



International Council of Nurses  
*The global voice of nursing*

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## **International Council of Nurses calls on public to support nurses: stopping the spread of COVID-19 is in your hands**

**Geneva, Switzerland; 12 August 2020** - The International Council of Nurses (ICN) today called for the public to support nurses by continuing to adhere to guidelines for hand washing, social distancing and wearing face masks.

“The world has shown so much appreciation to its nurses and other healthcare workers,” said Annette Kennedy ICN President. “The applause and messages of support have been incredible as morale boosters, but what nurses need most from the public is for them to keep themselves and others safe to reduce the pressure on healthcare services.

‘As lockdown restriction are lifted, case numbers are rising again, and we must not let our guard down. Each and every one of you can play your part in stopping the spread of this virus, by regularly washing your hands, wearing a mask in public, maintaining distance between yourself and others, and self-isolating if you have even minor symptoms.

‘By following these simple guidelines and those issued by your government, you can show your support for nurses and other healthcare workers who are risking their own health, and even their lives, to care for others.’

ICN has estimated that 8% of all COVID-19 cases are among healthcare workers, and the World Health Organization (WHO) believes it could be up to 10%, which is almost two million cases and rising.

ICN - a federation of over 130 national nursing associations around the world - has brought attention to the plight of nurses who are facing unprecedented challenges at the frontlines of the battle against COVID-19.

ICN has called for the protection of nurses and improved working conditions and pay. ICN has also implored governments to [collect accurate data](#) on nurse infections and deaths, and called for [nurses to be prioritised](#) once a COVID-19 vaccine is available.

“While ICN is putting pressure on governments to invest in and protect nurses, we need the public’s help to stop the spread of this virus,” Ms Kennedy said.

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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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