



Munich Declaration: Nurses and midwives: a Force for Health, 2000

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Munich Declaration: Nurses and midwives: a Force for Health, 2000

The Second WHO Ministerial Conference on Nursing and Midwifery in Europe addresses the unique roles and contributions of Europe's six million nurses and midwives in health development and health service delivery. Since the first WHO ministerial conference that took place in Vienna over ten years ago, some steps have been taken in Europe towards strengthening the status and making full use of the potential of nurses and midwives.

As Ministers of Health of Member States in the European Region of WHO, participating in the Munich Conference:

WE BELIEVE that nurses and midwives have key and increasingly important roles to play in society's efforts to tackle the public health challenges of our time, as well as in ensuring the provision of high-quality, accessible, equitable, efficient and sensitive health services which ensure continuity of care and address people's rights and changing needs.

WE URGE all relevant authorities in WHO's European Region to step up their action to strengthen nursing and midwifery, by:

- ensuring a nursing and midwifery contribution to decision-making at all levels of policy development and implementation;
- addressing the obstacles, in particular recruitment policies, gender and status issues, and medical dominance;
- providing financial incentives and opportunities for career advancement;
- improving initial and continuing education and access to higher nursing and midwifery education;
- creating opportunities for nurses, midwives and physicians to learn together at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, to ensure more cooperative and interdisciplinary working in the interests of better patient care;
- supporting research and dissemination of information to develop the knowledge and evidence base for practice in nursing and midwifery;
- seeking opportunities to establish and support family-focused community nursing and midwifery programmes and services, including, where appropriate, the Family Health Nurse;
- enhancing the roles of nurses and midwives in public health, health promotion and community development.

WE ACCEPT that commitment and serious efforts towards strengthening nursing and midwifery in our countries should be supported by:

- developing comprehensive workforce planning strategies to ensure adequate numbers of well educated nurses and midwives;
- ensuring that the necessary legislative and regulatory frameworks are in place at all levels of the health system;
- enabling nurses and midwives to work efficiently and effectively and to their full potential, both as independent and as interdependent professionals.

WE PLEDGE to work in partnership with all relevant ministries and bodies, statutory and nongovernmental, nationally, subnationally and internationally to realize the aspirations of this Declaration.

WE LOOK TO the WHO Regional Office for Europe to provide strategic guidance and to help Member States develop coordination mechanisms for working in partnerships with national and international agencies to strengthen nursing and midwifery, and

WE REQUEST the Regional Director to make regular reports to the Regional Committee for Europe and to organize a first meeting to monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Declaration in 2002.

Ms Andrea Fischer
Minister of Health
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Dr Marc Danzon
Regional Director for Europe