

152 Session of the WHO Executive Board

Universal Health Coverage

Statement by the Minister of Health of the Republic of Moldova, Ms. Ala Nemerenco

Thank you, Madam President.

No matter how fast we develop and how fast we advance with scientific discoveries, transplants and complicated brain and heart operations, disparities in the access of different categories of population to essential health services are increasing. The gap in access to services and medicines between the rich and the poor is growing, and the barriers in accessibility of services are increasing due to various reasons: pandemic, war-induced crises, refugee crises, lack of health professionals, especially doctors, high financial burden on families, lack of sufficient medicines on the national markets, destruction of usual supply networks, bureaucracy of the health systems, low access to diagnostic equipment and oncological advanced treatments, increasing prices for medicines and materials, inaccessible vaccines and more others.

The question for every country is what are the solutions.

First of all we have to bring services closer to people, in any way, to remove unnecessary bureaucracy and barriers in accessing them.

The high mobility rate among health professionals is additionally contributing to serious workforce shortages, leaving entire sectors and services not nearly covered, or even bare.

Because the shortage of health professionals goes deeper and deeper, we must offer to different categories of professionals, such as nurses working in primary health care or on ambulances more rights and responsibilities. This would result in increasing access to more services.

Also, in the age of technologies, robots, digital systems and modern equipments that help us, is it necessary to clarify how long has to be the postgraduate residency training - 5-6 years or can we shorten it a little and bring these doctors earlier in health care institutions? This is an opportunity to increase access to doctors and as result - to medical services.

At the same time we need wider teams for pregnant women and children – with paediatricians, gynaecologists, family doctors to reduce as much as we can the infant and maternal mortality rate.

Also we need to figure out How can we help patients with chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, etc. and to keep control on their disease? Can we use everywhere intelligent systems of monitoring, to empower them and to decrease the number of unnecessary visits to clinics.

How can we make primary medicine smarter, more active, more technologically advanced, and more attractive for health workers and patients? This is the main question for Universal Health Coverage.

It is certain that people pay to maintain the national health systems, regardless of the country, so we have the duty to rebuild our system so that no one is left behind.