Sixth Annual World Health Worker Week 2018 April 1-7
An engagement toolkit
They are caretakers. They are educators. They are your neighbors, friends, and family. They are on the frontlines every day.

From April 1-7, on World Health Worker Week #WHWWeek, show the world just how much #HealthWorkersCount.
Persistent inequalities in the world highlight that despite advances in medicine, millions of people continue to suffer needlessly from preventable and easily treatable diseases. This is where health workers on the front lines make a difference. These health workers – nurses, midwives, community health workers, physicians' assistants, peer counselors, clinical officers, doctors, pharmacists, and others – provide essential health services in many of the hardest to reach areas, often travelling on foot with just a backpack of supplies, providing needed prevention, treatment and health education to communities.

As we tragically learned from the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, lack of access to these trained and supported health workers on the front lines of care can have devastating consequences for communities. That is why, during the week of April 1-7, we’re asking you to join the worldwide effort to support, appreciate and raise awareness of the important role of health workers everywhere.

World Health Worker Week is an opportunity to mobilize communities, partners, and policymakers in support of your community’s health workers. It is a time to celebrate the amazing work that they do and it is a time to celebrate the challenges they face every day. Perhaps most importantly, it is an opportunity to call those in power to ensure that every community has access to health workers with the training, supplies and support they need to do their jobs effectively.

This toolkit will provide some ideas that can help your organization and your partners encourage greater appreciation and support of health workers and show your community that health workers count.

#WHWWeek #HealthWorkersCount
Get the conversation started

Frontline health workers are nurses, midwives, community health workers, pharmacists, peer counselors, doctors, pharmacists, and other health workers working at community level as the first point of care for communities. They often come from the very communities they serve.

With the proper training and supervision they make a difference by learning skills that save hundreds of lives. Millions of people in low- and middle-income countries are alive today because a midwife was by their side at birth; because a nurse vaccinated them as infants; because a community health worker taught their families to adapt healthy behaviors like breastfeeding, hand-washing, birth spacing, and sleeping under a mosquito net.

World Health Worker Week is an opportunity to highlight the challenges health workers face and call for them to be addressed. First, there are not enough health workers to get the job done. In addition to this global shortage, existing health workers often lack support and supervision, or may even lack the right training and equipment to provide simple and appropriate lifesaving care.

Some of the challenges they face include lack of suitable transportation to travel to reach the communities they serve. Some work in dangerous areas and have been targets of attacks, and wages can be low and inequitable. These conditions often lead health workers to migrate to urban areas or other countries where work conditions and wages are higher, and make it difficult to attract and attain skilled health workers in low-income and rural communities.

Every day people can come to my house for care or I will go to their homes if they prefer. My door is open 24 hours a day for the people in this village.

- Desita, Midwife in Aceh Province, Indonesia
Getting social

Social Media messaging for #WHWWW by theme

Monday March 26 - Friday March 30: Remind your community #WHWWeek is starting

World Health Worker Week #WHWWeek starts on April 1! What will you do to ensure #HealthWorkersCount for #GlobalHealth, #UHC, and the #SDGs?

Monday April 2: The health workforce needed to achieve SDGs and universal health coverage

A strong health workforce is simply a must to achieve #UHC, #SDGs. That’s why we must ensure #HealthWorkersCount. #WHWWeek

Tuesday April 3: Inspiring stories about health workers, especially in conflict/humanitarian settings

#EndImpunity: Globally, #HealthWorkers have been ambushed, abducted & killed. We must #SafeguardHealth safeguardinghealth.org/report2017 #NotATarget #WHWWeek

Wednesday April 4: Women’s Empowerment and the Health Workforce

Women make up 70% of the health workforce worldwide, & investment in #HealthWorkers holds enormous potential for women’s economic empowerment. Our health workforce will be stronger with a sharp focus on #GenderEquity: https://t.co/9em6Gt3b8x #WHWWeek

Thursday April 5: Engage in the Summit on #HealthHeroes

Don’t miss live coverage of #HealthHeroes +SocialGood! Join the conversation with @FHWCoalition @ plus_socialgood & @ JNJ GlobalHealth on 4/5 at 9am EST during #WHWWeek. https://livestream.com/plussocialgood/HealthHeroes

Friday April 6: Health workforce needed to ensure global health security

70% of countries are unprepared to handle infectious disease outbreaks. #HealthWorkersCount to strengthen #GHsecurity and avoid pandemics. #WHWWeek

As seen during the #Ebola epidemic in 2014-2015, lack of access to trained and supported #HealthWorkers on the frontlines of care can have devastating consequences for communities. #WHWWeek

Saturday April 7: World Health Day/UHC

Today on #WorldHealthDay we call for #HealthForAll. To get there, every community must have access to trained, supported, connected and safe #HealthWorkers. #HealthWorkersCount for #UHC. #WHWWeek

“Investing in the Health Workforce for Women’s Economic Empowerment” https://t.co/9em6Gt3b8x. #WHWWeek #HealthWorkersCount #WD2018
5 ways you can honor a health worker

1. **Share inspiring stories:** Let people know just how valuable they are. Sharing a specific story of how a health worker helped a local family can be quite moving and powerful. Pitch a story or write a letter to the editor of local media outlets. The media reaches a wide audience, including decision-makers. You can also contact the Ministry of Health, Finance, Education, Labor or other appropriate government agency to let them know how important health workers are.

2. **Get the community involved:** Everyone depends on the help of health workers. Whether you engage local musicians, carry out a community walk or race to honor the paths health workers travel on, create an art exhibit or make T-shirts, hats and banners to commemorate, make a day of it and celebrate health by establishing a special day to honor local health workers. You can also show your support by using the hashtags #WHWWeek and #HealthWorkersCount on Twitter and Facebook.

