



## Conference Summary

*“Better Care for a Better World”*

21<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Emergency Medicine, June 2022

### Background

The 21<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Emergency Medicine (ICEM) was held in June 2022 in Melbourne, Australia. Over 1300 emergency care providers from more than 60 countries participated in the meeting, sharing their knowledge and experience across 55 plenary and concurrent sessions. This document summarises the issues, principles and actions discussed, and provides a collective mission statement for the global emergency care (GEC) community.

The ICEM 2022 scientific program was underpinned by the core values of social justice and sustainability, arranged around four key themes:

#### **Global health and emergency care**

*Global disparities in the provision of timely and quality emergency care, and the role of emergency care in the attainment of universal health coverage*

#### **Equity and emergency care**

*The impact of race, gender and socioeconomic factors on healthcare practice and outcomes, including the challenges faced by First Nations peoples across the globe*

#### **Planetary health and emergency care**

*The intrinsic link between climate change, pandemics and other disasters, the centrality of emergency care systems to effective responses, and the critical need for sustainability in healthcare practice*

#### **Innovation, technology and emergency care**

*New thinking, new technologies and new models of care, enabled by innovation, leadership and transformative action*

## Commitments and actions

Following from extensive discussion across these four topic areas, GEC stakeholders – including communities, clinicians, health services and governments – are encouraged to:

1. Strengthen global provision for the care of patients with acute and undifferentiated health needs, by improving the capacity of all countries to deliver timely, effective and evidence-based emergency care, and advocating for universal emergency healthcare access for all people across the world.

*As a GEC community, we commit to international partnerships that are reciprocal and collaborative, and aim to address locally identified needs and priorities.*

2. Acknowledge that improving outcomes across populations requires an explicit focus on the social, commercial and political determinants of health, including the impact of structural inequities. The consequences of social inequality are witnessed everyday in emergency departments across the globe.

Additionally, GEC stakeholders must acknowledge and commit to addressing systemic and persisting gender inequities in the health workforce, including the significant gender pay gap. Gender discrimination clusters women in lower status, lower paid roles, sees them working in unsafe environments facing violence or sexual harassment at work, and being excluded from decision making. Despite comprising almost 70% of the health workforce, women hold 25% of leadership roles. This persistent and harmful inequality disadvantages women health workers, weakens health systems and undermines global health security, and impedes progress towards gender equity at all levels.

*As a GEC community, we must continuously strive to be inclusive, to advocate and work towards equity of access and outcomes for all our patients, and to acknowledge that diversity fundamentally strengthens our discipline.*

3. Adopt a planetary health lens when encountering challenges in emergency care, identifying and understanding the crucial linkages and cause-effect relationships between the environment and human health. The impacts of climate change continue to have a direct impact on the provision of routine and disaster healthcare across the globe.

*Using interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge integration, the GEC community should focus on translating and using planetary health science to advocate for policy development and health systems reform that recognises the crucial link between planetary ill-health and emergency care.*

4. Recognise the importance of clinical innovation and transformation to benefit patients and clinicians across the globe, and improve efficiency and precision in healthcare delivery.

*The GEC community encourages investments in research, technology and models of care that promote equity in healthcare access and outcomes, and enable sustainability for the emergency care workforce.*

## **Conclusion**

ICEM 2022 has reaffirmed the deep sense of solidarity and shared experience that exists between emergency care clinicians across the globe. It has also highlighted the unique strengths and capabilities of our discipline, and the opportunities for further global emergency care development. By emphasising the critical requirements for 'better care' in a 'better world', ICEM 2022 has created a renewed sense of optimism about the future of emergency care practice.

The GEC community will meet again at the 22nd International Conference on Emergency Medicine in June 2023 in Amsterdam, Netherlands.