



International
Pharmaceutical
Students' Federation

IPSF Pharmacy Education
**ADVOCACY
TOOLKIT**



Advocating for Pharmacy Education Transformation:

A Toolkit for Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Students

Background

The International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (IPSF) is the leading international advocacy organisation for pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences students, and recent graduates up to four years after their first degree in pharmacy. IPSF pursues the promotion of improved public health through the provision of information, education, and networking opportunities, as well as a range of publications and professional initiatives. The Federation aims to play an active role in the education, education processes, addressing imbalances, disparity, and workforce strategies of its members including rights and duties, acknowledging that there is no pharmaceutical workforce without education.

The education of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences students is critical for the quality of pharmaceutical care services that will be rendered to the public at present and in the future, after all, students today are the pharmaceutical/health care professionals of tomorrow. An inadequately and poorly trained pharmacy or pharmaceutical sciences student is a potential threat to the health system thus, it is pertinent that all students across the globe receive the best and possible quality, need-based education that will prepare them to be flexible and evidence guided pharmaceutical workforce members irrespective of their country or region.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed diverse inequalities and areas of improvement in the training of pharmacy and pharmaceutical science students globally. These imbalances need to be addressed and engaged at all



levels by local and international dialogues to ensure that actionable measures are taken and put in place for the most effective and adequate education system and process of students irrespective of their background or regions.

Now, more than ever, there is more need for a significant transformation of pharmacy education to advance the practice of pharmacy, improve patient outcomes and adapt the pharmaceutical workforce to the expanding roles of the pharmacy profession.

This toolkit aims to provide a guide, support, and solidarity system for all pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences students, educational stakeholders, and influencers who desire and commit to pharmacy education transformation.



What is advocacy?

According to UNICEF, “[a]dvocacy is the deliberate process, based on demonstrated evidence, to directly and indirectly, influence decision-makers, stakeholders and relevant audiences to support and implement actions that contribute to enhance access to scientific knowledge”. Advocacy can be thought of as a notion, an objective, or a mix of actions involving problems finding, researching, analysing, drawing strategies, and policymaking.

Advocacy encompasses multi disciplinary approaches which include:

- Advocating for a cause involves setting up a goal that encompasses both short-term and long-term profits for the cause;
- The goal should be aiming for a change in governance, laws, attitudes, power, social relations, and institutional functions;
- Working towards that goal includes multiple actions that need to be put into motion following a certain timeline;

What are we advocating for?

The FIP Nanjing Statements on Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Education are the global standard for which the framework of this advocacy and thus this toolkit will be built. The Statements were agreed upon in 2016 and show the envisioned future for pharmaceutical education needed to enhance professional standards worldwide. These statements are used for self-assessment and monitoring (at the country level or the education provider level), identification of gaps and strategic planning, and improving the process of education. These 67 Nanjing Statements are grouped into eight clusters:

- I. Shared Global Vision: Advocating for a shared global vision promotes workforce development in the context of pharmaceutical education and training. This global vision would help professional leadership bodies, educators, and regulators in developing a national or regional vision based on the priorities and

- Reaching that goal involves delivering strong evidence-based recommendations to decision-makers, stakeholders, and/or those who influence them. It highlights issues and encourages actions which are taken at scale, and which address barriers and challenges faced by pharmacy students and recent graduates as healthcare professionals;
- The goal of this advocacy should be to address issues related to education, training, students and young pharmacists' rights and duties, imbalances and disparities within the health workforce, the evolution of the pharmacist's profession and its position within the public health chain, as well as the implementation of new technologies, aimed to remold the practice of the pharmacy profession.



resources of the country or region, to develop new medicines and improve their use for better health. This cluster has 8 Statements providing further details for the standards of a shared global vision;

- II. Professional Skills Mix: Advocating that the education of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists in all settings needs to include competence, skills, and knowledge to meet the needs of the public and interact with other health care professionals. This cluster has 11 Statements describing the expected professional skill sets that pharmacy and pharmaceutical students should be trained on;
- III. Recruitment of Students: Advocating for students who have a profile that fits the requirements of the school and is aligned with the profile of pharmacists desired for the country recruiting into pharmacy schools;
- IV. Foundation Training and Leadership: Advocating that



the process of education should include the leadership development for students and new graduates in pharmacy and the pharmaceutical sciences with a priority on developing the next generation of clinical, scientific, academic, and professional leaders This cluster has 6 Statements that describe the accepted standards for foundation training and leadership;

