World Organization of Family Doctors

Wonca
World family doctors. Caring for people.

Statement on Primary Health Care and Health Workforce

79th World Health Assembly

18–23 May 2026

Agenda Items 12.5 Primary Health Care and and 12.8 Health Workforce (combined)

Primary healthcare is the foundation of resilient and equitable health systems, and family doctors are at its core. Strong evidence shows that continuity, coordination and comprehensiveness deliver better outcomes, patient safety and stronger communities across the life course. These are the hallmarks of person-centered family medicine.

The World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) shares the Board's concern over persistent underinvestment in primary healthcare. This gap is felt most acutely in the severe and worsening global shortage of family doctors, which threatens progress on universal health coverage, especially in underserved communities.

WONCA calls on WHO and Member States to:

- Invest in family medicine training, workforce development, specialty recognition, and fair working conditions.
- Promote ethical international recruitment standards.
- Strengthen continuity-based primary care as the backbone of resilient health systems.