



Statement on the conflict in Israel and Gaza: all parties must respect and protect access to healthcare

Geneva, Switzerland; 13 October 2023 – The World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) is calling for all parties to the conflict in Israel and Gaza to respect their legal obligations under international humanitarian law to protect and respect access to healthcare and ensure the safety of civilians and healthcare workers. Healthcare workers are delivering emergency medical care in the conflict areas with no regard to ethnicity, race, religion or political affiliation. They are putting themselves at enormous risk and we know that tragically many have been injured or killed. All parties to the conflict must adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law, namely that under the Geneva Conventions the ill-treatment and killing of civilians is prohibited and the sick and wounded must be cared for. WHPA also wishes to underline that under international law it is prohibited to abuse symbols of protection, and that hospitals and other health facilities and vehicles, such as ambulances, must under no circumstance be used as military installations of any kind or means of transportation.

In line with the humanitarian efforts that should be afforded to all citizens in conflict areas under the Geneva Conventions, WHPA members unanimously support the provision of care without risk to any health personnel. Therefore, WHPA calls for immediate cessation of any acts that risk the lives of civilians or health workers.

Access to health is a human right and any attack on health workers and the patients they serve is abhorrent and unacceptable.

Note for Editors

The World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) brings together the global organizations representing the world's dentists, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists and physicians and speaks for more than 41 million health care professionals in more than 130 countries. The WHPA works to improve global health and the quality of patient care and facilitates collaboration among the health professions and major stakeholders.

www.whpa.org

Press contact

Joannah C. Wengler, Manager of the WHPA Secretariat

jcwengler@whpa.org

+33 644 29 12 88

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