

## **Intervention on provisional agenda item 11.1 Primary health care 73<sup>rd</sup> WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

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Honourable Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) represents over four million pharmacists worldwide.

As countries face the COVID-19 pandemic, strong primary health care (PHC) is a critical first line of defence and response, providing essential health services to keep communities safe and healthy.

Earlier this month, we launched the FIP Development Goals as a key resource for transforming pharmacy over the next decade. These goals will serve as a basis for investment in pharmacy healthcare by governmental agencies and funding authorities, and for the planning and delivery of policy initiatives in order to transform PHC. They align with wider global imperatives underpinning the UN Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>1</sup>

This transformation is timely as the COVID-19 pandemic has created an even greater reliance on pharmacists to ensure that people get their treatments and professional advice as part of PHC. Pharmacists' scope of practice has increased with new measures speedily adopted by pharmacists' organisations, allowing much needed continuity of pharmaceutical care.<sup>2</sup> FIP has called on governments to swiftly authorise such changes.<sup>3</sup> One of the expanded roles with which pharmacists have proven to provide an effective and essential public service is vaccination. FIP has urged policy makers to recognise and fully harness the potential and convenience of community pharmacies for vaccination, including against COVID-19 once a vaccine is available.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to community pharmacists' response to the pandemic, pharmacists in hospital, research and laboratory settings are also playing their part, for instance working on clinical trials. To support all pharmacists in responding to the pandemic, FIP has published COVID-19 guidance. We are planning to supplement this with the latest information on COVID-19 diagnostic tests later this month.<sup>4</sup>

To conclude, pharmacists across healthcare settings are critical to strong PHC. As countries must cope with caring for the acutely ill while maintaining care for chronic patients, many innovative pharmaceutical care practices have been deployed. FIP appeals for such innovations to be captured with a view to promoting their wider adoption as PHC systems adapt and move into the pandemic recovery phase and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fip.org/fip-development-goals>

<sup>2</sup> A collated list of COVID-19 initiatives by pharmacy organisations are available at <https://www.fip.org/coronavirus>

<sup>3</sup> FIP [call to action](#) to expand the role of community pharmacies in vaccination, including against covid-19 and future pandemics

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fip.org/coronavirus#FIP-Guidance> - now available in different languages