

Principles on:

Universal Health Coverage

Every person across the globe has the right to access the healthcare they need. Health systems must be designed and services delivered to meet the needs of patients. Patients must be the first consideration.

The International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) has worked with its members to develop the following principles on universal health coverage from a patient perspective.



We believe these principles need to be at the heart of health systems and we call on all governments and stakeholders to put them into practice. These principles can help achieve universal health coverage: affordable, high-quality and accessible healthcare for everyone.

1) Accessibility

All patients have the right to access the healthcare that they need, when they need it.

2) Patient-centredness and equity

All people, regardless of disease or condition; age, gender, race or ethnic background; sexual orientation; geographic location; socio-cultural background, economic or legal status, must have fair and impartial access to quality healthcare.

3) Choice and empowerment

All patients have the right to know about the healthcare services that are available. Patients must be able to be meaningfully involved in healthcare decision-making in a variety of ways at the local, national, regional and global level.

4) Quality

It is not enough for all patients to have access to healthcare. Provision needs to be safe, of the highest attainable standard and include a commitment to learning and improvement. Patients need to define what constitutes quality in healthcare.

5) Partnership and collaboration

Patients have a moral and ethical right to play a meaningful role at all levels; in health and in other areas that can have an impact on health and wellbeing.

6) Sustainability and the value of healthcare

All stakeholders need to recognise the value of healthcare when considering investing in universal health coverage.

7) Accountability and transparency

Accountability and transparency are vital to delivering safe, effective and affordable healthcare. All stakeholders need to be held accountable on commitments they have made to implement universal health coverage, and be accountable to the patients that they serve.

The International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) is a unique global alliance representing patients of all nationalities. Everything we do is focused on promoting patient-centred healthcare. We do this by being the global voice for people who suffer from any disease, disability, illness, impairment or syndrome, and by being the focal point for local, national, regional and international patients' organizations.

Find out more about IAPO and the principles at: www.iapo.org.uk/UHC