

Statement of the WONCA Europe Conference 2018, Kraków

“Everyone has the right to timely access to affordable, preventive and curative health care of good quality” is one of the 20 principles and rights proclaimed by the European Commission in 2017.

EQuIP, the European Society for Quality and Safety in Family Practice, a WONCA Europe network, stated this year that: “Equity in health care is an essential dimension of quality of health care. Equitable health care is hereby considered as health care in which the access to care, treatment, and outcome of care do not vary according to any patient characteristic different than his/her health needs.”

During this year’s WONCA Europe conference in Krakow, we explored the many issues relating to equity in primary health care. It became obvious that equity should be one of the core principles determining the planning, organisation and behaviour of practice in primary health care. This would ensure the delivery of processes of care that would lead to more equitable care focussed on people’s needs, unaffected by other considerations.

Our statement: Promoting equity for a better quality of care for all Europeans

We, the family physicians/general practitioners from 58 countries attending 23rd WONCA Europe Conference in Krakow, share the World Health Organization’s position that countries should build universal health care systems, with a strong foundation of primary health care. This will prepare the ground for efficient multi-sectoral actions committed to deliver high quality health care. We urge:

- European politicians, governments and other decision makers to develop a primary health care system that does not vary in quality because of the patients’ personal characteristics, such as their socioeconomic status, gender, education, ethnic origin or geographic location.
- Family doctors around Europe to be aware of the importance of prioritising equity when planning and delivering comprehensive, holistic health care which includes promoting health and well-being in addition to the management of acute and chronic health problems.
- Health care professionals in Europe to focus on interprofessional collaboration as a key strategy in the delivery of equitable health care.
- Primary health care organisations and the WONCA Europe Member Organisations to engage in collaboration with governments, policy-makers, and other stake-holders, to ensure equitable availability and acceptability of care for all people living in Europe.
- Undergraduate and Postgraduate training to change selection processes and curricula to produce an adequate and equitably distributed family medicine workforce to meet population needs.

Concluding the work of our conference, we wish to strongly emphasise that the delivery of primary health care services should focus the available resources on patient and community needs.

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23rd WONCA Europe Conference, Kraków 2018*

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