**ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (APPF)**

**30TH ANNUAL MEETING**

**Draft Resolution Sponsored by: Canada**

**Developing health care services and facilitating equal access to primary health care**

**The 30th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum:**

**Reaffirming** resolutions adopted at previous annual meetings of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum relating to health, particularly on the topic of maternal and child health for sustainable development ([APPF23/RES/15](https://web.archive.org/web/20210616150945/https:/appfpresident.org/?wpdmpro=23appf-res-15-maternal-and-child-health-for-susteinable-development-pdf)),

**Reiterating** that health is a fundamental human right and that access to high-quality health care services is critical for both social and economic development,

**Being concerned** about World Health Organization (WHO) [data](https://www.who.int/health-topics/primary-health-care#tab=tab_1) indicating that one-half of the world’s population currently lacks adequate essential health services and that there is expected to be a global shortfall of 18 million health care workers by 2030,

**Reinforcing** that the COVID-19 pandemic has strained health care services in many countries and contributed to global [disruptions](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/immunization-coverage) in routine immunization programs against vaccine-preventable diseases,

**Acknowledging** that demographic and social factors have led to sharp rises in the prevalence of chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer, which are increasing the burden on health care services, particularly in low- and middle-income countries,

**Recognizing** that primary health care, as outlined in the 1978 [*Declaration of Alma-Ata*](https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/documents/almaata-declaration-en.pdf?sfvrsn=7b3c2167_2), is both essential health care and a central function of a country’s health system, and serves as individuals’ and families’ initial contact with the health system,

**Recognizing** that mental health care is a priority need in the region,

**Acknowledging** that the WHO and World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) have promoted the urgency to develop delivery of mental health care in primary care and the great need for improving mental health care globally,

**Noting** that primary health care covers health needs across the life course, including disease prevention and control, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, perinatal care, child and adolescent health, and palliative care,

**Recalling** the commitment in the 2018 [[*Declaration of Astana*](https://who.int/primary-health/conference-phc/declaration)](https://www.who.int/teams/primary-health-care/conference/declaration) to implement sustainable primary health care for all,

**Underscoring also** the 2019 United Nations resolution on universal health coverage ([A/RES/74/2](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FRes%2F74%2F2&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False)) that called for primary health care to be strengthened,

**Bearing in mind** the [United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3](https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal3) to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages,”

**Welcoming** the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation’s (APEC’s) [Action Plan on Vaccination Across the Life-Course](https://www.apec.org/vaccinestaskforce/Action-Plan) for 2021 to 2030and its [The North Star: A 2030 Strategy for Enabling Resilient Health Systems and Promoting the Health of our Populations in the Asia Pacific](http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2021/HWG/HWG2/21_hwg2_002.pdf),

**Remembering** that the WHO’s resolution concerning the standard of health for persons with disabilities ([WHA74.8](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA74/A74_R8-en.pdf)), which was adopted in May 2021, urges WHO member states “to identify and eliminate attitudinal, environmental and institutional obstacles and barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from accessing health.”

**Highlighting** the priority of improving access to high-quality health care services for all, and removing geographical, cultural, social, economic and other barriers to accessing primary health care,

**RESOLVES TO:**

1. **Urge** actions that would ensure equitable, appropriate and affordable access to high-quality primary health care for all;
2. **Emphasize** the need for investments in the health care workforce, including in relation to recruitment and retention, education and training, and compensation, especially for those working in primary health care settings;
3. **Remember** the importance of developing or strengthening policies aimed at eliminating inequities in access to health care services, including through removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities and members of other marginalized groups from accessing primary health care services;
4. **Encourage** and strongly recommend that APPF member countries work to identify and apply the best evidence-based education and training interventions for their primary care workforces to enhance capacity for mental health care delivery;
5. **Support** actions that would lead to the achievement of SDG 3, particularly through meeting targets focused on attaining universal health coverage, ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health care services, and augmenting the health care workforce in developing countries;
6. **Prioritize** strengthened cooperation to ensure equitable global access to vaccines, medicines, diagnostic tests and other health technologies;
7. **Advocate** the allocation of an additional 1% of gross domestic product to primary health care with the goal of implementing the WHO’s [recommendation](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/primary-health-care) to address current gaps in services;
8. **Invite** the world’s high-income countries to provide support to low- and middle-income countries in order to expand capacity in primary health care and train health care workers;
9. **Encourage** adoption of APEC’s Action Plan on Vaccination Across the Life-Course in order to enhance the resilience and sustainability of immunization programs;
10. **Request also** adoption of APEC’s The North Star: A 2030 Strategy for Enabling Resilient Health Systems and Promoting the Health of our Populations in the Asia Pacific in order to support health systems.