

Seventy-ninth Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia

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Agenda item 8.5

Health facility resilience

The International Council of Nurses (ICN), representing over 30 million nurses worldwide, welcomes the Regional Committee's focus on health facility resilience.

A facility is only as resilient as its workforce. During floods, cyclones, heatwaves and outbreaks across this Region, nurses are central to maintaining continuity of care, adapting services and supporting recovery. Resilience planning that covers buildings, energy, and supplies but neglects the workforce that operates them will be ineffective. Safe staffing is resilience infrastructure.

ICN urges Member States to place nursing leadership in facility-level emergency and climate-resilience planning; to build workforce surge capacity, cross-training and disaster competencies into resilience investments, drawing on ICN's Core Competencies in Disaster Nursing; to protect health workers through safe facilities, security from violence, insurance and psychosocial support; and to treat retention as a resilience measure, because a facility that cannot keep its nurses in normal times will not hold them in a crisis.

ICN further encourages WHO to reflect workforce readiness explicitly in regional monitoring of facility resilience, including staffing capacity, emergency competencies, surge arrangements and workforce protection alongside structural and logistical measures.

Climate-resilient, safe and green facilities are the right ambition for a Region on the front line of climate change. Nurses will be central to keeping their doors open. ICN remains committed to supporting this agenda.