

WMA RESOLUTION REGARDING THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND COVID-19

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PREAMBLE

The current COVID-19 pandemic is causing one of the greatest challenges that healthcare professionals have ever faced in recent decades. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), COVID-19 has exposed healthcare professionals and their social and family environment to unprecedented levels of risk. Although not representative, data from many countries across all regions indicate that the number of SARS CoV-2 virus infections among healthcare professionals has reached alarming numbers for any healthcare system.

The constant risk of infection and, in many cases, the lack of adequate material and human resources, the high number of infected, the physicians' morbidity and mortality and the lack of human resources policies is causing a physical and emotional exhaustion among health professionals. Moreover, thousands of physicians are losing their lives practicing their profession and fulfilling their ethical duties, a number that is increasing as the pandemic advances in most countries.

As a result of this global situation, the WMA offered its support to [the World Health Professions Alliance open letter which calls on immediate G20 action to secure personal protective equipment for health personnel](#) dated April 9, 2020, and denounced it through its [Urgent Call for governments to support healthcare staff in the battle against Covid-19](#) on April 2, 2020.

The derived consequences that the pandemic will cause in the political, economic and social spheres in all countries should be added to this situation. All of this will worsen the global population's health and will require an effort and commitment from the medical profession, its National Medical Associations and the WMA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The WMA wants to recognise the fight of the medical profession against the pandemic through this Urgent Resolution and advocates to:

1. Sufficient provision of equipment and personal protection material (PPE) for health professionals, which allows healthcare and guarantees the availability of this material in a situation of possible outbreaks.
2. Urge governments to adopt a multilateral and coordinated approach on a global scale of the crisis to promote equality in interventions, access to health services, treatments and future vaccines.
3. Provide enough financing to healthcare systems so that they can face the costs of the pandemic and guarantee accessible and quality healthcare.
4. The National Medical Associations and the WMA encourage an active participation in the planning and management of all stages of the response to the epidemic.
5. Recognise that SARS CoV-2 infection be recognised as an occupational disease and that the medical profession be declared a "profession at risk". Likewise, we request that taking care of healthcare

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professionals be a priority, especially in the field of mental health.

6. Fight against violence towards doctors and against any sign of their stigmatisation by promoting zero tolerance of violence in healthcare settings.
7. Support the medical profession that continues to honour its commitment to science and patients. Because current medical professionalism is one of the few and last defence that the seriously ill, excluded and helpless patients have to maintain a minimum of health, quality of life and human dignity.
8. Urge governments to include health system strengthening and resilience as part of national COVID recovery plans.