaza to respect their legal obligations under international humanitarian law to protect and respect access to healthcare and ensure the safety of civilians and healthcare workers.

Healthcare workers are delivering emergency medical care in the conflict areas with no regard to ethnicity, race, religion or political affiliation. They are putting themselves at enormous risk and we know that tragically many have been injured or killed. All parties to the conflict must adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law, namely that under the Geneva Conventions the ill-treatment and killing of civilians is prohibited and the sick and wounded must be cared for. WHPA also wishes to underline that under international law it is also prohibited to abuse symbols of protection, and that hospitals and other health facilities and vehicles, such as ambulances, must under no circumstance be used as military installations of any kind or means of transportation.

In line with the humanitarian efforts that should be afforded to all citizens in conflict areas under the Geneva Conventions, WHPA members unanimously support the provision of care without risk to any health personnel. Therefore, WHPA calls for immediate cessation of any acts that risk the lives of civilians or health workers. Access to health is a human right and any attack on health workers and the patients they serve is abhorrent and unacceptable.

Note to Editors

The World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) is a unique alliance of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), FDI World Dental Federation (FDI), the World Medical Association (WMA) and World Physiotherapy. WHPA addresses global health issues striving to help deliver cost effective, quality health care worldwide. Together, the partners of the WHPA include more than 600 national member

organisations, making WHPA the key point of global access to health care professionals within the five disciplines.

The **International Council of Nurses** (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.