

STATEMENT

78th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia on primary health care and universal health coverage

Agenda items 8.1 and 9.8

14 OCTOBER 2025, COLOMBO – IFPMA welcomes the agenda items on primary health care (PHC) and universal health coverage (UHC).

Unlocking investment in primary care is critical if we are to build stronger, preventative healthcare systems and make substantive progress in tackling the rising incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) including cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes, as well as the burden of infectious disease and the associated threat of antimicrobial resistance.

Research commissioned and published by IFPMA earlier this year demonstrates that in low- and middle-income countries, an additional 1% of GDP investment in total public healthcare expenditure, where 40% is channelled toward cost-effective primary NCD health care interventions, could save close to 5 million lives each year. Building the necessary capacity and health workforce, alongside investment in primary and secondary prevention, can reduce hospitalizations, lost productivity from premature deaths, and greatly relieve pressure on health systems.

Improving awareness and uptake of essential and innovative medicines, vaccines, diagnostics, and medical devices - supported by appropriate health service delivery models – is key to achieving UHC and will be essential to improving population health and stronger healthcare systems.

Our members continue to work to drive improved access to medicines and vaccines, and work in partnership to strengthening healthcare systems to improve the lives of people around the world, and IFPMA remains committed to working as a constructive partner toward these goals.