

## STATEMENT BY THE WORLD ORGANIZATION OF FAMILY DOCTORS (WONCA)

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### Agenda item: WPR/RC68/2 Address by and Report of the Regional Director

The World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA), see [www.globalfamilydoctor.com](http://www.globalfamilydoctor.com), represents members from more than 150 countries in all regions of the world, and brings together those who are committed to developing family medicine as a key discipline for stronger and more effective health systems. Family medicine as a primary care specialty is present in a majority of countries of the Western Pacific region.

The United Nations has developed the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs, which will guide the global development agenda. You and I know that the same model of care is not going to work for each community. Which is why family medicine is so important. We have the capacity to adapt to our community needs. Fortunately the greatest strengths of the people working in family medicine is our diversity, community leadership, resilience, and unwavering commitment to our patients and communities. Family medicine has the power to play a transformative role in the shaping of societies. We have the power to tackle disparities and change the world we live in, but this will take a lot of hard work.

In 2013, Dr. Margaret Chan launched WONCA's new guidebook on *The Contribution Of Family Medicine To Improving Health Systems* <http://www.globalfamilydoctor.com/Guidebook>. The guidebook includes a chapter from the WHO showcasing the research into the impact family medicine is having in improving health outcomes in many nations of this region, including China and Thailand.

In order to provide universal coverage, our countries need to stem the costs of health care, and can do so through increasing investment in community-based health services. And at the same time there must be a movement of funding from hospitals to the community, and especially to rural communities, rather than expecting more community-based care to be delivered with no increase in resources.

Over the past year WONCA and its member organizations have contributed to WHO work on subjects including classification systems, ageing and health, disaster preparation response, patient and family engagement, childhood obesity, palliative care, mental health, non-communicable diseases, tobacco control, occupational health, health equity, safe radiation and imaging for children, women's and children's health, rural workforce and transformative education.

Good progress is being made in WONCA's collaboration with the WHO in the WPRO. However there is still potential for significantly more, in particular through broader engagement by all WONCA Working Parties and Special Interest Groups, as well as between our Member Organizations and WHO across the region, country offices and across a greater number of WHO departments. E

We are devoted to strengthening WONCA's work with the World Health Organization at global and regional levels to expand the role of family medicine in strengthening primary care in all countries, supporting universal health coverage, and to ensure that each country has a well-trained and supported family medicine workforce.

WONCA calls for a family doctor for every family. This means that every family has access to a caring committed family doctor working with other primary health care providers, to provide comprehensive continuing care to all people.