- V. Experiential Education: Advocating that the education of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences students should ensure

opportunities to develop their pharmacy practice and science skills in a wide variety of real-life settings. This cluster has 11 Statements stating the accepted standards for experiential education;

- VI. Resources and Academic Staff: Advocating for the quality, availability, and accessibility of equipment, finances, technology, and human resources needed to properly prepare pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists. This cluster has 15 Statements stating the accepted standard for these resources and academic staff;
- VII. Quality Assurance: Advocating for the key aspects and mechanisms to identify opportunities for improvement in pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences education. This is to ensure a good, sustainable performance and suitable competencies of the future workforce. This cluster has 10 Statements;
- VIII. Continuing Professional Development: Advocating that

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) refers to continuously building on previous education as a pharmacist and pharmaceutical scientist for all recent graduates and practicing pharmacists. This cluster has 4 Statements;



For further reading about the different specific Nanjing Statements, please [click here](#).

The Nanjing Statements inspired the creation of the Pharmaceutical Workforce Development Goals (PWDGs). In 2016, at the FIP Global Conference on Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Education in Nanjing, China, FIP put a workforce at the start of the transformation that is needed for our profession to

deliver services and innovations to meet the evolving needs of our populations.

Why are we advocating for the FIP Nanjing Statements?

The pharmaceutical workforce is a unique profession with diverse expertise covering science, practice and education. FIP believes that it is imperative to bring science, practice, workforce and education together into one transformative framework for our members and the wider profession to clearly set out the goals for development for the next decade."

To learn more about the 21 FIP Developmental Goals and WRG's, please click [here](#).

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

- Mother Teresa.

The Nanjing Statements aim to implement the foundations of a new era of pharmacy, a modern advanced and contemporary epoch that will provide the needs-based education and training to shape competent and multi-skilled pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists.

These statements were made to achieve the highest quality education possible by shaping a shared global vision of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences education.



An IPSF [report](#) on the students' perspectives on the Nanjing statement showed that 82.3% of respondents had no prior knowledge of the Nanjing Statements. The high

number of reported unawareness about the Nanjing Statements at the students' level could potentially show that the implementation of these Statements in the different regions are not being done in collaboration with students.

IPSF actively advocates for the implementation of these goals on a regional, national, and international level through its network of members, member organisations, and strategic partners. In order to ensure maximum and sustainable educational transformation, each student and education stakeholder must have a more in-depth knowledge of the Statements. Although the Nanjing Statements are mainly targeting education providers, including Schools of Pharmacy, providers of Continuing Professional Development and Continuing Education, students and recent graduates are the primary receptors of the pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences education.

Thus, to achieve Pharmaceutical Workforce Development Goals (PWDGs) and the implementation of

