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Home > Seventy-second World Health Assembly (A72/1) > 11.5 Universal health coverage > - Community health workers delivering primary health care: opportunities and challenges > Public Services International

Public Services International

Meeting:

Seventy-second World Health Assembly (A72/1)

Agenda Item:

- Community health workers delivering primary health care: opportunities and challenges

Statement:

This statement from PSI is supported by PHM and MMI.

We welcome WHO's recognition of CHW as a significant component of HRH and commend the recommendation for their remuneration and regularisation in the WHO Guideline on CHWP. We urge MS to endorse these guidelines.

We are concerned that Resolution EB144.R4 brushes over crucial topics such as remuneration and regularization of employment. The use of digital technology should not be regarded as a panacea for problems facing health systems. We urge MS to amend the Resolution to reflect priorities as identified in the WHO guidelines.

In countries where CHWP are run by the private or NGO sector, there is a risk that the public health systems be weakened. We call on MS to take the responsibility of implementing and standardising programmes, as well as make them accountable to the communities CHWs work in.

CHW have the potential to be agents of social change. However, contemporary programmes treat CHW only as auxiliary extensions of the formal healthcare system. We invite WHA to consider the fundamental role that CHW can play in supporting health systems while advocating on behalf of their communities in the quest to achieve health for all.

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