

Seventy-eighth World Health Assembly

Provisional agenda Item 13.2 **Mental health and social connection**

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The International Council of Nurses (ICN), representing over 28 million nurses, strongly supports prioritizing mental health and social connection as essential in all countries and communities. There is a severe shortage of mental health nurses, who make up just 1% of the nursing workforce. Investing in, developing and sustaining the mental health nursing workforce, its scope of practice and competence is a necessity for a resilient health care system and healthy communities. ICN's 2024 Guidelines on Mental Health Nursing are a roadmap to improving mental health services and ICN recommends their integration into national policies to build effective and humane mental health care systems. Furthermore, nurses themselves face significant physical, mental, and social challenges and the 2025 State of the World's Nursing reveals an alarming lack of mental health services for nurses. ICN urges Member States to invest in comprehensive services for nurses' wellbeing.