



**ESMO Statement  
for the 76<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly  
21-30 May 2023**

**Agenda item 14.2: Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)**

Distinguished Delegates,

Speaking on behalf of our 28,000 members - cancer professionals from over 160 countries - The European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) welcomes the current draft amendments to the International Health Regulations.

These amendments include the recommendations, proposed by our society, that efforts to build, develop and maintain health systems to the resilience levels defined by the WHO, go beyond the proposals to do so at just local community and primary care levels but are also extended to both secondary and tertiary levels.

Given that cancer patients are disproportionately treated at secondary and/or tertiary levels, and that one in five people will develop cancer at some point in their lives, we urge Member States to support these proposals and ensure that the updated International Health Regulations do not leave these millions of patients behind.

We also urge Member States to support the inclusion of equally specific language on secondary and tertiary healthcare, as opposed to the more generic term 'continuum of care', in the planned 2023 UN Political Declaration on Universal Health Coverage.

The opportunity, presented by the reform of the IHR, should be taken to establish sustainable and resilient healthcare systems founded on Universal Health Coverage, and to strengthen population-based disease registries.

With the amended regulations due to come into effect in 2025, ESMO reiterates its availability to work with Member States to assist with the development of resilient oncology services across the whole continuum of care.

Thank you.