



International Council of Nurses (ICN)

Statement at the 68th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe

Provisional agenda item:5(o) Tuberculosis Action Plan for the WHO European Region 2016-2020

September 2018

TB negatively impacts global social and economic development by disproportionately affecting poor and marginalized communities and those in the productive age group. Efforts are needed to reach underserved populations and to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) accounts for one-third of all antimicrobial resistance (AMR)-related deaths globally. As such, continued efforts are required on the AMR agenda as it is central to tackling MDR-TB.

Priority must be given to strengthening European health systems, focusing on countries with the highest burden of disease. We call on European countries to invest in nurses to ensure an adequate number of well-educated healthcare professionals for TB prevention, treatment and delivery of quality person-centred care as part of integrated health services in line with Universal Health Coverage targets.

Efforts must be increased to end TB and DR-TB transmission through improved infection prevention and control (IPC) measures. This will require funding and high-level support in countries to ensure that IPC is prioritized and funded.

Healthcare professionals are at high risk of TB/MDR-TB therefore ICN urges to increase focus on occupational health to protect our health workforce.

Nurses are the largest clinical providers of TB care worldwide. In this regard, ICN urges the WHO Regional Committee for Europe to develop and introduce legislation, regulation and policies that support optimal use of the nursing workforce in its delivery of TB and TB/HIV programmes.

ICN works to engage nurses in strengthening health systems and to be strong advocates to end TB. We strongly commit to work with our members to position nurses as role models for TB care, to reduce stigma and discrimination.