

# LIVINGSTONE SAFE ABORTION CARE CHARTER

The Livingstone Safe Abortion Care Charter reaffirms the commitment of Obstetric and Gynaecological societies in their respective countries, to strengthen access to safe abortion care for women and girls. We will do this by creating enabling environments within which health systems function and health care professionals are empowered to meet the needs and entitlements of women and girls we serve.

Collectively, we pledge to leverage our clinical expertise and resources to address the scale of unsafe abortion in Africa.

The parties to this charter agree to

- I. Strengthen access to safe abortion care through interventions that promote self-managed abortion care.
- II. Ensure access to safe abortion care is integrated as a key component within our professional society's strategic mandate to deliver on sexual and reproductive health and rights. This includes integrating the need for safe abortion care within our sexual reproductive health activities and collating data on related abortion services to inform policies and programmes.
- III. Enhance the organisational and technical capacity of our national society, to advocate on safe and quality abortion care by ensuring our professional society has accessible guidance in place for our members and relevant stakeholders. We commit to ensuring this guidance is centred on up-to-date clinical advancements and human rights standards.
- IV. Address abortion-related-stigma that nurtures hostile environments for health care advocates and denies women and girls access to quality abortion care by utilising tools such as values clarification and attitude transformation.
- V. Work with the World Health Organization, Ministries of Health and relevant stakeholders to prioritise the alignment of WHO's Abortion care guideline (2022) and ensure training on safe abortion care is an essential part of professional development for health care professionals - integrate it into lifelong learning to ensure health services are universally available.
- VI. Work on behalf of and with marginalized population groups at high risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, this includes young people/adolescents, by advocating for their right to access sexual reproductive health services and age-appropriate and evidence-based information.
- VII. Advocate for the decriminalisation of abortion care and urge our governments to regulate it like any other health care provision. Decriminalising abortion refers to the removal of specific criminal and/or civil sanctions against abortion from the law, so that no one is punished for having, providing or supporting access to abortion.

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