



Statement on agenda item

EUR/RC70/11 The European Programme of Work (2020–2025) – “United Action for Better Health in Europe”

European Forum of National Nursing and Midwifery Associations largely welcome and support the proposed Programme.

The Programme strongly reflects both longstanding and emerging issues of health, puts forward the agenda of achieving universal health coverage, better health and well-being and improved protection against emergencies at a time of uncertainties and high pressures of Covid-19 pandemic.

Universal health coverage is at the heart of WHO-EURO Programme and is at the heart of both nursing and midwifery. The road to UHC is through primary health care and nurses and midwives are highly involved in providing care in the community, close to patients and their families. However, nurses and midwives need to be supported to a greater extent in order to provide care and they must be empowered to work to the full extent of their education.

Earlier this year, the International year of the nurse and the midwife, WHO launched the first ever State of the World Nursing Report calling for greater investment in nursing and midwifery education, jobs and leadership, with recommendations to Member States including advancing the roles of nursing professionals especially in primary care. As the largest group of health professionals nurses and midwives are well positioned to provide improved access to quality care to millions of people starting from birth till the end of life, they are those health professional who can serve best in achieving continuity and integrity of care; they are the real health force to educate population groups and improve health literacy, and they make significant contribution to patient's safety. However, nurses and midwives must be recognized, authorized and supported as such professionals.

EFNNMA highly welcomes the approach towards strengthened health workforce policies, based on patient and society's needs. Policies for improved recruitment, retention and motivation, supportive and safe work environment are greatly needed. EFNNMA appreciates WHO-EURO readiness to help member states in achieving team-based and people-centered care.

EFNNMA anticipates that collaborative regional efforts in exchanging and designing innovative models of care will put more light on the effects of nurse-led and midwife-led models of care on improved access, quality, people satisfaction, patient outcomes and level of costs.



Health needs of population have no breaks to allow systems fighting pandemics with no high losses in other areas and fields. Systems definitely require more and better prepared health workforce, need increased investments in nursing and midwifery education and jobs, as at times of pandemics nurse shortages lead to national tragedies.

Improved workforce planning and service provision strategies at all levels of health system and governance need to involve nurses and midwives. Nurses and midwives should be better prepared for leadership roles, and should be better supported in these roles.

Nurses and midwives are seldom involved in policy dialog. This must change if nurses and midwives are to make their full contribution to the goal of universal health coverage. The EPW proposes policy dialog as a route to develop and implement strategies and plans. EFNNMA urges the WHO Regional Office to invest into nursing and midwifery leadership and governance through establishing of a post of WHO-EURO Chief nurse.

The European Programme of Work gives a strong promise, and EFNNMA as an NGO partner is looking forward to make its input into extended collaboration with WHO Euro on behalf of 8 million nurses and midwives of the Region.

EFNNMA is the joint voice of nursing and midwifery and was established to promote the continuous development of professions in all Member States in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office

Faithfully yours,
Valentina Sarkisova
Chair of the European Forum of
National Nursing and Midwifery Associations,
President of the Russian Nurses Association