

**FIP Letter to COP26 UN Climate Change Conference UK 2021:  
“Pharmacy stands up to climate change”**

The Hague, 28 October 2021  
Ref.: GS001869/Bureau

Dear Heads of State and National Delegations,

Climate change is the single biggest threat to our world and health. The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) is the global body representing pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences and pharmaceutical education. FIP was founded in 1912 and has been in official relations with the World Health Organization since its establishment in 1948, signing a new memorandum of understanding for specific projects and collaboration in 2019. The federation, which comprises membership spanning 318 professional organisations and academic institutions across 114 nations and territories, is committed to playing its part in tackling the climate and ecological emergency through pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences. Pharmacy has a distinct role to play in our collective efforts to address climate change. As part of the health community and workforce, our profession is addressing its influence and impact in climate change and the ecological emergency the world is facing, and the action we can take, not only to protect our environment through green pharmacy practice and medicines use, but also to respond to the health and patient needs emerging from the climate crisis.

We support the Conference of the Parties (COP) and the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place in Glasgow. We recognise this as a pivotal moment in the fight against climate change and we voice our full support. We joined the global health community and global partners, alongside the World Health Organization and World Health Professions Alliance, in signing the collective #HealthyClimate Prescription letter. The letter is an urgent call for climate action from the health community ahead of COP26. Pharmacy is a critical, essential part of healthcare systems and service delivery, as evidenced globally during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pharmacy and pharmacists are often the most accessible members of the healthcare team. Pharmacists are rightly recognised by the United Nations as essential agents of sustainable development and key to achieving the health targets under **SDG 3 — “Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages”**. Through implementing greener pharmacy practices across all settings and sectors and by integrating health and equity in all policy developments, pharmacy is leading the way to environmental sustainability by actively contributing to cleaner air and water, greener medicines use and sustainable pharmaceutical services.

**Cleaner air and water**

Pharmaceuticals in our environment, especially in water, worsen the climate crisis and have pollution-related health effects. Traces of medicines and pharmaceuticals leak into our rivers, lakes, water surfaces and sometimes drinking water. Through responsible

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Mr Paul Sinclair

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use, prescribing and waste management of medicines, pharmacy can reduce pharmaceutical-related water pollution.

In addition, air pollution is acknowledged as one of the greatest threats to health across the globe and community pharmacists are essentially placed to rally against the deleterious effects of air pollution, not only by responding to and managing respiratory illnesses and symptoms and preventative strategies. Pharmacists are ideally positioned to advocate for air pollution reduction through responsible use of carbon-heavy respiratory medicines such as metered dose inhalers and inhaled anaesthetics. The expansion of pharmacists' roles in mitigating the health threats of air pollution is among several actions described in an FIP call to action "Mobilising pharmacists across our communities to mitigate the impact of air pollution on health" made in September 2021.

### **Greener medicines use**

Medicines contribute heavily to greenhouse gas emissions around the world and their inappropriate disposal contributes to contaminating our environment. The carbon emission linked to medicines use makes the rational and responsible use of medicines more important than ever. As the global experts in medicines, pharmacists have a critical role to play here as part of the wider health workforce. Rational and optimal prescribing and dispensing of over-the-counter medicines can lower medicines-use related carbon emissions. This is in addition to minimising medicinal waste and ensuring its safe disposal.

The global spread of antibiotic resistance is another important priority for our world. Pharmacy-led antimicrobial stewardship contributes to more efficient and responsible use of antimicrobials. This promotes strategies that mitigate antimicrobial resistance in community- and hospital-acquired infections and in the use of antibiotics in livestock production and agriculture.

These and other green pharmacy practices are highlighted in a 2015 FIP report, "Green pharmacy practice: Taking responsibility for the environmental impact of medicines", and in a 2016 FIP Statement of Policy entitled "Environmentally sustainable pharmacy practice: Green pharmacy" adopted by national associations of pharmacists from around the globe.

### **Sustainable and equitable pharmaceutical services**

Changes in the weather and climate are increasing air-borne, food-borne, water-borne and vector-borne diseases and changing their global distribution. Climate change impacts are taking a toll on peoples' mental health, causing post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety, and exacerbating existing conditions. Communities lose access to their daily health and medicines care due to extreme weather events and similar crises. Pharmacy-led people-centred care services can address these health impacts.

Over the years, FIP has identified Sustainability as a priority policy area for pharmacy. Most recently, in September 2020, FIP launched the UN-aligned FIP Development Goals



to transform pharmacy. These include FIP Development Goal 21 “Sustainability in pharmacy”, which seeks to implement policies, regulations and strategies for environment sustainability and to minimise the impact of pharmaceuticals and pharmacy practice on it. The sustainability in pharmacy and health agenda is a priority programme of work for both organisations. FIP is establishing its new SustainabilityRx programme dedicated to supporting the implementation of this goal.

One example of how our federation is embedding sustainability across all its work was seen in the outcomes of the FIP digital programme on Transforming Vaccination in 2020. Aligned with Development Goal 21, FIP has developed an action plan to put policies, regulations and strategies in place to ensure immunisation for all but also to ensure the sustainability of the environment and to minimise the impact of vaccination services on it. This plan includes scientific strategies and policies to maintain consistent supply of vaccinations throughout the life course while limiting negative consequences for the environment.

We are aligned with COP26 leaders in our commitment to this global battle against climate change and to supporting the pharmacy profession worldwide to play its role in climate action.

We are committed to supporting all our members around the world to enable pharmacy to take purposeful action in this climate crisis.

We support the work of our member organisations, such as the Royal Pharmaceutical Society in Great Britain, which has shown leadership in the sustainability agenda. We also support global groups and communities, such as Rx for Climate, that advocate for the role of the pharmacy profession in tackling climate change.

We commit to working in collaboration within the profession, with other health professions and our global partners to stand up to climate change.

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Mr Dominique Jordan (Switzerland)  
President

A blue ink signature of Dr Catherine Duggan, consisting of a stylized, cursive script.

Dr Catherine Duggan (Netherlands)  
Chief executive officer

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Dr Carmen Peña (Spain)  
Immediate past president

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Mr Luís Lourenço (Portugal)  
Professional secretary

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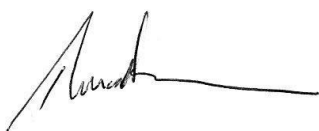
Prof. Giovanni Pauletti (USA)  
Scientific secretary

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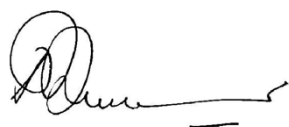
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Prof. Ralph Altieri (USA)  
Chair of FIP Education

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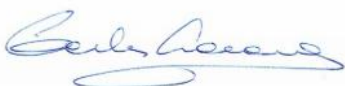
Prof. Ross McKinnon (Australia)  
Chair of the Board of Pharmaceutical Sciences

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Mr Paul Sinclair (Australia)  
Chair of the Board of Pharmaceutical Practice

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Prof. Parisa Aslani (Australia)  
Vice presidente

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carlos Lacava", underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Mr Carlos Lacava (Uruguay)  
Vice president

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "msgharat", underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Ms Manjiri Gharat (India)  
Vice president

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Ms Samira Shammass (Jordan)  
Vice president

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashok Soni", underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Prof. Ashok Soni (UK)  
Vice president

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lars-Åke Söderlund", underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Mr Lars-Åke Söderlund (Sweden)  
Vice president



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hiroshi Suzuki'.

Prof. Hiroshi Suzuki (Japan)  
Vice president

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