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## **Global virtual gathering of nurses and midwives outlines actions to be taken to protect individual nurses and midwives and strengthen the professions in the post-COVID-19 era**

**Geneva, Switzerland, 30 June 2020** – More than 600 of the world’s leading nurses and midwives discuss plans to strengthen the professions’ leadership and education, put them at the centre of policy and planning decision-making, and ensure there are sufficient numbers available to cope with increasing future health demands.

Leaders of the world’s nursing and midwifery professions have issued a joint statement following the recent ICN, International Council of Midwives and World Health Organization (WHO) TRIAD meeting, which was hosted virtually in Geneva.

More than 600 nurses and midwives, including government level Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers and representatives from ICN’s 130-plus National Nursing Associations, discussed the future of the professions.

The statement highlights key issues for the professions at this unique moment in time, including the need to implement the recommendations of the first WHO [State of the World’s Nursing report](#), support leadership, education and training in both professions, and implement human resource management in the context of COVID-19, which includes keeping healthcare workers safe.

ICN President Annette Kennedy said:

“The pandemic has shown the world that nurses’ knowledge is essential to health care because of their unique relationship with patients, their families and communities. Nurses have earned their place at the table whenever healthcare policy and planning decisions are being made.

‘Our constructive discussions at the Triad meetings highlighted the need for investment to maximise the leadership potential within the professions, and ensure that all nurses and midwives get the education and training they need to provide the best possible care for the people they serve.’”

ICN Chief Executive Officer Howard Catton said that six months on the COVID-19 pandemic is still far from over, echoing the sentiment of WHO Director-General Dr Tedros, and that keeping health professionals safe must be the utmost priority for all governments dealing with the continuing pandemic.

“The protection and safety of our nurses and midwives is of paramount importance. We have just passed the grim milestone of 500,000 deaths worldwide from COVID-19, with more than 10 million infected. Adding to this tragedy, scandalously we do not have accurate data for how many of the infected or deceased are nurses or other healthcare workers, but our analysis clearly suggests that nurses are at particular risk of contracting the virus and dying from it.

‘Governments, healthcare organisations and employers have a solemn duty of care to protect their staff and not put them in harm’s way, yet we know that many healthcare workers are going to work, despite knowing that adequate protections are not in place for them.

‘We have been calling for the centralised collection of standardised data on infections, deaths and assaults against nurses for months, and ICN is pleased that the TRIAD statement reiterates and endorses our recommendations. Once we have standardised data, we can see the true magnitude of the harm COVID-19 has done to our noble professions and the colleagues they work alongside. This knowledge will help us to improve infection control and prevention measures and ensure healthcare worker safety.’

To read the TRIAD meeting statement please click [here](#).

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### **Note to Editors**

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.

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