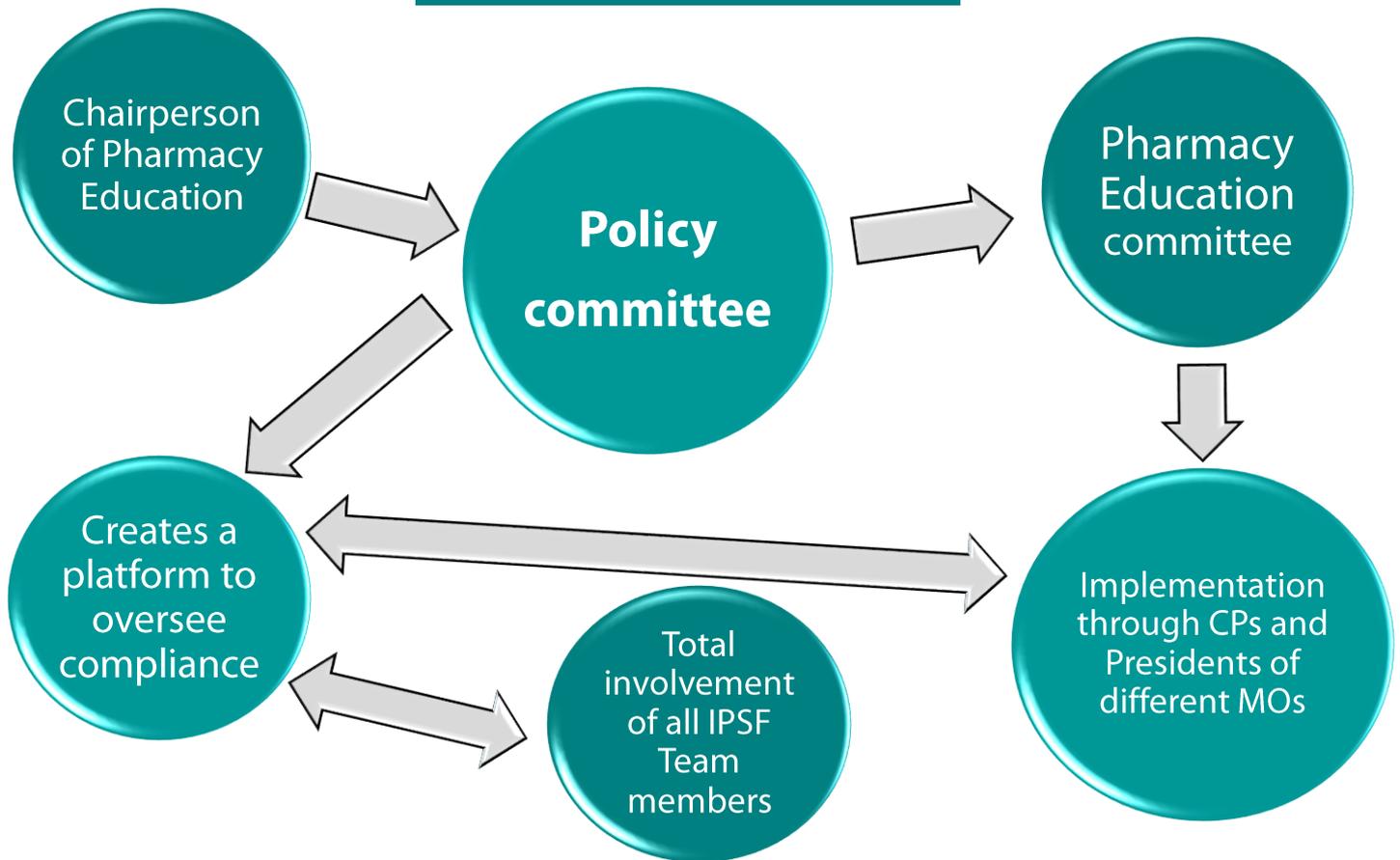
the Nanjing Statements globally, it is an absolute necessity that every student and recent graduate masters the comprehensiveness of the Statements and commits to taking deliberate actions to achieve the transformation of pharmacy education in this context.

How to Develop an Advocacy Strategy?

Having built the foundation for the advocacy for a transformation in pharmacy education at all levels, this section of the toolkit will provide a step by step approach on how to engage in an advocacy process through the development of an advocacy strategy. An advocacy strategy is set as a guide in achieving advocacy objectives.



A Typical Step by step Approach for Implementation



The key is being critical in approaches and tasks set to ensure success and impact. It will, therefore, assist in identifying resources and opportunities for collaboration and coordination, maximising benefits, and minimising risks.

Identifying the challenge before developing the advocacy strategy is key:

A challenge is anything that requires a great deal of intellectual or physical energy to be achieved effectively and

thus tests a person's or an organisation's capacity. It could also be described as a demand for explanation or justification or a call into question i.e., a challenge to a theory or a test of one's abilities or resources in a demanding but stimulating undertaking. An example of a challenge in this context can be understanding a particular statement in the Nanjing Statements and how it relates to you and your education. For example, *Statement 2.11 states that "Pharmacists should learn to work collaboratively with other health care professionals and*

scientists in medical, scientific and social fields”.

A challenge can be identified as how the pharmacist is trained and also how they perform and interact with other healthcare professionals. This can provide an avenue for developing an advocacy strategy and addressing how pharmacists can work collaboratively with other health care professionals.

