



ESMO Statement at the WHO Executive Board Meeting, 24 January – 1 February 2019

Agenda Item 5.5.3: Preparation for the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on universal health coverage

Honourable Chair, Esteemed Delegates,

The European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) represents over 20,000 oncology professionals from over 150 countries. We share WHO's vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and agree it requires strengthening health systems. We note, however, that many countries do not include cancer services in their health benefit packages. Therefore, we invite WHO to ensure cancer patients are not left behind in the political declaration of the UN HLM on UHC, which should state that **'UHC packages must include the provision of a set of cost-effective essential cancer and palliative care services delivered at the primary and secondary healthcare level'**.

To support the WHO's 3 dimensions of UHC, ESMO would like to highlight resources freely available on our website that can support Member States in addressing each dimension.

1. The first dimension of **'increasing population coverage'** requires increased availability and accessibility of a well-trained workforce able to provide quality healthcare services.
 - The [ESMO Global Curriculum in Medical Oncology](#) is available in 9 languages and provides countries with a detailed training curriculum to build cancer workforce capacity.
2. The second dimension of **'expanding essential health services'** requires decisions about new services based on the recommendations of national clinical practice guidelines.
 - For countries that do not have national cancer guidelines, they can adopt the evidence-based [ESMO Clinical Practice Guidelines](#), which set the standard for cost-effective cancer care.
3. The third dimension is **'reducing the financial burden of health services'** to patients.
 - To support reimbursement decisions for cancer medicines, ESMO developed the [ESMO-Magnitude of Clinical Benefit Scale](#) which provides the score of a medicine's clinical benefit to improve patient outcomes.

ESMO stands ready with its expertise in cancer management and its global network to support country efforts towards achieving UHC.

Thank you.