3. **Educate your Community:** Remember that health is a two-way street. Encourage people to follow medical advice and treatments provided by health workers. Advocate for health workers to receive the respect, pay and support they need to successfully carry out their responsibilities. Let government officials know that frontline health workers are valued. You too can contribute to a healthier community.

4. **A day of gift-giving:** Pick a day to say thank you to health workers with a flower, a car ride, or a card. They would truly feel the impact of the whole community showing appreciation for all of their hard work. Partner organizations could help choose an appropriate gesture and local business can be contacted to support this one-day effort by offering prizes or even discounts to local health workers.

5. **Present an award:** Work with a partner organization, supporters, friends, and family to honor a few inspiring health workers in your area with a certificate or even a trophy. Invite a government official or someone from the Ministry of Health, Finance, or Education to help with presenting the award. Invite local journalists, health workers’ family, and friends to join in the celebration.
Contacting the media

1. Reaching the right person is key to getting your story published. The editor or producer of the health section of your newspaper or health segment of the local radio program are most likely to be interested in a story about health workers. If the newspaper or radio station has no health section, try pitching your story to any features editor or producer who focuses on local stories.

2. Email is often the easiest way to contact a media organization. If you don’t get a response, follow up with a phone call to make sure your inquiry was received.

3. Highlight a unique aspect of your story. Be informative and concise. What makes the health worker in the story you are pitching extraordinary? It’s important to emphasize information that you think others would enjoy reading about, as well as make sure to convey a clear call to action if there is anything that you would like the community to do as a result of hearing this story. They will only participate in an event or visit a website, for examples, if that is clearly stated in the article.

4. Provide your contact information and a time you will be available to talk, whether you are e-mailing someone or leaving a message. It’s also important to let the health workers you are talking about know in advance that they might be contacted for an interview. The editor or producers may also need your help setting up any additional interviews that they are interested in.

5. Be patient and understanding. If an editor or producer expressed interest in your story, they will get to it as soon as possible. Often, stories that are not time-sensitive will be delayed until there is enough time or space. When possible, try to make the story more topical and related to a timely event so that it makes it more appealing to the editor. If they are not interested in your story, ask about other ways that you may get your information published.

6. Don’t be discouraged if your story is turned down. Others might love it, so reach out to other media outlets. Revise your pitch based on what you learned and try again!
Stay Engaged beyond April

During World Health Worker Week we will highlight inspiring work that health workers do every day, but let’s not stop there. We want our policymakers to keep hearing from all of us how crucial investing and supporting strengthening the global health workforce is to the health and prosperity of every community in the world. 2017 provided us with a unique opportunity to engage a multisectoral group of actors across the education, finance, health, and labor sectors at the Fourth Global Forum on Human Resources for Health. We also saw the adoption of Working for Health 5-year Action Plan on Health Employment and Inclusive Economic Growth that is critical for effective implementation of the recommendations of the High Level Commission.

During and after World Health Worker Week, here are some ways you can take action to support health workers in your community and around the world:

- **Engage in the hubs of the Global Health Workforce Network:** To galvanize accountability, commitment and advocacy for the implementation of Working for Health Action Plan and Workforce 2030 Strategy, the WHO has established the Global Health Workforce Network. The Network serves to maintain high-level political commitment; promote inter-sectoral and multilateral policy dialogue with all key stakeholders; facilitate the alignment of global health initiatives to the health workforce investment priorities; and foster global coordination and mutual accountability. The Network currently has 7 Hubs:
  - Community-based health workers
  - Data and Evidence
  - Education
  - Gender
  - Health Labour Market
  - HRH Leadership
  - Youth

We invite all stakeholders to learn about the network and contribute to its work. Follow GHWN on Twitter: @GHWNNetwork.

- **Please join the Frontline Health Workers Coalition’s @FHWCoalition’s Thunderclap:** Join health workforce advocates from around the world to call on leaders to invest in health workers to achieve universal health coverage, the Sustainable Development Goals and global health security. The Thunderclap is available to sign up before World Health Worker Week, with tweets released on April 16, 2018 ahead of the World Bank-USAID Universal Health Coverage Financing Meeting in Washington DC April 18-20. Join here: https://www.thunderclap.it/projects/69050-support-health-workers-for-all

“Walk the Talk: The Health for All Challenge” May 20, 2018, Geneva, Switzerland. Ahead of the World Health Assembly, this event will be open to people of all ages and abilities to mark the celebration of WHO’s 70th birthday and usher in the 71st World Health Assembly. Stay tuned to @GHWNNetwork for updates on participating. More information is available here.
The Frontline Health Workers Coalition is an alliance of United States-based organizations working together to urge greater and more strategic U.S. investment in frontline health workers in developing countries as a cost-effective way to save lives and foster a healthier, safer and more prosperous world.

We are an alliance of United States-based public and private sector organizations with a secretariat housed at IntraHealth International.

We advocate for greater and more strategic U.S. investment in frontline health workers in developing countries as a cost-effective way to save lives and foster a healthier, safer and more prosperous world.

It matters because trained and supported frontline health workers are the first and often the only link to health services for millions in developing countries. Yet, there are not nearly enough of them where they’re needed most. In addition, frontline health workers often are not authorized to provide a range of lifesaving curative and preventive services essential to primary health care—and not adequately supported by national health systems.

Stay up-to-date with us:

Website frontlinehealthworkers.org
Blog https://www.frontlinehealthworkers.org/blog/
Twitter @FHWCoalition
Facebook facebook.com/frontlinehealthworkers.

Organizations with a US office interested in joining the Coalition contact Director Vince Blaser: vblaser@intrahealth.org.
In partnership with:

IntraHealth International

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