Basic steps to the development of an advocacy strategy:

In developing an advocacy strategy certain steps form the basis of an action plan. The point of focus should be in line with the challenge in mind. Some questions that can guide the development of the advocacy strategy include:

- **What problems are you trying to solve?**
 - The potential issues to be addressed form the basis of identifying a challenge;

- **What are the main priorities?**
 - Each strategy should have a plan in line with the objectives to be achieved, as this can ensure that the advocacy is efficient and focused. Once a plan is identified, the priority challenges should follow up on how this advocacy strategy will address it;
- **What are the set timelines and tasks for the successful execution of the advocacy strategy?**
 - The parties involved need to decide on a set timeline and the tasks to be done as this will assist in the planning and the designing of the strategic objectives' milestones. In the long run, the well-set milestones will grant evaluation and monitoring of the advocacy strategy and assist in the acceptance of the achieved and intended impact;

- **How are you going to evaluate the overall impact of the advocacy strategy?**
 - It is crucial to identify as early as possible what is working and what is not working while progressing through the timeline in order to be able to adapt and develop new strategies. Progress should be measured by benchmarks established in the beginning;

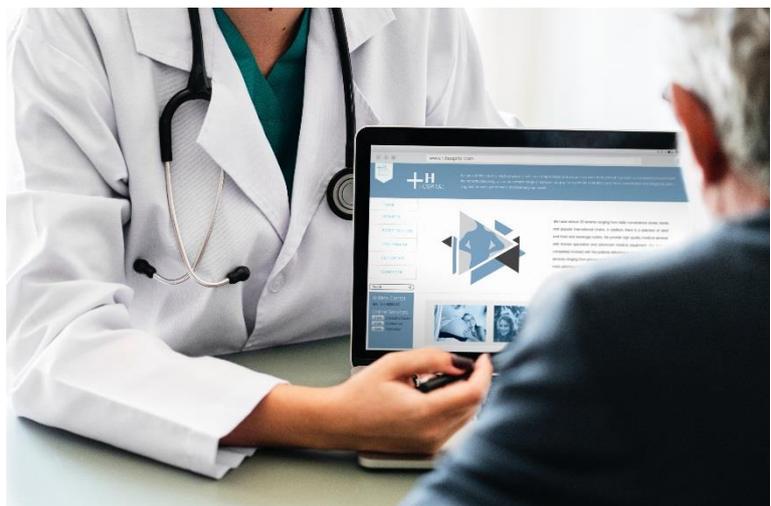
Create realistic goals

Goals are the results or achievements toward which effort is directed. They are broader as compared to objectives that are more focused on one's effort or actions to be accomplished or targeted. The SMART system is simple and direct when it comes to creating realistic goals for advocacy.

An advocacy goal has to be:

- **Specific:**
 - Simply ask the 5 important W questions: who, what, where, when, and why;
- **Measurable:**
 - It is very important to establish a way to measure progress towards achieving your advocacy goals;
- **Attainable:**
 - When setting your advocacy goal, ask yourself if there is anything outside of your realm of influence that could stand in the way of a focus on the achievement of your goals. E.g.: finances and cultural differences;
- **Realistic:**
 - Set goals that you are able and willing to work toward. While you should always set goals that will challenge you to be better, it's important to take a realistic approach;
- **Timebound:**
 - Give yourself a time frame for accomplishing your goal. Without a time frame tied to your goal, there isn't a sense of urgency and you'll be less motivated to make it happen.

Evaluate your decisions on the advocacy goals made. For example, are you motivated to work on the advocacy issue? What is the relevance in the school or your environment and confidence in the SMART goal framework?



Map out resources and capabilities

It is important to identify the resources at hand, and what resources are lacking to successfully advocate for a cause. Not only will it be helpful in resource allocation, but it also assists in helping us understand the value of establishing and maintaining partnerships, as well as building sustainable networks.

Aspects to consider include:

- i. What resources do we have?
- ii. What resources do we need?
- iii. How can we collaborate to transform and advocate for pharmacy education with partners?

Resources include networks, partnerships, financial and non-financial assets that will help you in achieving your advocacy goal.

- First, you need to identify what resources you have at hand. Resources may include libraries, donor organisations, meeting spaces, technology, and printing services;
- Establish resources needed in the success of the advocacy. It is therefore important to establish a network. A network is a group of individuals or organisations that can contribute to information, resources, skills, and opportunities;



- Building your network can assist the development of new ideas, and access to knowledge which will multiply inputs to the project strengthening the advocacy effort. Therefore, it is important to develop trust, leadership, and feasible ways of working together. Partnerships are dynamic as they enable different stakeholders to work together towards a shared goal;
- Pinpoint potential stakeholders and collaborators include student-based organisations, volunteers, youth groups and youth leaders, NGOs;
- Identify and select decision-makers and influencers in the country, those in the private and public sectors.

When determining the need for collaborators for advocacy activities,

it is crucial to provide a good understanding of the advantages that various styles of collaboration can add to the initiatives and how specific organisational resources can support each other.

