

World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA)



and



Constituency statement to the WHO Executive Board 158 (Feb 2026)

Agenda Item 26: Economics of health for all

Before I start reading the constituency statement, these are the non-state actors co-signing the statement:

- *FDI World Dental Federation*
- *FIP International Pharmaceutical Federation*
- *ICN International Council of Nurses*
- *WMA World Medical Association*
- *World Confederation of Physical Therapy (World Physiotherapy)*
- *Humatem*
- *WONCA World Organization of Family Doctors*
- *IFBLS International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science*
- *IFA International Federation on Ageing*
- *IPPNW International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War*

Five of the organisations supporting this statement - FDI, FIP, ICN, WMA and World Physiotherapy - are part of the World Health Professions Alliance, representing 47 million health professionals, and have a Memorandum of Understanding with WHO. An economy of health for all is impossible without sustained and strategic investment in the people who deliver health. There is no economic prosperity without population health, and no population health without a skilled, supported, protected and adequately resourced health workforce. Health workforce is an essential pillar of sustainable and effective health care systems, especially today and in the future as the need for access to healthcare services will increase.

Addressing the global health workforce crisis requires long-term, sustainable strategies that prioritise workforce well-being as a core system investment. The health and well-being of health personnel directly influence quality of care, patient safety and economic productivity. Neglect leads to higher turnover, absenteeism, preventable errors or unavailability of medical devices, imposing significant and recurring costs on national economies. In contrast, investing in workforce well-being and education improves care quality and safety, strengthens retention, enhances system resilience and delivers substantial economic returns.

The economic evidence is clear. Every dollar invested in health systems generates returns of \$2-4USD¹. Higher health workforce density is associated with longer life expectancy, improved productivity, and sustained economic growth.

Health innovation and macroeconomic strategies must prioritise public health value, equity, and population needs, strengthening primary health care and workforce capacity globally.

¹ Remes, J., et al. (2020). 'Prioritizing health: A prescription for prosperity', McKinsey Global Institute. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/healthcare/our-insights/prioritizing-health-a-prescription-for-prosperity>