

WFPHA Intervention – Agenda Item 3(i) - Health Surveillance Systems V/10 – 25 June, 2025

Thank you co-chair. I am Andrea Rother from the University of Cape Town in South Africa, representing the World Federation of Public Health Associations.

The World Federation of Public Health Associations would like to emphasise the importance of monitoring population health data through surveillance systems for preventing and protecting human health from chemical exposures. We remind delegates that a key principle of the GFC is the prevention of chemical and waste-related health risks. In order for countries to develop targeted interventions to protect health, health surveillance data is vital. However, effective and operational health surveillance systems are weak or lacking.

We do have epidemiologic science to support low cost and sensitive early warning systems. However, these are not being implemented because of the lack of global political will to establish these.

The Global Framework on Chemicals provides an important mechanism for multisectoral cooperation to promote the political will needed. It can also highlight that the health sector plays a critical role and provides unique expertise to address the sound management of chemicals and waste. For example, the critical role poison centres play in providing data useful to other sectors in protecting human health to reduce exposure to chemicals and waste.

We welcome the World Health Organisation's current process to update the Chemicals Road Map under the Executive Board Directive 156/23 and are ready to support the updating process. Health ministries have widely used the previous road map to develop or strengthen their capacities on chemicals and waste management. The World Federation of Public Health Association's Environmental Health working group stands ready to assist with the dissemination and implementation of the updated Chemical roadmap and encourages all delegates, not just health ministries, to do the same.

We also encourage the clear integration and prioritisation of selected actions, which gives greater prominence to issues covered by the health sector targets in the Framework, actively promoting intersectoral collaboration.

Co-chair, I thank you.

