Tools and Techniques
This strategy is very action oriented. It will result in valuable evidence, case studies and techniques that support the transition towards people-centred and integrated health services. For example, WHO will:

- Produce evidence and examples of the benefits a people-centred and integrated approach to health service delivery can bring to people, communities and countries;
- Identify approaches to leading and managing this change; and
- Outline ways that health systems can monitor, evaluate and learn from their progress.

A strategy for all countries
People-centred and integrated health services can strengthen health systems everywhere, whether in low-, middle- or high-income countries. The approach should not be regarded as only the concern of rich countries. People-centred and integrated health services promote the economic, social and cultural right of everyone to a universal minimum standard of health and health care. It can also combat the problems of remote, unresponsive, inequitable and under-resourced health care often found in poorer, conflict-affected or fragile states.

How you can help today
People-centred and integrated health services involve many national and international partners. Actors at the country level are likely to include national governments, provider organizations, consumer associations, community groups, local government, health insurance agencies and regulators. At the global level, WHO is fully committed to this vision and is collaborating with other interested agencies to make it happen.

Want to help achieve the people-centred and integrated health services vision? Here’s how:

Development partners can integrate their support for health service delivery into countries’ own health systems and share technical knowledge about different approaches to promoting more people-centred and integrated services.

Citizens’ groups from international networks to local organizations have an important role to play in advocating for more people-centred and integrated health services, as well as in empowering their members to better manage their own health concerns and engage with the health system.

Academics and researchers can provide analytical, educational and implementation skills. They can also enhance understanding of people-centred and integrated health services through health systems and implementation research efforts.

Provider associations can play important roles in adopting and endorsing new practices, and in providing support to their members.

It should be emphasized that this strategy is still an interim report that will undergo further broad consultation, with a view to being submitted to WHO’s Governing Bodies in 2016. Your comments would be highly appreciated, therefore.

For further information, please contact us at toropolancon@who.int.
Achieving high quality, effective health care today is challenging, especially in areas of the world where the chronic disease burden is high and resources are limited. Improvement is possible. A first step is to put people at the heart of the health-care experience and to focus on true and lasting integration of the services offered to them.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has a new global strategy on people-centred and integrated health services (PCIHS) to address these issues and to encourage a shift in the way health services are funded, managed and delivered. As this new strategy takes hold, services available to people will be on a more complete continuum of care that better meets their health needs, in an integrated way, throughout their life course.

What are people-centred and integrated health services?
People-centred, integrated health services are an important new way to empower patients, fight health system fragmentation and both engage and incentivize providers across care settings.

People-centred health services are an approach to care that consciously adopts the perspectives of individuals, families and communities, and sees them as participants, as well as beneficiaries, of trusted health systems that respond to their needs and preferences in humane and holistic ways. People-centred care requires that people have the education and support they need to make decisions and participate in their own care. It is organized around the health needs and expectations of people rather than diseases.

Integrated health services are health services that are managed and delivered in a way that ensures people receive a continuum of health promotion, disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment, disease management, rehabilitation and palliative care services, at the different levels and sites of care within the health system, and according to their needs, throughout their whole life.

The way forward
WHO recommends five interwoven actions for health service delivery to become more people-centred and integrated, including:
- empowering and engaging people;
- strengthening governance and accountability;
- reorienting care models towards efficiency and effectiveness;
- coordinating services around the needs of people, health care provider integration and effective networks; and
- creating an enabling environment for change.

One of the challenges is that individuals and organizations from the health, service delivery and other sectors need to come together to make people-centred and integrated health services a reality.

There is no perfect combination or “one size fits all” solution. The right PCIHS solution will depend on a country’s unique context and needs, as well as local considerations.

The WHO global strategy on people-centred and integrated health services is designed flexibly enough to provide each Member State with the tools it may require to “provide the right care at the right time”. It also builds on and supports WHO’s historical push for better primary health care, addressing the social determinants of health, strengthening health systems, building health workforce capacity and universal health coverage (UHC). The central features of people-centred and integrated health care are essential if the goals of universal health coverage are to be realized.

“Treat each patient as if they were your own family. Show compassion, caring and provide positive hope to patients. Don’t treat them like cattle. Also, keep patients informed about their disease and options... Spend more time with patients and their families. Help patients learn about their diseases. Encourage patients to [...] become their own advocates. Share information about patient groups where they can get support from other patients. Most importantly, don’t treat a patient like a number in a factory of patients. Treat them as an individual, like it was your own mother/father/sister/brother. Show compassion, caring and empathy.”

A patient’s son, WHO Region of the Americas