

Item 16.3 Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030): adolescents' health

Thank you Chair. The International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care and the Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance are disappointed that the revised Global Strategy under this Lifecourse agenda item, *still* excludes *palliative* care for women children and adolescents, despite the fact that our organisations submitted a detailed, timely response to the original call from the Commission. Lack of palliative care and controlled essential medicines in 75% of the world means that more than 18 million children, adolescents, mothers, and *grandmothers*, die in avoidable pain and distress each year. Tragically, cancers in children and adolescents are on the rise globally, while breast and cervical cancers are still the leading killers of women worldwide.

Women's health is more than maternal health: *women are not just mothers*. Children's health more than nutrition and vaccines, and adolescent health more than reproductive rights. Much as people prefer not to think about it, palliative care is a key component of essential health care services as defined within UHC. The majority of primary and secondary caregivers for people suffering from communicable and non-communicable diseases around the world are women and girls, often older women, who are unsupported (if they have to leave paid employment) and ill-prepared for this demanding role.

Community based palliative care programs can train and support caregivers to provide quality care for family members, and ensure that basic income is not lost if people have to leave paid employment to care for a loved one. The Ley de Cuidadores program in Costa Rica, is a great example of such assistance.

When you ratified Resolution 67/19, you recognised your ethical obligation to ensure palliative care is available and accessible for *all*, including

women, older persons, children and adolescents with life-limiting illness. It a component of your commitment to respect, protect, and fulfill all persons' rights to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. We urge you to recognize the contribution of women, children, and adolescents as primary caregivers, as well as their suffering as patients, and to develop the necessary programs to support them. Finally, we urge member states to ensure funding to the Secretariat to implement WHA Resolution 67/19 on palliative care. I thank you.