



## 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Americas

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### **Policy for Recovering Progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals with Equity through Action on the Social Determinants of Health and Intersectoral Work**

**26-30 September 2022 (Washington, USA)**

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) supports the need to focus on social determinates of health (SDH) to equitably achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs). ICN sees investments in nurses and health workforces as key to achieving health equity, addressing SDHs, and preparedness for future pandemics.

Nurses work in a variety of settings including preventative care and public health. They see the impact of failing to address SDHs on achieving the SDGs. SDGs regarding poverty, hunger and education are all things that nurses are trained to assess for in their patients. Nurses are also key leaders in health equity research and policymaking. Failing to incorporate nurses into planning for expanding health equity will create gaps in care plans leaving patient with unmet needs by the health system. ICN calls for the following:

- Ensuring nurses have adequate training to deal with health disparities, so SDH are assessed and addressed in clinical care settings.
- Ensuring nurses are included in leadership positions within health equity interventions.
- Ensuring disaggregated data on health workforce populations. This policy statement called for data collection in patient populations to be disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, territory, income, education, occupation, and social class, needed for health equity monitoring. ICN calls for workforce data to also be disaggregated. A diverse health workforce is needed to provide care to diverse populations.
- Incorporating investments in health workforces and nurses into all health equity interventions, as without strong nurses and health workforces we will be unable to address SDH, especially through future pandemics.

The pandemic has increased poverty, reduced access to food and widened gaps in educations making it more difficult to address SDH. Nurses are key to resetting after the pandemic to work again towards the SDGs. We call for nurses to have leadership in all health equity interventions.

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 nursing care for all and sound health policies globally.