



IFMSA
International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

**Statement of the
International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)
144th Executive Board Meeting of the World Health Organization
*Agenda item 6.6 Patient safety***

Honourable chair, distinguished delegates,

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations welcomes the recognition of patient safety as a growing global public health concern, one that is challenged by new technologies and increasingly complex healthcare environments.

The global burden of death and disability resulting from unsafe patient care is immense. Human factors are an element in many safety incidents, although these can often be linked to system failures. Blaming individuals for these incidents discourages future reporting, prevents positive learning outcomes, and impacts negatively on the mental health of healthcare workers. We need modern reporting and learning systems that are fair, blame-free and non-punitive.

Secondly, the lack of water and adequate sanitation in healthcare facilities, as well as the unsafe management of waste, are major factors in healthcare-associated infections and the spread of antimicrobial resistance. The IFMSA urges Member States to make funding for WASH in healthcare facilities a policy priority and, furthermore, for it to be embedded into global initiatives to fight antimicrobial resistance. Moreover, we emphasise that this issue not only pertains to patient safety, but also the safety of staff; and the dignity of patients and staff alike.

Finally, we call upon Member States to implement robust quality assurance and formal accreditation mechanisms for medical schools. These mechanisms safeguard the quality of healthcare, keeping patients safe in a world where medicine is increasingly globalised and the number and diversity of medical education providers is rapidly expanding. High-quality healthcare cannot be achieved without high-quality medical education.

As future healthcare workers, we value the importance of patient safety as a central component to not only our work, but the greater goal of achieving universal health coverage. The decisions made here today will affect our clinical practice and the safety of our patients in the future.

Thank you