In order to improve the efficacy of the advocacy effort and create solidarity for all stakeholders, approaches to be utilised in the execution of the advocacy effort should be implemented in partnership with the other stakeholders.

This should help reduce the disputes and misunderstandings that can occur from operating in the partnership.

The identification of collaborators will be informed mainly by the goals and objectives of the lobbying effort.

— The prospective partners should be those that will actively contribute to the fulfilment of these priorities and objectives.

Factors to take into consideration to identify collaborators include:

- Potential collaborators' prior experience in advocacy, technical capacity, and similar issues, as well as their reach and network;
- Creation of an accessible conversation and encouraging stakeholders to be involved as this is critical to maintain a fruitful relationship and to accomplish the goals and priorities of advocacy.

Identify key targets

Through study and review, you can develop an awareness of key actors in decision-making to determine your target audience for advocacy. Clear stakeholder research can often include useful guidance on strategic steps in your campaign strategy, in particular the creation of suitable and successful initiatives and the option of how to distribute the message to reach the target group.

Knowing where various people stand on your target issue(s) can help shield

your lobbying activities against any incorrect conclusions.

There are two key targets in advocacy initiatives:

- Primary targets include decision leaders who can influence others and help bring about the change you advocate for;
- Secondary targets are those individuals or communities that will impact your main target and they can put control on others who have a clear influence.

Begin by recognising organisations and persons such as:

- Decision-makers (major players at state, national, regional or global level);
- Government - Ministry of Higher Education;
- Influencers (media);
- Non-governmental organisations;
- Academic institutions;
- Professional and student organisations, Pharmaceutical Societies.

Execute the Plan

A. Develop your message: The next step after having identified the challenge and setting reasonable goals and objectives, is to develop an effective message that will be delivered to the appropriate target audience. As identified in the section above, stakeholders are key actors in decision-making and are the target audience. Your message should be persuasive, evidence-based, solution-oriented, and include the following:

- a. *Description of the problem;*
- b. *The magnitude of the problem;*
- c. *The adverse impact of the problem on the population.*

For example, the Nanjing Statements advocate for quality assurance in order to identify opportunities for improvement in pharmacy and pharmaceutical science education to ensure a good, suitable performance and suitable competencies of the future workforce.

Statement 7.3 states "Quality metrics should include feedback from students and new graduates, faculty, preceptors and key external stakeholders, such as employers and professional bodies".

Example:

- If pharmacy students are trying to advocate for such changes and they are targeting a professional pharmacy organisation, such as FIP, then they can include global data that shows increased competencies in regions that have institutions that are routinely reviewed in comparison to institutions that are not;
- If students are advocating for academic institutions to begin incorporating this methodology then they might include data that would show higher academic grades, higher prestige amongst other schools, or greater interest in attending over other pharmacy schools;

- If pharmacy students are advocating to the general public, they can educate the general public on the quality of education pharmacy students are receiving and appeal to their emotions by asking if they would like improved quality of education for professionals that will be taking care of their loved ones in the future.

B. Choose and train your messengers:

After developing the message, the next step is to find a suitable messenger. This is a challenging step as the person delivering the message can have as much of an impact as the message itself. Be sure to choose a credible, respectable, and trustworthy messenger that the audience will be attentive to. Some important points to consider when choosing a messenger:

- a. What level of influence, if any, does the messenger have on the target audience?*
- b. How much does the messenger know about the issue?*

c. Where does the messenger stand in regards to the issue?

d. How credible is the messenger in the eyes of the target audience?

It is crucial to train your messenger, so they are well-equipped to answer any questions that the target audience might have. Workshops, webinars, or private briefings are all examples of how training might be achieved.

C. Delivering your message: When preparing to deliver the message, the choice of format depends on the target audience and the ability to work with the format. Keep in mind that your message might be reinforced if different formats are used. One of the most effective ways of advocating for changes is through lobbying with policymakers, however, one can use different formats to mobilise the general public behind the advocacy issue.

The following are examples of formats:

- a. *Person-to-person: conferences, workshops, meetings, etc.*
- b. *Print: newspapers, journals, newsletters, letters to decision-makers.*
- c. *Electronic: television, social media websites, YouTube, etc.*

D. Monitor and evaluate results: At the beginning of the advocacy process, goals and timelines should be clearly outlined, as well as which benchmarks will be monitored for progress. It is important to maintain a core team throughout the process that understands the direction of the message.

