



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

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Strategy on the health and well-being of men in the WHO European Region

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations welcomes the Strategy on the health and well-being of men in the WHO European Region and congratulates all the parties investing their efforts on it. Our association has always been a passionate advocate for gender equity as we have no doubts that it is an essential factor to ensure the human right to health and the entitlement to a health system that grants equal opportunities to everyone. Therefore, we applaud the WHO efforts toward improving men's health while at the same time promoting equity by focusing on fighting gender stereotypes that often entail negative health outcomes for women, men and other genders. As much remains to be done, we acknowledge the possible challenges and, therefore, call upon you, the Member States, to:

1. Follow this proposed strategy by specifically implementing policies that encourage equal participation in child rearing and ensure paid parental leave for men. A proper implementation of such policies contributes to ensuring equal opportunities for women at work, as evidence suggests paid paternal leave contributes to diminishing the gender wage gap. Moreover, paternity leave and father-specific paternal leave has not only a proven positive effect on the work and life balance of families but has a significant positive impact in the health of both men and women, reducing for instance the risk of premature mortality, alcohol abuse as well as postpartum depression.
2. We also call upon you to actively promote large-scale research and segregated data collection aimed at studying the health and healthcare gaps between different genders. However, we want to emphasise that gender-segregated data collection unfortunately does not necessarily mean that the applied methods take into account gender roles and norms, although also gender-sensitive methods are crucial for such data collection.

As the voice of 1,3 million medical students from 125 countries across the globe, our association strongly believes that improving gender equity in health is one of the most direct and potent ways to reduce health inequalities and cross-cuttingly makes a big step towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals. Therefore, we would like to share our strong commitment with the proposed strategy. As medical students, we vow to our commitment to change healthcare from the inside out. But we can only achieve a substantial change if you, the member states, are on board with us. Therefore, we ask you to embrace the proposed strategy and commit together to raise awareness and address the health impacts of gender inequity at both individual and collective levels.

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