



Health Workforce-related terminology

Terminology work carried out by the WHO Language department

at the request of the Health Workforce department

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Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
health worker	<p>Health workers are all people primarily engaged in actions with the primary intent of enhancing health.</p> <p>This definition was first provided by the seminal World Health Report 2006, https://www.who.int/whr/2006/en/</p>	https://www.who.int/whr/2006/en/	<p>agent de santé</p> <p>Source: Rapport sur la santé dans le monde 2006, https://www.who.int/whr/2006/fr/</p> <p>soignant (variant)</p> <p>“agent de santé” is the preferred term for WHA and EB documentation, for historical reasons (it was used in numerous resolutions and in relation to</p>	<p>trabajador de (la) salud</p> <p>trabajador sanitario [Note on usage: mainly European]</p>	卫生工作者	<p>работник здравоохранения</p> <p>медико-санитарный работник</p>	عامل صحي

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
			Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978). For other documents, "soignant" is the preferred choice.				
care worker	Care workers provide direct personal care services in the home, in health care and residential settings, assisting with routine tasks of daily life, and performing a variety of other tasks of a simple and routine nature. This term comprises the two ILO ISCO occupational groups below:	Adapted from : https://www.who.int/hrh/statistics/Health_workers_classification.pdf Original source: https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/	auxiliaire de vie Note: Phrases with "aide à la personne" can also be used.	cuidador (de la salud) trabajador asistencial With input from Ms. Juana Bustamante and PAHO. Both favoured "cuidador (de la salud)"	照护工作者	социальный работник социальный работник, оказывающий индивидуальны е услуги по уходу за больными	عامل في مجال الرعاية

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
	<p>Heath care assistant (ISCO-08 code: 5321) - Institution-based personal care workers who provide direct personal care and assistance with activities of daily living to patients and residents in a variety of health care settings such as hospitals, clinics and residential nursing care facilities. They generally work in implementation of established care plans and practices, and under the direct supervision of</p>						

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
	<p>medical, nursing or other health professionals or associate professionals.</p> <p>Home-based personal care workers (ISCO-08 code: 5322) who provide routine personal care and assistance with activities of daily living to persons who are in need of such care due to effects of ageing, illness, injury, or other physical or mental conditions, in private homes and other independent</p>						

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	residential settings.						
health and care workers	WHO HWF does not recommend a dedicated definition, as this is not a separate term, but rather the listing in sequence of the two terms above		personnels de santé et d'aide à la personne	trabajadores de la salud y asistenciales trabajadores y cuidadores de la salud	卫生和照护工 作者	медико- санитарные и социальные работники	العاملون في مجالي الصحة والرعاية
health care worker	Synonymous with health worker. The preference however is to refer to 'health worker' to avoid confusion with 'care workers'.		agent de santé soignant	trabajador de la atención de salud	卫生保健工作 者	медико- санитарный работник медицинский работник	عامل في مجال الرعاية الصحية
International Year of Health	WHO HWF does not recommend a dedicated	https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA	Année internationale des personnels	Año Internacional de los	国际卫生和照 护工作者年	Международн ый год медико- санитарных и	السنة الدولية للعاملين في مجالي الصحة والرعاية

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
and Care Workers	<p>definition. Translating correctly the terms above should suffice.</p> <p>In WHO/UNTERM Member States at the resumed virtual, 73rd World Health Assembly, recognizing the dedication and sacrifice of the millions of health and care workers at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic, unanimously designated 2021 as the International Year of Health and Care Workers.</p>	73/A73_BCONF 2-fr.pdf	<p>de santé et d'aide à la personne</p> <p>https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA/73/A73_BCONF_2-fr.pdf</p>	<p>Trabajadores Sanitarios y Asistenciales</p> <p>A different version used in PAHO: Año Internacional de los Trabajadores y Cuidadores de la Salud</p>		социальных работников	

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
	https://www.who.int/news/item/11-11-2020-designated-as-the-international-year-of-health-and-care-workers						
health workforce	Health workers considered collectively. It can also refer to the policy area, field of study or health system component. This is the preferred term.		personnels de santé	<p>personal de salud</p> <p>fuerza de trabajo de la salud</p> <p>trabajadores de (la) salud</p> <p>[With input from PAHO]</p> <p>personal sanitario</p>	卫生人力/卫生人员队伍	<p>кадровые ресурсы здравоохранения</p> <p>трудовые ресурсы здравоохранения</p>	القوى العاملة الصحية

