



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

Statement of the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)

Sixty-fifth Session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean *Agenda Item 4 (a): Advancing Universal Health Coverage*

Honourable chair,
Distinguished delegates,

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) represents 1.3 million medical students from over 100 countries across the globe. IFMSA is a strong proponent of the global movement for Universal Health Coverage and we firmly believe that the provision of quality primary health care (PHC) is critical to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

Henceforth, IFMSA strongly applauds and supports the efforts of WHO and Member States in implementing the Regional Framework: Scaling up family practice. IFMSA reaffirms the need to scale up the family practice workforce and help overcome a shortage of family physicians in the Region, however, we would like to draw your attention to the need to intervene at an earlier stage: Undergraduate Medical Education. Integrating health systems knowledge, family medicine and primary health care exposure into undergraduate curricula positively affects the quality and commitment of the future health-care professionals, and may strongly influence their future career choice to the latter, thereby addressing the shortages faced in family practice. In line with this, we want to commend WHO's efforts to develop the Global Competency Framework for UHC.

Secondly, IFMSA would like to emphasize the need for an intersectoral approach and stronger partnerships with civil society and private sector within the UHC and PHC concepts. Although the family health model within a PHC setting is an asset that can effectively and efficiently improve quality of health-care services, there is a need for increased intersectoral collaboration such that other components of PHC including, among others, surveillance systems, control of endemic diseases, health information systems, are fulfilled.

Finally, IFMSA shares the vision that young professionals, medical and health students, representing the future generation and the health workforce of tomorrow, represent a powerful driving force in the worldwide movement towards achieving Universal Health Coverage. IFMSA, through its recent Hurgada Youth Call to Action on Universal Health Coverage, is committed to supporting the global movement towards Universal Health Coverage through UN Sustainable Development Goals.

As we are only days away from the 40th anniversary of Alma Ata declaration, IFMSA would like to reaffirm its commitment to Alma Ata's Vision - to equip the future healthcare providers with the knowledge, values, and skills to take on health leadership roles locally and globally, and we call on Member States to join us in the process.

Thank you.