

## **WONCA Urges Support of Colleagues and Calls for an Immediate End to the Conflict in Ukraine**

4 March 2022

WONCA is profoundly saddened by the devastating developments in Ukraine.

Family doctors of the world express their deepest sympathy with the affected populations. We offer our strongest support to all healthcare workers in Ukraine, now working under extreme duress to continue the provision of health care to civilians, who in crises, suffer the most.

People are suffering. A large-scale humanitarian crisis now affects multiple countries in Europe. Families are split. Populations are displaced within Ukraine and into neighbouring countries. Basic needs are threatened – water, food, sanitation, shelter, and not least, safety.

A basic human right is the right to health. Conflict destroys health infrastructure as health facilities are decimated. Access to health care becomes problematic. Conflict adds to the health needs of peoples - severe physical injuries, need for medications, and mental health afflictions. Medical supplies are scarce. Few, if any, health systems in the world could cope.

We know that the demand for coordinated primary health care increases in crises of conflict. We also know that the pressure on our family doctor colleagues and their teams is drastically increasing and that the demand for primary health care exceeds supply. The impact is devastating for health care provision. The vulnerable, the aged, children, those with chronic medical conditions are particularly affected.

Our colleagues in Ukraine, in both pre-hospital and hospital care, are stepping up to meet the needs best they can. To those colleagues: we salute you, we salute your bravery, we share your despair. You have our deepest respect and support!

WONCA calls for protection of civilians from the collateral damage of military actions and for safe and bearable working conditions for all health personnel.

WONCA urges our members to reach out and support our colleagues in the affected region, and if possible, provide assistance on a practical level.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all colleagues and their families and patients who are affected. We call for an immediate end to the conflict in Ukraine.