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
				[Note on usage: mainly European and the Global Strategy]			
human resources for health	Synonymous with health workforce. The two terms can be used interchangeably . HRH may have, however, a more utilitarian/ economics connotation, and can be deliberately prioritized if this connotation is desired in the context.		ressources humaines pour la santé	recursos humanos para la salud	卫生人力资源	кадровые ресурсы здравоохранен ия трудовые ресурсы здравоохранен ия	الموارد البشرية الصحية
health personnel	Synonymous with health workforce, can be used		personnel de santé	personal de salud	卫生人员	медицинский персонал	موظفون صحيون

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
	interchangeably .			<p>fuerza de trabajo de la salud</p> <p>[With input from PAHO. Same main option]</p> <p>personal sanitario [Note on usage: mainly European]</p>			
health manpower <i>Included as deprecated in UNTERM.</i>	Discouraged from use, as it does not reflect the contemporary discourse and sensitivities on gender; it also has a poor connotation in terms of labour						

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	relations. No longer frequently used, it was however common from 1980s to 2000s, back then used synonymously with HRH, health workforce, health personnel. Also discouraged from use according to the WHO style guide (see section on sex-specific descriptions and illustrations): "Avoid the unnecessary use of "man" or composite words that use "-man", which						

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	imply that the term refers only to males, i.e. the average person, people in general, not the average man, the man in the street staff, personnel or human resources, not manpower humankind, not mankind, man"						
health practitioner	Any health worker who has acquired health-related qualifications. It comprises both health professionals and health associate professionals (ILO ISCO categories 22		<p>praticien</p> <p>prestataire de soins</p> <p>prestataire de santé</p> <p>Note from AFRO colleagues : not to be confused with "tradipraticien"</p>	<p>proveedor de atención de salud</p> <p>proveedor de asistencia sanitaria</p> <p>[Note on usage: mainly European]</p>	卫生从业人员	медицинский работник	مهنة الصحة

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
	and 32, respectively).		(traditional practitioner). Choice of term depends on local usage.				
health professional	Health professionals conduct research; improve or develop concepts, theories and operational methods; and apply scientific knowledge relating to medicine, nursing, dentistry, veterinary medicine, pharmacy and promotion of health. ILO ISCO category 22.	ILO International Standard Classification of Occupations https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/docs/resol08.pdf Includes the regulated health workers, e.g. doctors, dentists, midwives, nurses, pharmacists.	professionnel de santé ILO's term "spécialiste de la santé" (ILO ISCO category 22) is awkward.	profesional de la salud	卫生专业人员	профессиональ ный медицинский работник	أخصائي صحي

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
health associate professional	Health associate professionals perform technical and practical tasks to support diagnosis and treatment of illness, disease, injuries and impairments in humans and animals, and to support implementation of health care, treatment and referral plans usually established by health professionals. ILO ISCO category 32.	ILO International Standard Classification of Occupations https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/docs/resol08.pdf	auxiliaire médical Plural : “auxiliaires médicaux” or “professions intermédiaires de la santé” (ILO ISCO category 32).	profesional de nivel medio de la salud Consulted with Ms. Juana Bustamante. Not clear what it means and to whom it refers. It would vary by country.	卫生助理专业人员	средний медицинский персонал	
health provider	Discouraged from use if the intention is to refer to health		prestataire de santé prestataire de soins (variante)	proveedor de atención de salud	卫生服务提供者	поставщик медицинских услуг (deprecated)	مقدم خدمات صحية

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
	workers because it can be confusing, since it can also refer to an institution/ entity/ facility (e.g. hospital/ clinic/ network of facilities, etc).		dispensateur de soins	proveedor de asistencia sanitaria [Note on usage: mainly European]		медицинская организация (entity)	
health care specialist	Health worker who has obtained advanced degree/ formal qualifications following completion of further studies beyond their initial health qualification.		professionnel de santé spécialisé spécialiste (variante) professionnel de santé avec spécialisation complémentaire (synonyme)	especialista de la atención de la salud especialista de la atención sanitaria [Note on usage: mainly European]	卫生保健专家	врач- специалист	أخصائي في مجال الرعاية الصحية
front-line health worker	This term is relatively common and is generally		agent de santé de première ligne	trabajador de la salud de primera línea (de atención)	一线卫生工作 者	медицинский работник первой линии	عامل صحي في الخطوط الأمامية

