

**Health Workforce Impact Assessment Report**  
**Draft global strategy to accelerate cervical cancer elimination**  
**146<sup>th</sup> Executive Board, February 2020**

**Purpose of the assessment:**

Resolution WHA69.19 on the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030, adopted by the 69th World Health Assembly in May 2016, requested the Director General to include an assessment of the health workforce implications of technical resolutions brought before WHO governing bodies (World Health Assembly and Regional Committees). This report presents the assessment results of the draft global strategy to accelerate cervical cancer elimination (hereafter referred to as the draft strategy) which provides guidance to Member States on the path towards elimination by achieving targets for prevention, treatment and care of cervical cancer. Thus saving lives and averting suffering.

**Process of assessment:**

An initial screening of the draft strategy was first undertaken in August 2019 showing potential workforce implications. A more detailed examination was undertaken in October 2019 to define more clearly the health workforce implications.

**Key points highlighted by the assessment:**

- The draft strategy addresses interventions for reducing the burden of cervical cancer from primary prevention (HPV vaccination), to secondary prevention (cervical cancer treatment and precancer treatment), and tertiary management (invasive cancer and palliation). Successful implementation of the draft strategy is dependent on having sufficient health workers with the needed competencies to deliver these interventions in a quality manner. This includes a diverse group of health workers, including nurses, physicians, paramedical staff, as well as specialists, such as oncologists, surgeons, pathologists and radiologists.
- Depending on the national context, additional clinical interventions may need to be integrated in the package of services, with implications for competencies of health workers and for regulation. Investments in health worker education and training (pre-service and life-long learning) will be needed to deliver prevention, treatment and care of cervical cancer.
- Primary health care is the means to advancing the elimination of cervical cancer (see also the health workforce impact assessment of the draft operational framework: primary health care: transforming vision into action). Strengthening linkages between primary care facilities

and community-based programmes, particularly for community sensitization on HPV vaccination and for reaching out of school girls, is more effective when communities trust and accept the health workers. Depending on the national context, engaging health workers known to communities such as community health workers or social workers as part of the primary care team addresses issues of trust. The WHO guideline on health policy and system support to optimize community health worker programmes provide evidence-based policy guidance to support national strategies and investments to build fit for purpose community-based health workforces.

- Screening will require a matching increase in strengthening capacity for treatment. This means availability of and accessibility to diagnostics, drugs and chemotherapy as well as surgical oncology capacity. All of which has clear implications on the health workforce. Health workers would need to possess the required competencies and be supported to deliver quality care.
- This draft strategy is the first of its kind. It presents clear goals and targets to set countries on path towards cervical cancer elimination. It is expected that scaling up national programmes on cervical cancer will increase domestic spending on cervical cancer and thus on the health workers. It is also expected that the implementation of such programmes will lead to increased awareness and demand for such services, creating additional demand for health workers. This may require optimizing health workers' skill-mix. In some instances, this could be achieved by reorganizing scopes of practice. There may also be a need for the creation of new job profiles as part of the primary health care team, such as patient navigators or care coordinators.
- The WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel serves as the universal ethical standard for the international recruitment of health workers with particular relevance to supporting cooperation between countries and building a sustainable health workforce.

**Assessment statement: (A)<sup>1</sup>** - A full assessment of possible impacts on health workforce was conducted, and it did not reveal any issue requiring consideration; the draft global strategy to accelerate cervical cancer elimination can proceed as per normal governing bodies processes.

*Access to further support on health workforce is available from the Working4Health Programme: <http://working4health.org/>*

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<sup>1</sup> (A) - No specific issue requiring consideration.

(B) - Some specific modifications to the strategy/resolution are required to adequately factor in health workforce implications and requirements.

(C) - The strategy/resolution has major workforce implications or requirements, which need to be factored in as part of the official process of consideration by Member States.