



Written Statements by NGOs

The inclusion and collective voice of non-governmental organizations (NGO) is an important aspect for the strengthening of Patient Safety. This document contains written statements by some of the most influential NGOs in the area of Patient Safety. These statements provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities facing the strengthening of Patient Safety and can serve as a call to action.

Name of the Institution: European Specialist Nurses Organisation (ESNO)

Signed by: Members of the ESNO Microbial Focus group; Noel Abela & Joséfine Declaye

Statement

European Specialist Nurses Organisation (ESNO) strongly believes in the importance of nurse representation in high-level meetings, particularly on patient safety. Nurses play a vital role in the delivery of healthcare. We are the front liners, we have seen this during the covid pandemic. This unique position offers insights and perspectives on the challenges and opportunities.

There is no safety without nurses.

We are proud to represent specialist nurse to the 5th Patient Safety Forum. Our participation in this forum will not only help to ensure that patient safety is at the forefront of healthcare delivery, but it will also help to elevate the profile of the nursing profession and demonstrate the important contributions that nurses make to healthcare.

In addition to our role in patient safety, we would also like to highlight the critical importance of education in addressing Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). Nurses are often the first point of contact for patients and play a crucial role in promoting Antibiotic Stewardship. Through targeted educational initiatives, nurses can make a real difference in the fight against AMR and ultimately save lives.

The ESNO is committed to working with healthcare organizations, stakeholders and policy makers to ensure that the voices of nurses are heard. That we are effectively integrated into discussions around patient safety and AMR. We look forward to the opportunity to participate in the 5th Patient Safety Forum and make a meaningful contribution, while demonstrating the ESNO spirit of pride and academic and scientific expertise.



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5th Global Ministerial Summit 2023
23 - 24.02.2023, Montreux, Switzerland

Name of the Institution: Foetal Anti-Convulsant Syndrome New Zealand

Signed by: Denise Astill and Jacqueline Morris; www.facsnz.com

Statement

Experts by experience

There are and continue to be systemic failures that people of childbearing potential have and continue to experience in the prescribing of anti-seizure and teratogenic medicines. These failures are causing death or permanent disability to babies that are exposed in utero. This has continued over the last 60 years. Does the international community have the appetite to address this? It has been acknowledged that sodium valproate exposure in pregnancy is bigger than the thalidomide scandal.

The international community has a moral obligation to ensure all people of childbearing potential that are on an anti-seizure/teratogenic medicine receive informed consent and informed choice. Without doing so compounded harm and trauma becomes not only an individual component but an intergenerational one, particularly for women.

The negative social and economic impacts, by not doing so, continues to place a burden on the health and disability systems worldwide.

Whilst it is pleasing to see the World Health Organization address epilepsy through their Intersectoral global action plan, and are aware that anti-seizure medicines are an essential medicine, it is disappointing that the WHO have not prioritised anti-seizure medicine use in pregnancy. So we call to action the World Health Organization to research and publish a technical brief to prioritise the safe prescribing of anti-seizure medicines during pregnancy, including informed consent and informed choice.

NGO's and advocacy groups should not have to be fighting for change, instead they should be around the table at every level as the Global Patient Safety Plan intended, and be treated as experts by experience.



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Name of the Institution: [International Society for Quality in Health Care ISQua](#)

Signed by: ISQua President Professor Jeffrey Braithwaite; ISQua President-Elect Professor Ezequiel Garcia-Elorrio; ISQua Chief Executive Dr Carsten Engel

Statement

The International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua) – response to the Montreux Charter

The International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua) wholeheartedly endorses and commits to supporting the intentions and the actions outlined in the Montreux Charter, released today at the 5th Global Ministerial Summit on Patient Safety in Switzerland.

In doing so, we wish to strengthen further our longstanding collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ministerial Summit. WHO's "Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021-2030" clearly outlines a positive way forward and lists specific objectives for stakeholders. Closing the implementation gap has the highest priority.

ISQua's stakeholders (Board, staff, academicians, institutional members, individual members, Fellows, supporters and partners) are deeply committed to the patient safety agenda. Keeping people safe is the fundamental goal of all who work collaboratively with ISQua. ISQua will leverage its strategy, based on "Knowledge, Network, Voice – Action", to continuously achieve patient safety goals.

And, as it clearly emerged from the 5th Global Ministerial Summit 2023, knowledge is not only about evidence-based best practices but, importantly, includes knowledge and tools that will allow healthcare professionals, leaders, policymakers, and patients to partner to implement change and real-world practice improvement.



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Name of the Institution: WaterAid

Signed by: <https://www.wateraid.org/uk/>

Statement

There is no patient safety without clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene.

Lack of these basic services in healthcare facilities (HCFs) is an expensive patient safety risk. It costs millions of lives every year; undermines the work of healthcare workers and widens the inequity in healthcare.

It disproportionately affects women and girls, who not only constitute 90% of healthcare workers in patient facing roles but also frequent HCFs due to their distinct health needs.

Shockingly, 1 in 2 HCFs in the world do not have basic hand hygiene and unclean birth environments alone cause over a million maternal and new-born deaths every year.

This is unacceptable and a completely avoidable patient safety risk.

Access to WASH and a clean environment are established and cost-effective infection prevention and control measures to prevent the majority of hospital-acquired infections, promote quality care and reduce patient harm. **Without WASH, equitable access to safe healthcare will remain an unachievable goal.**

[WaterAid](#) supports the Global Ministerial Patient Safety Summit in highlighting the need for urgent action to improve patient safety. We call on health leaders to invest in WASH in HCFs.

This is a fundamental and priority action to achieve patient safety in low- and middle-income countries; address the needs of women and girls; and provide healthcare workers with the basic tools they need to do their job.



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Name of the Institution: WHPA-World Health Professions Alliance

Signed by: [WHPA](#) members: FDI World Dental Federation; FIP International Pharmaceutical Federation; ICN International Council of Nurses; WMA World Medical Association; World Physiotherapy

Statement

Health workforce safety is patient safety

Providing a decent, safe working environment for health professionals is an integral part of the strong safety culture needed to reduce patient harm. Risks to the health and safety of the health professionals providing care can lead to risks for patients, patient harm and adverse patient outcomes.

Many health systems and facilities were already under strain when Covid-19 hit. The pandemic has exacerbated existing staff shortages, burnout and violence against health professionals. As a consequence, health professionals are more than ever in need of positive practice environments to ensure that neither staff nor patients are harmed in the delivery of health care.

[Positive practice environments](#) are health care settings that provide decent work conditions, and have the power to attract and retain staff, provide quality care and deliver cost-effective, people-centred health care services. One essential element is good occupational safety and health provision—including safe staffing levels, access to equipment, work-life balance and job security—but it goes beyond that. Health professionals need opportunities for education and information to learn, develop, progress and save lives. And professional recognition and empowerment are needed to improve performance and build professional self-worth.

As the host of the summit and President of the Swiss Confederation Alain Berset puts it, the relevant measures for improvement are well known. To help bridge the implementation gap, civil society and professional associations must be involved at all levels of consultation and decision making which aim to keep patients and the health workforce safe.
