



## **Vienna Statement on Hospital Performance Assessment**

**2<sup>nd</sup> International WHO Conference on PATH, 4 July 2008, Vienna**

Health systems in the European region are under growing pressure to optimize their performance so as to meet the health needs of the populations increasingly calling for more accountability and transparency. Functions carried out by hospitals are an integral part of and contribute to the performance of health systems. Incentive mechanisms encourage health care providers to improve their contribution to population health and to the quality of services delivered to patients. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms such as external assessment, economic incentives, public reporting and internal continuous quality improvement tools are increasingly used to support quality improvement, accountability and transparency in hospitals. In this context, hospitals strive to continuously improve the quality and efficiency of their services and thereby contribute to strengthening health systems.

### **We, the members of the PATH network,**

**Recognize** that equity, solidarity, and participation are core values of WHO Member States as stated in the Tallinn Charter on Health Systems, Health and Wealth, and that accountability and transparency are essential to promote these. In particular, we recall the commitment made by the Member States of the WHO European Region through the Tallinn Charter on Health Systems, Health and Wealth to promote transparency and to be accountable for health system performance to achieve measurable results.

**Endorse** these values and commitments and encourage the evolution towards more hospital accountability.

**Recognize** that a comprehensive and holistic view of hospital performance which goes beyond traditional concepts of single performance dimensions is necessary to adequately respond to the needs of the population; that patients are central to all health care processes and that as such they must be empowered to contribute to hospital performance improvement processes; and that mechanisms should be developed to involve, motivate and enable professionals to function in teams and maximize their contribution.

**Declare** that we are committed to quality. Quality is a high level of performance which assumes a state of functioning that corresponds to societal, patient, and professional norms. It should be based on professional competences in applying existing knowledge, maximizing the use of available technologies and resources, increasing efficient use of resources, minimizing risk to patients, promoting patient centeredness and working towards optimal health outcomes. Within the health care environment, hospitals should be responsive to community needs and demands, integrate services in the overall

delivery system and commit to health promotion. Hospital performance should be assessed in relation to the availability of hospital services to all patients irrespective of cultural, demographic, economic, physical and social barriers.

**Believe** that performance assessment is a cornerstone to quality improvement processes and that while there are variations in the way performance measurement is currently used for performance improvement in European hospitals, it is important that performance assessment tools be adapted to the diversity of needs across the Region. It must be aligned to the strategic orientations of each hospital and should be embedded in its local context, thereby helping to test and revise the hospital's strategies.

**Believe** that quality improvement is further facilitated by learning from other hospitals, countries and professions. We support a collegial and constructive dialogue and believe that the PATH network is an appropriate mutual learning environment to identify international best practices.

**Assume** that the effort by hospitals towards continuous quality improvement is recognized and financially supported and that appropriate information systems are in place.

**Understand** that hospitals are only one of many actors in complex health systems and that they need to coordinate their efforts with other stakeholders and sectors.