Examples of Successful Pharmacy Education Advocacy Outcomes

The International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation and its member organisations have led advocacy campaigns and projects to support and contribute to the transformation

of pharmacy education through the implementation of the Nanjing Statements worldwide. Examples of these outcomes include:

1. **Contributing during the consultation process for education policy:** IPSF was fully involved during the drafting of the Nanjing Statements including the global conference that led to the agreement of these Statements. IPSF provided a student-friendly and youth-based perspective during the development of these Statements. This shows that students' voices have to be heard during the development of local and country pharmacy education policies including academic curricula as they are the primary preceptors and the future of the pharmacy profession;
2. **Contributing to the curriculum review process in pharmacy schools:** IPSF member organisation NAPS-SL, Sierra Leone has engaged with their school of pharmacy during the consultation process of a new academic curriculum by

presenting the Nanjing Statements and gaps in their prior education based on this. This intervention was welcomed into the curriculum review process and shows another approach to which students can advocate for the Nanjing Statements;

3. **Discussions with Education Stakeholders:**

IPSF has led an interview with some FIP stakeholders including the Director of the Workforce Development Hub Prof. Ian Bates and Dr. Lina Bader, the lead for Workforce Transformation and Development, to discuss the roles of students and young pharmacists in the implementation of the Nanjing Statements. The interview having been broadcasted on social media has created high-level awareness for students and the actions they require to take;

4. **Social Media Awareness and Campaigns:**

IPSF has adopted a strategy to increase the awareness of the Nanjing Statements through its different social media

platforms. Some of these media initiatives include:

- Celebration of the Nanjing Statements' anniversary through webinars, infographics, and educational videos;
- Nanjing Statement Photo frame challenge: IPSF has led a campaign to create awareness of the Nanjing Statements across all regions through a photo frame on Facebook where students declare their stand and solidarity with the FIP Nanjing Statements. This challenge has a big impact on increasing awareness among students regarding the Nanjing Statements;

5. **Generating evidence for pharmacy education changes through research:**

Generating evidence through their research projects e.g Undergraduate, Master Thesis, this will create evidence on which policies can be made. A student from Kenya initiated such a research project

for his undergraduate thesis - *Assessment of the Bachelor of Pharmacy education and Training in JKUAT, putting to perspective views of students and faculty members and global pharmacy education guidelines*. This study and more can somewhat serve as evidence to influence policy in their country.

Recommendation:

This advocacy toolkit is set out to be a part of steer metamorphosis of pharmacy and pharmaceutical education. In the absence of change in education, the future of pharmacy and pharmaceutical workforce is at stake. The toolkit focuses on elements in the FIP development goal 1 on Academic Capacity and goal 3 on Quality Assurance. Education is a synergist and a background to transformational policy and development of leadership. The analysis of the transformation related to educational actions allows the feasibility of perceiving prognoses

regarding failures and common goals, thus creating a universal possibility of integrality, making it necessary to combine policies making them also aimed at assimilating the future and educational profile, a deep analysis is necessary to avoid the disintegration and polarisation of health actions, and this needs to be done directly, with joint actions, so it is clear the necessary junction and the applicability of health promotion policies and universalisation of pharmaceutical education.

IPSF would recommend the member organisations to adopt this advocacy toolkit to serve as a guide, broaden access to information and build on liaison to ensure improvement in Pharmacy and pharmaceutical education. IPSF would recommend members to be involved in education advocacy and apply them on a personal level because collectively and through uniting individual actions, we can reach the global vision advocacy goal. As future goals, to have a strong focus on FIP Development Goals and relay the importance of applying these goals in the pharmaceutical workforce for IPSF members to advocate for better education and thus an advanced professional career.

References:

- *United Nations Children 's Fund, [Advocacy Toolkit: A guide to influencing decisions that improve children's lives](#), UNICEF, 2016, pg 3.*
- *FIP Development Goals. (2020, September 21). Retrieved November 04, 2020, from <https://www.fip.org/fip-development-goals>*



The International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (IPSF) was founded in 1949 by eight pharmacy student associations in London, United Kingdom. The Federation now represents approximately 500,000 pharmacy students and recent graduates in 100 countries worldwide. IPSF is the leading international advocacy organisation for pharmacy and pharmaceutical science students. We promote improved public health through the provision of information, education, and networking opportunities as well as a range of publications and professional activities.



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