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Worldwide

WHO: Workforce Crisis Endangers Healthcare

www.who.int

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced in its World Health Report 2006 that a serious shortage of trained healthcare professionals is severely limiting the life-saving services available in 57 countries around the world, 36 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa. According to the report, this shortage, in conjunction with inadequate medical training, poses a significant obstacle for health systems trying to respond effectively to chronic diseases, avian influenza and other health challenges. The declining number of healthcare workers is even more problematic in light of the growing global population.

The WHO reports that over four million additional doctors, nurses, midwives, managers and public health workers are urgently needed to fill the healthcare gap in the 57 most-affected countries. In addition, the WHO concludes, every country must improve its healthcare planning, education and employment policies, as well as working conditions. The World Health Report 2006 includes a 10-year plan for addressing the workforce crisis.

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