



Patient Safety Global Ministerial Summit 2018 International Council of Nurses (ICN) Statement

April 2018

Honourable Minister, Chairperson, Distinguished delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Council of Nurses (ICN). ICN is a federation of over 130 national nursing associations representing the more than 20 million nurses worldwide.

The delivery of safe, high-quality patient care is of utmost importance to nurses. As nursing care spans all areas of care delivery, nurses are well placed to prevent harm to patients and improve the quality and safety of healthcare delivered across all settings. As such, nurses should be central to the design and operation of all health providers' patient safety systems and processes.

However, in order for healthcare systems to benefit from nursing practice there must be an appropriate number of nurses with a suitable mix of education, skills and experience available at all times across the continuum of care. Investing in safe, effective and needs-based nurse staffing levels has proven to be cost-effective, lead to positive patient outcomes, improved working environments and is critical for patient safety. ICN therefore urges governments to ensure funding is sufficient to deliver needs-based staffing. Furthermore, when nurses are supported to practice at their full scope of practice, safety and quality improve. For example, a survey by the Japanese Nursing Association demonstrated a reduction in pressure sores where there were more experienced nurses.

We must promote solutions that will facilitate communication and data sharing across multiple practitioners, delivery settings, geographic settings and languages. We wish to emphasise the importance of interprofessional teamwork to advance quality and safety by fostering a safe work environment built on mutual respect and shared decision-making. ICN believes that there is a need for greater inclusion of interprofessional education in curriculums to support this.

ICN has a strong focus on people-centred care and supporting patient health literacy to empower patients to be active participants in their own care. ICN supports putting a greater emphasis on engaging patients and families to improve patient safety and encourages governments to involve them in the development of all relevant policies and strategies.

Finally, we would like to highlight that ICN participated in the expert consultation on the implementation of the Global Patient Safety Challenge: *Medication Without Harm* and we will continue to support the efforts of WHO and contribute to the patient tool, identifying research priorities, and updating the Patient Safety Curriculum Guide.

Thank you for your kind attention.