

How to Use the WHHO EB144 Advocacy Note

The World Health Organization (WHO) 144th Executive Board (EB) meeting begins on January 24 and lasts until January 31. During the meeting, the EB members are entitled to comment first on agenda items and propose changes or new initiatives. All other countries are entitled to comment after the EB members, followed by interventions of representatives of NGOs in official relations with WHO, such as the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care (IAHPC).

Delegations will be reviewing the agenda and preparing their statements early, probably as soon as they get back to work after the New Year. It is probable that delegation members from most countries are unfamiliar with the state of development of palliative care in their country and you can play an important role in generating awareness and providing them with the information.

The IAHPC staff prepared an [Advocacy Note](#) to help national associations act effectively as key informants so the members of their country delegations can speak accurately on the floor about agenda items relevant to palliative care. To help your national association in this process we have prepared this step-by-step guide on how to use the IAHPC Advocacy Note, our suggested content of a letter to the Ministry of Health (MoH) and a guide on how to develop an attachment to that letter.

Process

- 1) Research the correct contact information for the Minister/Secretary of Health, and write a cover letter on letterhead to him/her from your Association. This letter will most likely be reviewed by the staff member who is responsible for palliative care issues. It is important to identify this person and follow up with them in a timely fashion for this and for future meetings.
- 2) Prepare an attachment to the letter containing facts and agenda items for WHO EB144 relating to the state of palliative care in your country. The attachment should also include the Association's suggestions for your country delegations' comments on the EB agenda items and reports (more instructions below).

Letter: The letter should not be too long (no more than two pages) and cover the following points:

I: Introduce yourself, describe the work of the Association and include a link to the organization's website. Mention that your Association is a member of the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care, an organization in official relations with WHO and in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, and that you work closely with us on international advocacy.

II: Request a meeting as soon as possible to discuss substance and advise your addresses in the ministry of your availability.

III: Request the name and contact information of who from the Ministry or from the Geneva mission will attend the WHO EB in January, and

IV. Reference the Attachment that you will prepare and send with the letter (see below)

V. Close by saying you will follow up within a few days to schedule a meeting (preferably before January 15), making sure you include all your contact information.

Copy the letter to the WHO Country Officer and your relevant contacts in the MoH (for example, the person responsible for Non-communicable diseases and the person responsible for controlled medications)

If you do not receive a reply within one week, follow up with an email. Resend the letter if necessary.

The Attachment: To develop the Attachment, go through the [Advocacy Note](#) and think about how each agenda item and the IAHPHC response applies to your country. Lay the facts in one or two paragraphs per agenda item, mentioning your national data on Serious Health Related Suffering (see [here](#) for information) and describe the work that your Association does to relieve this suffering.

Ask your country delegation to mention the issues in their interventions as per the “Association asks and requests” under each agenda item.

Example - Response prepared by IAHPHC: Agenda Item [EB 144/5](#)
Proposed Program Budget

- 1) “Our Association requests the Ministry to report to WHO EB144 on the percentage of the national budget allocated to health and to education, and specify how much will be invested in palliative care development as part of Primary Health Care in 2019.” (If nothing is budgeted for PC, then you can offer to assist in developing a budget. IAHPHC can help with this.)
 - a. You can help by supplying evidence about the number of palliative care providers in your country, and issues they have with access to education and essential medicines, etc. These can be both challenges and successes. No more than a paragraph.
 - b. You can offer to work with the WHO Country officer and your MoH to strengthen your health system by integrating palliative care according to regional and global guidelines. IAHPHC can assist you if you wish us to help.

If you need help with this, please ask! Write to Dr. Katherine Pettus, IAHPHC Advocacy Officer any time before the EB begins using this [link](#). We will be undertaking a similar process to prepare for the World Health Assembly in May.