



STATEMENT

IFPMA statement at the 73rd WHO EURO Regional Meeting

Reaffirming commitment to health systems strengthening for universal health coverage, better outcomes, and reduced health inequalities

25 OCTOBER 2023, ASTANA, KAZAKSTAN – The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) welcomes the EURO region’s progress report on reaffirming commitment to health systems strengthening for universal health coverage, better outcomes, and reduced health inequalities.

We are supportive of the Secretariat’s effort to revitalize primary healthcare services across the region, as a backbone to health systems’ readiness and resilience. Primary healthcare is the foundation to delivering essential programs, including life course approaches to prevention (including vaccination), health promotion, screening, diagnosis, treatment, surveillance, and follow-up. This can only be sustainable with sufficient domestic financing over the long-term.

The other priorities outlined by the report – namely reinforcing healthcare workforce, working toward UHC, strengthening data, and enhancing collaborations and partnerships – are critical building blocks to deliver on improved health outcomes, including for the most vulnerable populations. As stated in the WHO-World Bank 2023 Universal Health Coverage Report, the global health community urgently needs to accelerate action on UHC. While we are encouraged by the progress made, we urge Member States to work with all necessary stakeholders to develop partnerships that will help them to achieve the health-related SDG targets, for which the world is currently off track.

We also acknowledge the lack of equal financial protection in the region and the fact that current budgets for health services are not sufficient to address public health challenges, in particular for chronic conditions. Achieving SDG 3 requires investing more and investing better in effective interventions toward UHC. While UHC is the primary responsibility of governments, it is clear that success relies on the combined efforts of all stakeholders.

Furthermore, COVID-19 highlighted the link between UHC and global health security and brought broad recognition that non-communicable diseases and pandemics constitute a complex and catastrophic combination that requires building back robust and resilient health systems that ensure health equity. The innovative pharmaceutical industry is committed to scaling up our contributions to

UHC. We acknowledge our role in helping to improve access to quality, affordable vaccines, medicines, and healthcare for all, via innovative approaches and partnerships.

Sustained political support and effective multi-sectoral mobilization will be needed for countries to properly resource and protect health and care workers and strengthen PHC systems as the foundation of UHC. UHC is the only solution to ensuring equitable access to healthcare and is an investment in the foundation of a healthier, more sustainable future for all.

We also wish to commend the Regional Office's renewed focus on mental health – a global health topic that is often underserved and one which the pharmaceutical industry remains committed to finding innovative solutions to address.

Thank you.