

## **WHO Global Forum for Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers**

**18-19 May 2016, Geneva, Switzerland**

### **The future of nursing and midwifery workforce in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and universal health coverage**

#### **Forum Statement**

The goal of the World Health Organization and its Member States is to achieve the highest attainable levels of health for all people. A number of health development approaches have been directed toward this goal from primary health care in the 70's through to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The commitment made by Member States to universal health coverage reinforces the need for strengthened nursing and midwifery contribution to achieve good health outcomes.

Although many countries still have nursing and midwifery workforce shortages, we the Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers recognize that in addition to increasing our numbers, more must be done in order to realize these professions full potential. Consequently, we acknowledge the importance of ensuring the quality, acceptability, relevance and sustainability of our future nursing and midwifery workforce.

Strengthening nursing and midwifery services in our respective countries is possible by using the latest evidence-based knowledge and relevant technologies to create policies and management systems that support practice and leadership which deliver quality services to individuals and communities within the distinctiveness of our health systems.

In the context of this Forum and in support of the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 and the Global Strategic Directions for Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery 2016–2020, we commit ourselves to: a) Strengthening governance and accountability, b) Maximizing capacity and capability and realising the potential of the nursing and midwifery workforce and c) Mobilizing political will, commitment and investments for nursing and midwifery.

#### **Strengthening governance and accountability**

Strong governance and accountability are crucial in order to ensure that the overall processes of planning and coordination of nursing and midwifery development are efficient and focused on priorities. Establishing strengthened mechanisms that ensure quality education and practice, and clarify relationships and roles can help to ensure good quality of services in countries. For this purpose, we commit ourselves to doing the following:

- Work with relevant partners to translate and implement the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 and the Global Strategic Directions for Strengthening

Nursing and Midwifery 2016–2020 to maximise nursing and midwifery contribution to patient care and good health outcomes;

- Advocate for the establishment of Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers positions in countries requesting assistance;
- Develop robust national workforce plans for nursing and midwifery development to meet national strategic plans;
- Participate in leadership capacity building programmes to increase governance accountability skills and promote innovation;
- In collaboration with key partners, strengthen regulatory mechanisms for nursing and midwifery practice.

### **Maximizing capacity and capability and realising the potential of the nursing and midwifery workforce**

Sustainable development of nursing and midwifery requires efficient planning and use of existing and future resources. The education, deployment, management and retention of nurses and midwives need to be properly coordinated and managed to ensure an appropriate balance of local competencies and skill mix. We therefore commit ourselves to doing the following:

- Work with educational institutions, nursing and midwifery associations and regulatory authorities to develop and implement quality educational standards;
- Collaborate with educational institutions, nursing and midwifery associations, regulatory bodies and other key nursing and midwifery stakeholders to develop and/or strengthen mechanisms for interprofessional education and collaborative practice;
- Encourage nursing and midwifery research development by advocating for the provision of funding and supportive infrastructure;
- Foster the development of multisectoral partnerships to support comprehensive development of all aspects of nursing and midwifery education, practice and management;
- Establish mechanisms for recognizing and rewarding best practice and excellence in nursing and midwifery.

### **Mobilizing political will, commitment and investments for nursing and midwifery**

Government and decision-makers' support, commitment and investments are vital for strengthening nursing and midwifery services. We therefore commit ourselves to promote the above by doing the following:

- Work with politicians and decision makers to ensure that nursing and midwifery development is adequately reflected in national human resources and overall national health plans;
- Use research evidence on nursing and midwifery programmes in countries as a basis for policy and strategic interventions and advocacy with relevant stakeholders;
- Analyze and update respective Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers roles and responsibilities to reflect existing and future country needs.