



71st WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Provisional agenda item:

11.7 Preparation for the third High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, to be held in 2018

May 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the over 20 million nurses worldwide.

The health workforce has an enormous contribution to make in the promotion, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and needs to be a central part of any NCD strategy. There are more than 40 million health professionals who can bring their education, skills and commitment to the task and help close the gap between the great ambitions of NCD strategies and action on the ground to achieve results.

Nurses are increasingly taking on the management of NCDs and providing high-quality, accessible and cost-effective services. Nurses play an even greater role by using every contact and every opportunity for health promotion, disease prevention and early detection. Nurses are local people who can work with local communities on improving health and help make community health workers more effective by providing support, supervision and a point for referral.

Recognising, investing in and mobilising the nursing workforce will lead to real and lasting changes. We therefore call on Member States to:

- Invest in quality undergraduate and post graduate education and continuing education to facilitate improved interventions.
- Enable nurses to work to their full scope of practice and support the development of advanced and specialist roles. This may require modernising regulatory frameworks to support nurses broader decision-making authority.
- Include and strengthen the contribution of nursing leaders in high-level policy and planning decision making. This includes appointing nurses to senior positions within the health system.
- Ensure that the necessary and appropriate diagnostic and treatment tools are available.

We urge members to ensure that the health workforce is included as a central component of the WHO and United Nations Strategies for the prevention and control on NCDs.

Thank you.

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