



GNWHOCNM Meeting Brief

Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery
ICN Congress, Helsinki | Tuesday, 10 June 2025

Overview

The Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery (GNWHOCNM) convened a meeting during the ICN Congress in Helsinki on Tuesday, 10 June 2025, with 52 participants—30 in-person and 22 online. Participants represented WHO Collaborating Centres (WHO CCs) from across all six WHO regions, alongside global partners including WHO, Jhpiego, Sigma, the International Council of Nurses (ICN), the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), and Afrehealth.

The meeting provided a collaborative space to share updates, review progress against WHO strategic priorities, and discuss actions to advance nursing and midwifery aligned with the WHO Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery (SDNM) policy priorities; Leadership, Education, Service Delivery, and Jobs worldwide.

The GNWHOCNM extends sincere thanks to the International Council of Nurses (ICN) for generously providing the meeting room and supporting the facilitation of this collaborative session during the ICN Congress in Helsinki.



GNWHOCNM meeting at ICN Congress in Helsinki



Key Updates and Discussions

Welcome and Secretariat Report

The GNWHOCCNM Secretariat, based at the WHO CC for Nursing, Midwifery, and Health Development, University of Technology Sydney (UTS), and co-chair, WHO CC for Nursing and Midwifery Development at Mahidol University, opened the meeting by emphasising the Network's continued mission: Health for All Through Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery.

The Secretariat provided updates on:

- The growing influence of the Network, now comprising 42 active WHO Collaborating Centres.
- Discussion for the GNWHOCCNM Biennial Meeting in 2026.
- The Secretariat election process.

The group also welcomed the extension of the WHO Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery (2021–2025) to 2030, ensuring continued alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (details shared in attached Power Point).



Dr Ameporn Ratinthorn (Mahidol University) and Prof Michele Rumsey (UTS) opening the session



SoWN 2025 Actions Workshop

Dr. Carey McCarthy, WHO Headquarters, facilitated a focused discussion on the State of the World's Nursing 2025 (SoWN 2025) report (slides in PowerPoint).

Key Findings:

- There are 29.8 million nurses globally; however, workforce distribution remains inequitable.
- The global nursing shortage has improved but still stands at 5.8 million nurses, expected to decrease to 4.1 million by 2030.
- Persistent challenges include leadership inequities, workplace protections, and gender pay gaps.

Action Priorities:

- Strengthen nursing leadership pathways.
- Improve workforce protections and address pay disparities.
- Focus on emerging priorities including digital health, climate impacts, and advanced practice nursing.

The session emphasised leveraging SoWN 2025 data for evidence-informed decision-making, policy development, and global advocacy.



The session included virtual participants



Participant Poll: Strategic Priorities for 2026–2030

During the meeting, participants engaged in an interactive polling exercise to help identify key priority areas for the Network's future work, aligned with the WHO Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery. The poll captured participant views on where the greatest focus and investment should be directed from 2026 to 2030.

Key Findings from the GNWHOCC Priority Poll:

- **Jobs priorities:** Growing Professionalization was voted at the top priority (71%): 80% of the world's nurses are at the 'professional' level. Working to the full extent of their education and with updated scopes of practice, these contributions elevate the skill mix of interprofessional teams to optimize service delivery and accelerate progress towards UHC. A professionalized workforce can drive innovation, take advantage of career pathways, and stimulate economic and social development and inclusive growth.
- **Education priorities:** Education Standards (74%) were voted as the top priority; better-educated nurses are equipped to manage complex conditions, bolster nurse competencies and improve the overall quality of care and clinical outcomes. Graduates from robust programs are more likely to stay in the profession, reducing turnover and fostering leadership pipelines.
- **Service Delivery priorities:** Expansion of Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) Roles and Nurse-Led Care (61%) was voted as the top priority for the Network. 62% of countries have introduced APN roles, highlighting the expanding scope of nursing practice. APN roles expand nurses' scope, allowing them to provide more specialized, cost-effective care—especially critical in under-resourced setting, contributing to improved patient care and health outcomes. APN roles are proven to deliver cost-effective care, alleviating physician shortages.



Interactive polling activity on strategic priorities for 2026-2030



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- **Leadership priorities:** Strengthening of Government Chief Nursing Officers (87%) was the top leadership priority: An 82% presence of Chief Nursing Officer positions (up from 71% in 2020) doesn't necessarily indicate a strong policy role. GCNOs, adequately resources, have positive impacts in policy development, resource mobilization, and for health services delivery planning. When enabled, GCNOs can spearhead reforms that address workforce distribution, working conditions, advance equitable care, and enable professional development.
- **Emerging Priorities:** Digital health (61%) was voted as most relevant, with climate change, gender equity, and addressing the needs of fragile and conflict-affected settings also considered highly relevant for strategic advancement.

The results of the poll will be used to guide future GNWHOCCNM planning and advocacy efforts, ensuring that the Network's activities are responsive to the evolving global health landscape and the needs of the nursing and midwifery workforce.

Regional and WHO Collaborating Centre Updates

Centres from multiple regions provided updates on key initiatives including:

- Mahidol University, Thailand: Regional education and leadership programs, interprofessional training, and international conference preparations.
- Jordan University: Competency development in primary health care, crisis leadership, and nursing educator capacity assessments.
- Gulf Region: Regional research collaboration, educational mapping, and upcoming midwifery-focused webinars.
- Chiang Mai University: Erasmus-funded educational projects, community-based elder care initiatives, and cross-sectoral partnerships.
- Cross-Centre Collaborations: Joint patient safety research, contributions to WHO Lifelong Learning, and student leadership development through the Asia Pacific Alliance for Health Leaders.



Group photo with Dr Oscar Ocho, Chair of PANMCC (retiring end of 2025)



Next Steps

- Election processes email will be circulated with revised 2022 bylaws and election guidance
- Biennial Meeting: The next GNWHOCCNM General Meeting is scheduled for 2026.
- Continued engagement through the WHO Global Nursing and Midwifery Community of Practice and regular knowledge-sharing sessions.

Additional Resources

GNWHOCCNM Website: <https://www.globalnetworkwhocc.com/>

WHO Nursing and Midwifery Global Community of Practice: <https://nursingandmidwiferyglobal.org/>