



## International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science

IFBLS Statement to 138<sup>th</sup> WHO Executive Board  
Agenda Item 10.1

The International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science is a federation of National Organizations of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists (BLS). Presently, we represent 32 countries with more than 127,000 members. Our members are the Scientists who perform, interpret and report results of routine and specialized laboratory procedures. Statistics indicate that up to 80% of a patient's record is comprised of data generated by the clinical laboratory. Clinicians rely on this data for the diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of a patient's health status.

The education, recruitment and retention of BLS are of prime importance. As with other healthcare professions, we are experiencing shortages of Scientists. As the technological advances continue, so must the continual upgrading of education for the BLS occur, similar to physicians and nurses. Many of our members have a minimum requirement of a 3-4 year degree before being accepted into the profession, as well as ongoing National Registration. Future planning is required to ensure sufficient trained BLS are available for the healthcare system.

Funding for continued learning is also of prime importance to ensure the practitioner is competent, which will have a positive impact on patient safety. Ensuring that the BLS receives adequate pay for their valuable contribution to healthcare will assist in the retention of practitioners. Clinical placement is an essential element of the education and training and these positions must be made available in the laboratory.

As BLS work behind the closed doors of the laboratory, they are often overlooked in the planning of the healthcare workforce. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the Executive Board to keep sight of the importance of these healthcare workers and the need to ensure an adequate supply of appropriately trained BLS.

Respectfully submitted  
Tom Stowe  
President

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