
FIP STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE¹

Accelerating vaccine equity for pharmacy teams on the front line

22 March 2021

Supporting vaccines access for health workers and pharmacy teams

The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) supports the World Health Organization's (WHO's) [Vaccine Equity Declaration](#), which calls for worldwide action to accelerate early access to vaccines for healthcare workers, including pharmacy teams, on the front line. The declaration calls on global, national and local leaders to accelerate the equitable rollout of vaccines in every country, starting with health workers and those at highest risk from COVID-19. FIP also supports the World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) endorsement of this Declaration, which FIP has signed individually and collectively with the WHPA.

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The WHO has named 2021 the International Year of Health and Care Workers in recognition of the dedication and sacrifice of millions of these workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ensuring early access of the pharmacy workforce to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines will contribute to accelerating access to vaccines for all, as well as the continuity of treatments and other essential services, medical products and medical devices provided by pharmacists and pharmacy teams on the front line.

Vaccine access for pharmacy teams contributes to vaccine equity for all

FIP stresses the critical role that pharmacy teams can play in immunising patients and populations and contributing to improving vaccination coverage in multiple ways, including evidence-based counselling and advocacy. The provision of vaccination services through pharmacies widens access to vaccines for everyone, especially hard-to-reach population groups and those in medically underserved communities. This is because pharmacies remain the most accessible health facilities despite the challenges brought about by the

¹ FIP Statement of Principle: A statement setting out the position of FIP in emergency situations or on a subject that has humanitarian implications internationally but may not be perceived as being directly related to pharmacy.



pandemic. It is, therefore, essential to ensure that pharmacy teams are able to contribute to accelerating and widening equity of access to vaccination services. FIP's 2020 "[Commitment to action on improving vaccination coverage through pharmacies](#)" highlights actions that are urgently needed to ensure equitable access to vaccines and vaccination services for all people around the world. FIP is committed to supporting pharmacists and pharmacy workers with the most up-to-date intelligence on COVID-19 vaccines. It has also published answers to [frequently asked questions](#) so that pharmacists around the world can confidently deliver vaccines where this is supported by legislation, as well as address concerns and vaccine hesitancy.

No vaccine equity without access for all

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased health inequalities and in May 2020, FIP issued a [Statement of Principle](#) on the pandemic's impact on vulnerable patients and populations, including women, children, older adults, marginalised and displaced communities, and those at higher risk from COVID-19. Furthermore, FIP applauds the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access initiative (COVAX) and its leading partners Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the WHO, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and others in ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostic tools and treatments in low- and middle-income countries.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made addressing inequities more urgent than ever. Pharmacy plays an important role in alleviating these inequities and this is affirmed by [FIP Development Goal 10](#), which calls for clear strategies to address inequalities in the pharmaceutical workforce and widen access to and equity of pharmaceutical care services, as well as equity in global capacity in pharmaceutical sciences development. [FIP-EquityRx](#) — FIP's programme on equity and equality in pharmacy — is driving the global implementation of FIP Development Goal 10.

In this statement, FIP stresses that accelerating vaccine access to pharmacy teams on front lines contributes to widening access of vaccines for all. FIP and the pharmacy workforce across the globe reaffirm their commitment to widening access to pharmaceutical services, particularly vaccination-related services, to ensure vaccine equity for all, leaving no one behind.