



Statement of Ireland

79th World Health Assembly

Agenda Items 12.5 & 12.8

Primary Healthcare & Report of the Expert Advisory Group on the WHO

Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health

Personnel

22 May 2026

**Honourable Chair,
Distinguished Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,**

Ireland reiterates the importance of ensuring equitable access and strengthening primary healthcare as the foundation of universal health coverage.

To truly transform health outcomes, countries must scale up investment in primary care.

To this end, Ireland has increased investment in primary care services through a suite of strategic reform initiatives that seek to reduce dependency on the hospital system, with service delivery reoriented towards general practice, primary care, and integrated community-based services.

This has improved access to, and the affordability of, primary care services, delivering expanded eligibility and reducing the cost to patients.

Chair,

A strong and well supported health workforce is critical to building resilient health systems and ensuring equitable access to quality of care for all.

In this regard, Ireland continues to support and value the principles of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel and its aims to balance the needs of source countries, destination countries, and the health workers themselves.

Ireland also supports renewed efforts to strengthen the implementation of the Code and welcomes the informal consultations focusing on the Expert Advisory Group's recommendations.

In alignment with the Code and recommendations of the Expert Advisory Group, Ireland is seeking to strengthen its workforce sustainability and has developed an evidence-based strategic direction for the health and social care workforce for the next 15 years as set out in the paper, "Ireland's Future Health and Social Care Workforce."

Furthermore, Ireland is making efforts to increase our domestic supply of health and social care workers and to support partner countries through programmes that co-invest in training capacity and health system strengthening.

Thank you.