



WHO Executive Board 144

6.6 Patient Safety - Global action on patient safety

Honourable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the World Medical Association (WMA), which represents more than 9 million physicians around the world.

We welcome the WHO report *Global action on patient safety* and would like to thank WHO for the fruitful cooperation in the development of various tools and curriculums on this topic.

Physicians strive to provide the highest quality health and medical care to patients. Patient safety is one of the core elements of quality care.

In order to enhance patient safety special attention is required in health systems strengthening and here especially in primary health care. Since health care is delivered in a team approach, effective leadership, good communication and the availability of a competent and compassionate workforce is vital. Communication and cooperation with all relevant stakeholders and especially patients are imperative to improve patient safety.

Individuals and processes are rarely solely responsible for producing errors. They rather happen through combined elements. Therefore, there should be a non-punitive culture for confidential reporting of healthcare errors that focuses on preventing and correcting systems failures rather than on individual or organization accountability.

To favour such an approach, physicians must continuously absorb a wide range of advanced scientific knowledge. Special attention needs to be given therefore to education, training and continues development.

All these aspects are a priority for WMA and are reflected in the WMA Declaration on Patient Safety. WMA therefor supports WHO in setting similar priorities in its report and recent activities.

WMA through its member associations will promote policies on patient safety and encourage individual physicians, other health care professionals, patients and other relevant individuals, organizations and governments to work together to establish systems that secure patient safety.

We look forward continuing our collaboration with WHO on these issues.

Thank you