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	<p>understood to indicate health workers with patient-facing responsibilities.</p> <p>WHO HWF discourages its active use in WHO documents for several reasons: its meaning is unclear, as it does not correspond to any recognized occupational group or category thereof; it may be unintentionally divisive, as it pits some health workers against others (those working in the</p>		<p>agent de santé en première ligne (variante)</p> <p>“première ligne” has no heavy military connotation in French. Widely used.</p>	<p>Input from Ms Juana Bustamante: adding "de atención" after "de primera línea" breaks ambiguities and gives clarity to the text.</p>			

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	'backline'); the militaristic metaphor has a connotation that feels inappropriate to some; finally it translates poorly in some other languages.						
primary health care worker	Health workers operating in primary health care services		agent dispensant des soins de santé primaires agent chargé des soins de santé primaires (variante) agent de soins de santé primaires (variante)	trabajador de atención primaria de salud trabajador de la atención primaria de la salud	初级卫生保健工作者	медицинский работник первичного звена	عامل في مجال الرعاية الصحية الأولية
nurse-midwife	Health worker with dual qualification as both nurse (ILO ISCO 2221) and	https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/	infirmier spécialisé en gynécologie obstétrique	enfermera-partera enfermero-partero	护士-助产士	медсестра-акушерка специалист сестринского/а	ممرضة - قابلة

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
	<p>midwife (ILO ISCO 2222).</p> <p>This occupation exists only in some countries which combine pre-service education, licensing and regulatory requirements for the two occupations. In most contexts the two professions are entirely distinct, in some cases with midwifery representing a specialization of nursing.</p>		<p>infirmier-accoucheur</p> <p>infirmier/sage-femme</p> <p>Note: Choice of term depends on cultural and geographic context.</p>	<p>enfermera especializada en obstetricia</p> <p>enfermero especializado en obstetricia</p> <p>profesional de enfermería y partería</p> <p>With input from PAHO.</p>		кушёрского дела	
<u>skilled birth attendant</u>	<p>Skilled health personnel, as referenced by SDG indicator 3.1.2, are competent</p>	https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272818/WHO-RHR-18.14-eng.pdf?ua=1	<p>accoucheur qualifié</p> <p>Source: https://www.who.int/maternal</p>	<p>personal /profesional cualificado para atender partos</p>	熟练接生人员	квалифицированный акушер	أخصائية توليد مؤهلة

Term (including link to UNTERM)	Definition/ comments on usage	Source	French	Spanish	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
	maternal and newborn health (MNH) professionals educated, trained and regulated to national and international standards. They are competent to: (i) provide and promote evidence-based, human-rights based, quality, socioculturally sensitive and dignified care to women and newborns; (ii) facilitate physiological processes during labour and delivery to ensure a clean and positive childbirth	A clearer/ narrower -but older and therefore outdated - definition is available at https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/mdgs/skilled_birth_attendant/en/	child_adolescent/topics/maternal/skilled_birth/fr/#:text=Ces%20services%20exigent%20%C2%ABun%20professionnel,de%20rep%C3%A9rer%2C%20de%20prendre%20en See also SDG indicator 3.1.2 (https://undocs.org/fr/A/RES/71/313) : Proportion d'accouchements assistés par du personnel de santé qualifié				

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	experience; and (iii) identify and manage or refer women and/or newborns with complications. In addition, as part of an integrated team of MNH professionals (including midwives, nurses, obstetricians, paediatricians and anaesthetists), they perform all signal functions of emergency maternal and newborn care to optimize the health and well- being of women and newborns.						
task sharing	The rational redistribution of		partage des tâches	distribución de tareas	任务分担	делеги́рование полно́мочий	تقاسم المهام

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(synonyms: role optimization, role delegation, role substitution, optimal skills mix).	responsibilities among health workforce teams. Specific tasks or roles are shared, where appropriate, to less specialized health workers in order to make more efficient use of the available personnel. It should be accompanied by appropriate measures in terms of education, supervision, management support, licensing, regulation and remuneration.		Source: B146/13, WHA73.1	(sinónimos: optimización de funciones, delegación de funciones, sustitución de funciones, combinación óptima de competencias/habilidades)	(职能优化、职能委派、职能替代、最佳技能组合)	перераспределение полномочий расширение функций среднего медицинского персонала (contextual variant)	التوزيع الأمثل للأدوار مزيج المهارات الأمثل

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task shifting	Discouraged from use, as found inappropriate and typically implying the simple shifting (sometimes dumping) of tasks in isolation, therefore lacking the accompanying support measures indicated above.						تحويل المهام
community health worker			agent de santé communautaire	agente de salud comunitario trabajador comunitario de la salud (variant)	社区卫生工作者	общинный медико- санитарный работник	مجتمعي صحي عامل (term) الصحيون العاملون المجتمعيون (variant)