

Open Letter to Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization
Date: 15 May 2025

Dear Dr. Ghebreyesus,

I write to you as the CEO of the World Patients Alliance (WPA), the largest global association of nonprofit patient organizations. With over 650 member organizations, WPA unites the collective voice of patients worldwide.

While our work spans a broad spectrum of patient issues, one concern consistently stands out across all communities: patient safety. It underpins every WPA program and advocacy effort. We highly value our collaboration with WHO's Patient Safety Flagship and the Patient Safety and Quality of Care Unit. Many WPA members actively participate in WHO's "Patients for Patient Safety" initiative.

Despite limited resources, these programs have delivered outsized impact, shaping safer health systems around the globe. However, we are deeply concerned by indications that these vital initiatives may face reductions or even termination due to upcoming budget constraints at WHO.

We respectfully urge you to safeguard these programs. As you have rightly emphasized, patient safety and quality of care form the foundation of universal health coverage. Without safety and effectiveness, access to healthcare loses its value. Health systems, both in low- and high-resource settings, continue to struggle with preventable harm. WHO's patient safety programs (from hand hygiene and safe surgery to medication safety, maternal care, and hospital safety) provide practical, evidence-based guidance to ministries and healthcare providers who rely on them to protect patients.

The Global Patient Safety Action Plan, adopted by the World Health Assembly, has already galvanized momentum among Member States. Yet it remains in its early stages and requires sustained support to achieve its full potential.

On behalf of patients worldwide, we urge you to preserve and strengthen WHO's patient safety initiatives. They are essential not only to WHO's mission but to the well-being and trust of the millions who seek safe, quality healthcare every day.

Regards,



Hussain Jafri
CEO
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