

Statement of the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)

Agenda Item 9. Artificial intelligence

77th Session of the Regional Committee of the WHO for the Western Pacific Region

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Honorable Chairperson & Distinguished Delegates,

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations represents 1.5 million medical students, who are the first generation of digital natives to enter medical practice, bringing along with them, Artificial Intelligence. This brings real opportunity, but it also creates a risk of eroding clinical reasoning upon which safe medical practice stands.

So we ask ourselves: what are we still meant to learn for ourselves, and how will we recognise when that answer is wrong? We do not see AI as a replacement for tomorrow's physicians, but it is already reshaping how we are trained.

As the Regional Office's analysis for RC76 mentions, most AI initiatives in the Western Pacific remain at the pilot stage, and readiness and regulatory capacity vary widely across countries.

Concerns over model bias, data protection and over-reliance, were raised at the ADB-WHO forum in Manila this year; and the risks will be inherited by young health workers unless they are addressed now.

Therefore, the IFMSA urges the World Health Organisation and Member States to implement the Guidance's three frameworks with the health workforce at their centre:

- Engaging health workers and students in selecting use cases, with priority given to assistive tools that strengthen frontline care in low- and middle-income settings;
- Requiring transparent, locally validated tools and establishing clear legal frameworks on liability for AI-related harm;

- Integrating AI literacy, including its limitations, algorithmic bias, data privacy and the primacy of clinical judgement, into undergraduate medical curricula.

Used responsibly, AI can expand access and strengthen health systems; without adequate safeguards, it risks deepening existing inequities. As the generation that will practice alongside these tools, IFMSA stands ready to work with Member States and the Regional Office to ensure that AI in the Western Pacific leaves no one behind.

Thank you!

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