

Pan American Health Organization, 63rd Directing Council

September 28 –2 October 2026

Item 3.3 Plan of Action on Antimicrobial Resistance 2027–2031

I am speaking on behalf of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), representing over 30 million nurses worldwide.

ICN welcomes the Plan of Action on Antimicrobial Resistance 2027–2031 and its emphasis on accelerated, coordinated action through a One Health approach. Successful implementation will depend on fully engaging and equipping the health workforce, including nurses, who are central to infection prevention, antimicrobial stewardship and community engagement.

Across diverse scopes of practice, nurses assess people with suspected infections, administer antimicrobials and, where authorized, diagnose and prescribe; monitor treatment outcomes and adverse effects; deliver vaccination; lead and implement infection prevention and control; and educate patients, families and communities.

Through their central role in primary health care, nurses build public understanding and engagement by educating patients on health risks of AMR, its drivers and prevention measures, including treatment adherence, appropriate antimicrobial use and infection prevention.

ICN continues to advocate for competency-based, context-sensitive AMR education across the nursing career pathway. AMR, infection prevention and control, and antimicrobial stewardship competencies should be integrated into pre-service education, continuing professional development, workforce strategies, facility quality programmes and national AMR action plans, with learning linked to practice and measurable competence.

As leaders of IPC teams and initiatives, IPC nurse specialists can help close substantial gaps in IPC and water, sanitation and hygiene capacity in health facilities and communities, while guiding multidisciplinary teams in applying IPC principles and best practices. ICN stresses the importance of immunization in

preventing AMR and calls for increased funding and equity-focused expansion of immunization programmes.

As AMR disproportionately impacts vulnerable populations, ICN calls on countries to invest in equitable health systems ensure access to preventative, diagnostic and curative care delivered by well-trained, well-supported health professionals. ICN stands ready to work with PAHO, Member States and partners to preserve the effectiveness of antimicrobial medicines for current and future generations.

Delivered by Sarah E. Gray