



## **72nd session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe**

Provisional agenda item 3

### **Leveraging digital transformation for better health in Europe: regional digital health action plan for the WHO European Region 2023–2030**

**12-14 September 2022, Tel Aviv, Israel**

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the European Forum of National Nurses and Midwives Associations (European Forum - EFNNMA) strongly support the proposed regional digital health action plan and believe that digital technologies provide significant opportunities to improve the working lives of nurses and midwives, advance practice and improve population health.

There is significant potential for nurses and midwives to be both positively impacted by and contribute to the WHO digital health vision and associated regional action plan. Their contribution is vital for effective digital transformation. Without it, there is a risk that the accelerated adoption of digital health will have a negative impact on the ability of nurses and midwives to deliver care and support citizens' health and wellbeing. Nurses and midwives tell us that the challenges they face with digital health are:

- Many digital technologies are not well designed and cause more work for nurses and midwives affecting their ability to join up care across different care settings and to deliver person-centred care that is safe and of high quality.
- Systems are often not well connected, and this lack of interoperability affects the ability to share information and creates duplicative work for nurses and midwives.
- Many nurses and midwives do not feel confident in sharing data and reassuring the public about data security.
- There is a lack of education at pre- and post-registration to enable nurses and midwives to work with technology and handle data to support care.
- Digital technologies often reinforce exclusion of staff, marginalised groups and communities.

The pandemic has demonstrated the ability of nurses and midwives to adopt new ways of working with a surge in remote monitoring and telehealth. There is evidence that, in some areas, nurses and midwives are already taking a leading role in digital healthcare. ICN recognises the need to support the levelling up called for in the roadmap, in order to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals. A number of Member States are delivering profession-specific initiatives and guidance to build capacity and capability. ICN will collaborate with WHO to ensure shared learning to deliver the best opportunities for citizens, midwives and nurses regardless of where they live.

There is synergy between the Regional Digital Health Action Plan and the WHO Global Nursing & Midwifery Strategic Priorities; the former cannot be delivered without the latter. Therefore, we call for nurses and midwives to have a leadership voice and role in the implementation of the action plan across Member States.

**ICN Euro region Global Nursing Leadership Institute Scholars 2022**



The **International Council of Nurses (ICN)** is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality nursing care for all and sound health policies globally.

The **European Forum of National Nurses and Midwives Associations (European Forum - EFNNMA)** is the joint voice of nursing and midwifery in the WHO European Region and was established to promote the continuous development of the nursing and midwifery professions in all Member States in the region in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office.