
Dr Muna A. Tahlak Assumes Presidency of the International Hospital Federation



Dr Muna A. Tahlak begins her two-year term as the 36th President of the International Hospital Federation (IHF) – a global non-profit, membership organization representing hospitals and healthcare associations across the globe. Dr Tahlak was elected in November 2021 and has served two years as President Designate before taking up the position of President at the Closing Ceremony of the 46th World Hospital Congress in Lisbon, Portugal on 27 October 2023.

Dr Tahlak is the CEO of Latifa Women and Children Hospital and Chief Medical Officer of the Dubai Academic Health Corporation. She is a celebrated health professional and talented leader, taking an active role in fostering global partnerships for knowledge exchange and excellence in healthcare. A member of the IHF's Governing Council since 2016, and IHF Treasurer 2019–2021, she supported the development of the IHF's Global Healthcare Leadership Competency Model and is a valued contributor in the IHF's Women in Leadership Forum.

In starting her term as President, Dr Tahlak stated:

"It is my honour to serve as President of the International Hospital Federation. Dubai Health Authority is a proud member of the IHF, and we have long recognized the value that it can bring. Being part of this international community enables us to address global challenges and opportunities for improved health outcomes for patients, the healthcare workforce, and the environment.

The challenges of tomorrow must be met with new solutions. Through the programmes and the leadership forums of the IHF, we can exchange expertise on the common themes and trends worldwide, such as workforce shortages, cybersecurity, AI, universal health coverage, and the need for gender equity in leadership. And through the Geneva Sustainability Centre, the IHF supports the transition to low-carbon, resilient, and sustainable healthcare delivery. The IHF is the global voice of hospitals worldwide, ensuring leaders and executives who serve their communities are providing healthcare services that are fit for the future."

As President of the IHF, Dr Muna succeeds Ms Deborah J. Bowen, President and Chief Executive Officer of the American College of Healthcare Executives. Having served on the IHF's Governing Council since 2015, Ms Bowen remains a highly valued member of its Executive Committee, and will now serve a two-year term as Past President.

Reflecting on her presidency, Ms Bowen shared a positive vision of the future:

"It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve as the IHF President since November 2021. Healthcare systems around the world are going through a tremendous period of change as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and address an increasingly digital landscape, unprecedented workforce shortages, climate change and continued gender inequity in leadership. It is through exchanging with peers worldwide that we can address these shared issues. With the support and expertise of a global community, our focus remains clear – to provide safe and equitable care to all.

I would like to express my gratitude to my fellow Governing Council members for their support and collaboration in these past years, and no doubt into the future. And I am delighted to transition my role to an outstanding woman, Dr Muna Tahlak and wish her every success as she steps into the presidency, taking forward our commitment to excellence in healthcare leadership."

Dr Tahlak is the first woman from the Middle East region to step into the presidency, and the third female president of the IHF. The first was Gillian Morgan, former CEO of the UK's NHS Confederation (2003–2005), with Ms Bowen serving as the second female President (2021–2023).

As the presidency formally transitions, a new President-Elect was announced this week. Dr Henry Gallardo, Director General of Fundación Santa Fe de Bogotá (FSFB), and representative of the Colombian Association of Hospitals and Clinics, was elected by the IHF's General Assembly to serve as President-Elect for the period 2023–2025 before assuming the presidency.

Dr Gallardo shared his thoughts on international collaboration.

"I'm proud to be confirmed as President-Elect of the IHF, having served on its Governing Council since 2018 working alongside my inspiring peers from around the world. Coming from a Latin country, I'm looking forward to opportunities to increasingly engage leaders in the region in global discussions about the healthcare sector. I am also thrilled that the 47th World Hospital Congress will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2024. Together, we are improving health outcomes for everyone, everywhere."

Source: [IHF](#)

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