**WHO Executive Board 146th session**

**EB146/20 - Data and innovation: draft Global Strategy on digital health**

Distinguished Delegates

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the World Medical Association representing 9 million physicians worldwide.

We welcome the draft Global Strategy on Digital Health, particularly the recommendation to strengthen the digital health sector governance. We recognize the potential of digital health to supplement traditional ways of delivering healthcare and recall that its driving force must be the need to improve the quality of care. “Do no harm” is a core value of our professional ethics that must be valid for digital health as well. We therefore call on you to ensure the following:

* Member states should develop and implement legislative framework for Digital Health to prevent manipulation that may disrupt global health security and increase inequality.
* The regulatory oversight should bring in domains of clinical/ interventional effectiveness, as well as data privacy and security, with clear sanctions for breaches of these regulations.
* Digital Health development and delivery should underpin ethics and follow a person-centered approach, by engaging patients and health professionals in the development of technologies.
* As laid down in the [WMA Declaration of Taipei on ethical considerations regarding health databases and biobanks](https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-taipei-on-ethical-considerations-regarding-health-databases-and-biobanks/), key ethical principles in collecting and using health data, including the principles of confidentiality and informed consent, should be respected at all stages.
* Mobile health is a form of digital health offering advantages to patients otherwise unable to access health care. However, it is not universally appropriate. Where face-to-face treatment is available, this is advantageous to the patient and should be privileged as recommended in our [Statement on mobile health](https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-statement-on-mobile-health/).
* Great efforts should be made to equip and educate the health workforce, including physicians, on digital skills and the evaluation of digital technologies.

Thank you