

A POSITIVE PRACTICE ENVIRONMENT IS...

...a health care setting that supports excellence, and decent work conditions, and has the power to attract and retain staff, provide quality care and deliver cost-effective, people-centred health care services.

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

About the global health workforce crisis

Achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is one of the targets the nations of the world set when adopting the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015.

UHC enables everyone to access the services that address the most significant causes of disease and death and ensures that the quality of those services is good enough to improve the health of the people who receive them.

However, there is a growing gap between the supply of health professionals – the people who work in the medical profession and provide health care treatment and advice – and the demand for their services. The World Health Organization estimates a shortage of 18 million health workers by 2030, leaving people with no access to health care. It also reports that countries at all levels of socioeconomic development face, to varying degrees, difficulties in the education, employment, deployment, retention, and performance of their workforce – while faced with the increasing burden of noncommunicable diseases, among other health related challenges.

How to address the global health workforce crisis

Health professionals are key to sustainable health systems, both now and for the future.

However, the poor quality of most healthcare work environments are undermining health service delivery and driving health professionals away from their caregiving role and country.

Unsafe working conditions are a feature of many health systems around the world. Unrealistic workloads, poorly equipped facilities, compromised personal safety and unfair compensation feature among the many factors affecting the work, life and practice of today's health professionals. Such environments weaken an employer's ability to offer enabling workplaces, and make it more difficult to attract, motivate and retain staff. These factors, when appropriately resourced, go a long way in ensuring an effective health professional workforce and, ultimately, the overall quality of health care delivery.



STAND UP FOR
POSITIVE PRACTICE
ENVIRONMENTS



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

To keep employees safe so they remain healthy, motivated and productive.

- Adhere to safe staffing levels.
- Adopt occupational health, safety and wellness policies and programmes that address workplace hazards, discrimination, physical and psychological violence and issues pertaining to personal security.
- Invest in health and work environments.
- Adhere to regulatory frameworks that ensure safe working conditions.
- Provide access to adequate equipment, supplies and support staff.
- Promote healthy work-life balance through policies and programmes that support fair and manageable workloads and job demands/stress, and flexible work arrangements.
- Promote awareness regarding cultural adaptability within staff and among employer/employee/co-workers/patient to foster a better working environment and outcome.
- Offer employment security and work predictability.
- Ensure employees practice under an overarching code of ethics.
- Communicate clearly and uphold standards of practice.
- Regularly review scopes of practice and competencies.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

To provide opportunities to learn, develop, progress and save lives.

- Support opportunities for professional training, development and career advancement.
- Offer thorough orientation programmes for new hires.
- Foster effective supervisory, mentoring and peer coaching programmes, contribution and performance.



STAND UP FOR POSITIVE PRACTICE ENVIRONMENTS

The delivery of high-quality health services depends on the competence of health workers and a work environment that supports performance excellence. The ongoing under investment in the health sector has resulted in a deterioration of working conditions worldwide. This has had a serious negative impact on the recruitment and retention of health personnel, the productivity and performance of health facilities, and ultimately on patient outcomes.

Positive Practice Environments must be established throughout the health sector if national and international health goals are to be met.

Let's join in commitment and action to create quality workplaces for quality care.

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