



European Medical Students' Association

Association Européenne des Étudiants en Médecine

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Statement of the European Medical Students' Association (EMSA) on 3: Summary of the draft global strategy on digital health (document EUR/RC69/Inf.Doc./5)

Regional Committee for Europe

69th session

Copenhagen, Denmark 16-19 September 2019

The European Medical Students' Association appreciates the efforts of the World Health Organization, its member states and partners on the development of the draft digital health strategy.

The digital transformation of healthcare will disrupt the workflow of health professionals, making digital health literacy and skills prerequisite competencies for the future health workforce. Education and training of healthcare professionals are key facilitators of digital health implementation. However, the implementation of digital health literacy and skills into healthcare students' education remains a lagging process in the strategies so far.

A survey carried out by EMSA showed that 53% of European medical students participating in the survey considered their eHealth skills as 'poor' or 'very poor.' However, the results also illustrated the wish of medical students for sufficient digital health literacy and skills. We see a clear gap between the willingness of students to become key players in a meaningful digitization of healthcare and the competencies and skills they acquire through their education.

To meet the needs of healthcare students, respective competencies must be implemented into medical education and therefore EMSA calls on the World Health Organization to involve the importance of digital health literacy and skills for the future health workforce in the Global Strategy on Digital Health and outline strategies for the enhancement of those competencies through implementation in undergraduate education and continuous professional development.

As a medical students' association, EMSA would like to highlight the importance of meaningful youth involvement in the process. EMSA is ready to cooperate with WHO on this matter, in order to equip the next generation of health workforce with the necessary knowledge to successfully implement digital health and advance progress towards universal health coverage and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals.