

## New WHO document highlights the role of compassion in primary healthcare

7 February 2025



A mother holding her baby attentively listens to a healthcare worker.

Reference: <https://www.who.int/news/item/07-02-2025-new-who-document-highlights-the-role-of-compassion-in-primary-health-care>

The World Health Organization (WHO) has released a new report, *Compassion and Primary Health Care*, highlighting the critical role of compassion in strengthening primary health care (PHC). The report synthesizes insights from a five-year study, emphasizing how compassion—defined by awareness, empathy, and action—serves as a transformative force in improving health care quality and driving systemic change.

Aligned with the WHO-UNICEF Operational Framework for PHC, the document explores how compassion influences strategic and operational health care aspects. Drawing from twelve Global Health Compassion Rounds, it examines the intersection of compassion with key health care themes.

Designed as a practical resource, the report offers health leaders and practitioners actionable strategies to integrate compassion into PHC, positioning it as both a core principle and a catalyst for reform. It outlines three key approaches to ensure compassion remains central to PHC efforts. Emphasizing the universal nature of shared humanity, the report's release coincides with the launch of a complementary learning module. This module, part of WHO Academy's *Global*

*Capacity Building Course on Strengthening Primary Health Care Leadership*, reinforces the importance of compassionate leadership in shaping the future of health care.