

## **Statement on Global Plan of Action to Strengthen the Role of the Health System Within a National Multisectoral Response to Address Interpersonal Violence**

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WONCA welcomes the Director-General Report on Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), and highlights its importance. The COVID-19 Pandemic has unmasked severe inequities often linked to poverty, quality of education, food insecurity, access to transportation, affordable housing, unemployment, maintenance of basic utilities, violence, and public safety. In addition, power relationships across economic, political, and cultural dimensions, and systemic, durable, and persistent racism, discrimination, and other forms of oppression have resulted in severe inequities in COVID-19 outcomes.

PHC teams have a leading role in identifying and addressing issues that affect patients beyond the clinical setting, decrease health disparities, and advocate for public policies.

SDOH screening in clinical practice can be integrated into the workflow in a team-based approach that includes community health workers, social workers, and community-based organisations - so that practices can engage and empower individuals and communities to address needs.

We urge member states to enhance the possibility of an SDOH approach through 1) the support of interdisciplinary primary health care teams working with the community, 2) wrapping quarantine and isolation support services such as paid leave, rent, and utilities support, and food security around those diagnosed with COVID 19 who need these important services, and 3) electronic connectivity between health systems and CBOs.

WONCA enthusiastically supports the global plan of action to strengthen the role of the health system within a national multisectoral response to address interpersonal violence, in particular against women and girls, and against children.

WONCA recognises the importance of family doctors as first point of contact for victims, as well as providers of continued multi-generational care having a crucial role in facilitating disclosure of family violence. Family doctors are trusted leaders in their communities and committed to patients and families, as well as leaders of primary health care teams. They must be aware of the magnitude and impact of family and gender violence on patient's health and the health care system.

WONCA, through its Special Interest Group on Family Violence (SIGFV), promotes dissemination of available evidence, resources and training on family/gender violence in family medicine and primary care settings, offering workshops and presentations on various aspects of violence in WONCA regional and World WONCA conferences. SIG members are leading trainers on the topic in

their countries, working in national and international research projects, the involvement of national academies and colleges in developing policies and training programs on family violence' and in encouraging individuals and organisations to raise awareness of family violence in the professional community.

As it has been pointed out in the WHO report, the Covid-19 pandemic and measures to combat it have increased the magnitude of family/gender violence.

WONCA, and especially the SIG on Family Violence, propose to engage more actively with WHO, member states, WONCA Member Organizations, and other interested partners in the development of materials, policies, webinars and training of members of the PHC workforce to recognise and address all forms of family and gender violence, as well as promote research on these topics. A coordinated and continuous effort is needed to increase training for all members of the healthcare team, to improve identification, support and referral of victims of family violence.