Global Competency and Outcomes Framework for Universal Health Coverage

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Foreword

Achieving the collective commitment to universal health coverage by 2030 requires a health workforce that is equipped to provide the full range of essential health services. This means a health workforce with the education, support and supervision to provide quality, people-centred, integrated health services.

Competency-based education is the most effective approach to ensuring preparedness for practice. Amidst the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, Member States have an opportunity to invest in strengthening competency-based health worker education that will bring dividends in health, jobs, global health security, economic opportunity and gender equity.

This Global Competency and Outcomes Framework for Universal Health Coverage is addressed to Member States and education institutions to support them to identify health worker education outcomes; integrate those competencies within education programmes; establish standards for practice; and build performance appraisal tools oriented towards the health services of the quality standards that meet population health needs. With this framework, WHO sets out its recommended approach to competency-based health worker education outcomes; in so doing, it also provides conceptual and terminological clarity.

The framework results from the excellent collaboration among leading experts in the field, many of whom have been very generous with their time and insights to guide its iterative development. That development process has made clear that we must think not only about the number of health workers we need to educate and employ, but also about what that education looks like, what the content should be, how we determine what an acceptable passing standard is, and how these adult learners can best achieve the learning outcomes they need to meet the health needs of the populations that they serve.

The framework incorporates some of the often-overlooked outcomes that underpin the provision of individual health services, such as collaborative practice and respectful care. Further it emphasizes the need to prepare health workers for the teams and settings in which they may practice, the individual and population health services they may provide – including emergency preparedness and response – and the related management and organizational activities.

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