

## Early warning system: An Urgent call for Development and Implementation of National Consensus Guidelines Across the Healthcare System of Pakistan

I am writing to highlight the urgent need for the implementation of a simple yet essential tool across the healthcare system of Pakistan: the Early Warning System (EWS).<sup>1</sup> Vital signs are crucial indicators of general health and can predict both chronic disorders and acute deterioration in a patient's condition. Monitoring these vital signs is a fundamental part of hospital care and observation. Early warning systems have evolved from vital signs charts, allowing for the early identification of patients at risk of serious deterioration before they collapse.<sup>2,3</sup>

These systems, tailored to patients' clinical needs and physiological sub-groups, such as maternal early warning systems and national early warning systems, are widely used in developed countries. 4,5 They enable timely detection and intervention, preventing severe acute morbidity and mortality. This not only improves patient survival but also prevents the loss of millions in revenue, when managing critically ill patients.<sup>2</sup> Early detection boosts the morale of patients and their families, and fosters trust in the healthcare system.<sup>3,5</sup>

Despite their proven benefits, early warning systems are not widely used in developing countries like Pakistan, where national guidelines for such systems are non-existent. As a result, healthcare professionals often rely on their personal knowledge and experience to determine when to alert specialists or intensive care, leading to inconsistencies in patient care.<sup>2,4</sup>

There is a pressing need to establish national consensus guidelines for early warning systems in Pakistan. These guidelines should ensure that the EWS adopted nationwide is uniform, with similar triggers and only slight variations to cater to different

physiological patient groups. Implementing such a system would bring significant improvements to our healthcare settings, leading to better patient outcomes and more efficient call management systems.

I urge policymakers to prioritize the development and adoption of national guidelines for early warning systems. This will ensure that all healthcare professionals are aware of and can effectively use these systems, ultimately improving the quality and safety of healthcare in Pakistan.

## REFERENCES

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Sincerely,  
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