

Statement for Sammi UHC2030

My name is Dr. Ebtessam Ahmed. I am currently a Clinical Professor at St. John's University College of Pharmacy in New York, where I teach about pain management; palliative care, ethics, and end of life care. I also serve on the board of The International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care. IAHPHC thanks the chair and requests member states to ensure that "palliative care" is included in the spectrum of UHC as an essential service. The Declaration of Astana 2018, signed by all, recognized palliative care as an essential element of primary health care. Palliative care medicines on the Model List are unavailable in many parts of the world because governments still control them as "narcotic drugs" forgetting that they provide substantial therapeutic benefits for many patients. Morphine, an essential medicine for pain management costs almost nothing, and in some countries as little as three cents a dose, yet because of a man-made barriers to manufacture and distribution, it never reaches millions of people around the world leaving them to live and far too often die in agony. This is not a natural disaster like an earthquake, it is a result of deliberate, often well intentioned, but short sighted and unbalanced policies. Drug policies can be balanced to ensure the public good, including the entire spectrum of services, like UHC, from prevention, to promotion and treatment, to rehabilitation and palliative care. Palliative care ensures that patients do not suffer unnecessarily, allowing member states to fulfil their human rights obligations and protect the dignity of all persons with no discrimination. Governments that integrate palliative care into their healthcare systems are more likely to achieve the goals and targets of Agenda 2030, including reduce extreme poverty, gender equality, education, decent employment, access to essential medicines and universal health coverage. I thank you.