

Testimony of Dr. Simone Cernesi to the UN High Level Political Forum on the SDGs for IAHP

I thank the opportunity offered by IAHP to participate in Expert Group Meetings on behalf of Stakeholder Group on Ageing (SGA)

I would give voice to general practitioners and primary care staff and patients.

Never before in this pandemic family medicine has been shown to be important, however, the enormous workload was not enough to make people feel welcomed. The use of telemonitoring technology did not reduce the sense of loneliness.

The work of primary care has remained under-appreciated and in many countries, instead of taking the opportunity to strengthen proximity medicine, it is being discredited. As a nursing home physician I agree that people should be cared for at home, but what are the caregiver support policies? Unmet needs increase and will increase but resources for proximity medicine?

Proximity approach means that the primary care team goes to the patient's home and sees patients in their environment and GPs are the only professionals who have long lasting relationships with patients. When the patient can't come to us we come to visit them.

The number of needs is rapidly increasing and GPs are under high pressure despite this situation the GPs numbers are always cut down.

Many resolutions mentioned too timidly about general medicine but how can we reduce inequality and protect the vulnerable without solid primary care? SDG 3 is about well-being. I would like to underline that well being means being free from futile pain and living well to the end. How can we leave no one behind if primary care is not valued also in terms of human resources?

Certainly having home care teams with basic palliative care skills would have made this pandemic less devastating.

Wellbeing also means to end well. Don't forget palliative care and the difficulty in access to end of life care everywhere globally. Strengthening primary care is urgent to reach this goal and all SDG goals. Without primary care there is no UHC. A new healthcare humanism is necessary, profit cannot cancel fundamental rights.

This pandemic has made the need for community and solidarity dramatic.

Will this humanitarian catastrophe move towards new awareness and a different allocation of resources?

Thank you for this opportunity, I really appreciated the way to work in groups. I hope to be able to participate again and that being part of this network will lead to advancement in the goal of sustainable and solidarity development.

Thanks for your time