
JOINT STATEMENT ON PATIENT SOLIDARITY DAY 2021

Geneva, December 3rd, 2021 - On Patient Solidarity Day, the International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO), the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA), the International Hospital Federation (IHF) and the International Council of Nurses (ICN), join patients and families all over the world, in calling for governments and all health stakeholders to collaborate in the implementation of the WHO Flagship Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021-2030 (GPSAP 2021-30) that was adopted at the 74th World Health Assembly this year.

Every year, large numbers of patients are harmed or die because of unsafe health care, creating a high burden of death and disability worldwide, especially in low- and middle-income countries. On average, an estimated one in 10 patients is subject to an adverse event while receiving hospital care in high-income countries. Available evidence suggests that 134 million adverse events due to unsafe care occur in hospitals in low- and middle-income countries, contributing to around 2.6 million deaths every year. According to recent estimates, the social cost of patient harm can be valued at US\$ 1 trillion to 2 trillion a year.¹

Patient safety is fundamental to the provision of health care in all settings. However, avoidable adverse events, errors and risks associated with health care remain major challenges for patient safety globally. The global COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of building a culture of trust in healthcare systems, health professionals and medical products. Trust can be undermined by products and interventions that do not adhere to the highest standards of quality and ethical standards.

We therefore call on all governments and health stakeholders to deploy patient safety as a health priority in health sector policies and programmes to achieve universal health coverage; and for all health stakeholders to uphold the guiding principles of GPSAP 2021-30, by working to:

- Implement policies to eliminate avoidable harm in health
- Foster high-reliability systems
- Ensure safety of clinical processes
- Maintain patient and family engagement
- Secure continuous health worker education, skills and safety

Today, representing key actors in health systems, we reaffirm our commitment to provide the highest quality health care and health products to patients and to work towards the GPSAP 2021-30 vision of “a world in which no one is harmed in health care, and every patient receives safe and respectful care, every time, everywhere”.

¹ Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021–2030 [Towards eliminating avoidable harm in health care](#)