

---

## IAPO Urges WHO Member States to put Patients at the Centre of Healthcare Systems



---

The International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) has urged World Health Organization (WHO) Member States to put patients at the centre of healthcare systems. This request was central to an intervention made by Jo Groves, IAPO CEO, on health system strengthening at the sixty-fifth session of the WHO World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. The following is taken from IAPO's statement:

"Health systems in all world regions are under pressure and cannot cope if they continue to focus on the disease and not the patient. As is increasingly recognised, a sustainable approach to health system design and delivery needs to be based on patient-centred healthcare which encompasses the five principles, as outlined in IAPO's Declaration on Patient-Centred Healthcare, of: respect for an individual's unique needs, preferences and values as well as their autonomy and independence; choice and empowerment; patient involvement in health policy; access and support to receive safe, quality and appropriate healthcare services and information. It is imperative that these principles are at the core of your work.

In your work to strengthen healthcare systems, whether that is putting patients at the centre of service delivery or securing universal access, patients and patients' organizations are your key ally.

Patients and patients' organisations across all disease areas are delivering services from patient education to providing care and support, across the world, with much of this work going unrecognised in daily policy-making. Often, these patients' organisations are best placed to understand the realities facing patients on a day to day basis and are an essential resource for all people with a stake in delivering quality and safe healthcare.

To harness this resource we urge you to continue to establish "robust national or subnational health policies and strategies based on broad and continuous consultation and engagement of all relevant stakeholders." Patients are always a relevant stakeholder in health matters and therefore member states should establish robust frameworks to involve patients in all policy development.

Likewise, we believe that WHO has a crucial leadership role to play in both exemplifying patient involvement in its own practice and supporting governments to establish models of patient involvement to strengthen national health dialogue.

IAPO is committed to working with WHO and Member States to facilitate this work for the benefit of all."

The progress report on Health system strengthening was approved by Committee A of the WHA. IAPO will continue to work with WHO to ensure that patients are the centre of healthcare systems worldwide.

For more information, please visit: [www.patientsorganizations.org](http://www.patientsorganizations.org)

Published on : Thu, 31 May 2012