



**Frontline Health Workers Coalition Statement on WHO Executive Board Item 14.1:
COVID-19 Response
January 2021**

The Frontline Health Workers Coalition commends the WHO for its work in responding to COVID-19. However, much more must be done to ensure essential support and protection for frontline health workers if the response is to succeed.

Reports show at least 44,000 health workers in Africa, 12,000 health workers in Asia, and 570,000 health workers in Latin America and the Caribbean have been infected with COVID-19, threatening their lives and overall health system capacity.

Governments, donors, and implementing partners must prioritize protection and support for sustainable frontline health workforce teams so they can continue responding to COVID-19, while simultaneously ensuring uninterrupted access to essential health services for all people.

Immediate policy changes and investments are needed to surge frontline health workforce capacity, ensure health workers' safety and well-being, provide the supplies and remuneration needed to do their work, and recognize their commitment and personal sacrifices.

We call on Member States to immediately address critical needs facing frontline health workers, as outlined in our [Policy Recommendations for Sustainable Health Workforce Teams to Respond to COVID-19](#), including by:

- Making WHO- or CDC-recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) available, as well as needed testing and treatments, for every health worker, including community health workers.
- Prioritizing frontline health workers in future COVID-19 vaccine distribution.
- Providing remuneration as well as additional support and compensation for frontline health workers, particularly for unpaid health workers.
- As women make up 70% of the health workforce, enacting gender-transformative policies to address barriers women health workers face, which have been amplified by COVID-19.
- Reporting gender-disaggregated data on health worker COVID-19 vaccination rates, infections, and deaths.

The heroic sacrifices of frontline health workers must be met with honor, compassion and support for their efforts.

The Frontline Health Workers Coalition is an alliance of 37 United States-based organizations urging greater and more strategic investment in frontline health workers in low- and middle-income countries as a cost-effective way to save lives and foster a healthier, safer, and more prosperous world.