

Lisbon Outcome Statement: Regional summit on policy innovation for healthy ageing in the WHO European Region

10–11 October 2023
Lisbon, Portugal

Regional summit

on policy innovation for healthy ageing in the WHO European Region

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We, participants in the Regional summit on policy innovation for healthy ageing in the WHO European Region in Lisbon, Portugal, on 10–11 October 2023, unequivocally recognize the invaluable contributions of older people and their caregivers to our societies, and advocate a life-course approach to healthy ageing, ensuring that no one is left behind. We reaffirm the concept of healthy ageing, which promotes well-being through development and maintenance of functional ability,¹ and empowers all individuals to participate actively in society. Celebrating the extended longevity in the WHO European Region, we underscore the significance of recognizing the diverse capacities and life experiences of older adults, while addressing persistent inequities tied to socioeconomic status, gender, disability, ethnicity and other social determinants of health.

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We express concern about the preparedness of health systems to meet the needs of rapidly ageing populations – particularly in primary care settings – including promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative, assistive, palliative and specialized care, and about sustainable provision of long-term care in ways that fully uphold all human rights. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has intensified these challenges, emphasizing the urgent requirement for age-specific, inclusive, accessible, gender-sensitive and prevention-focused responses, including in emergencies.

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Recognizing the proactive steps taken by many governments on healthy ageing, we emphasize the ongoing need for collaboration and knowledge exchange within and between countries. To foster healthy ageing across the Region, aligning with the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing and universal health coverage, we call for:

- a. **prioritization of preventive measures for physical, social and mental well-being, ensuring availability of support and services throughout the life-course through:**
 - i. investment in cross-sectoral integrative strategies by all stakeholders to encourage physical activity, healthy nutrition, access to vaccines and behaviour-change interventions, while strengthening mental health, guaranteeing each individual's voice, choice and control;
 - ii. strengthening of noncommunicable and communicable disease policies for healthy ageing, rooted in a quality-of-care framework,² and emphasizing prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation to prevent impairment and optimize functional ability – including taking into account other attitudinal and environmental factors;
 - iii. development and implementation of comprehensive plans for mental and brain health, including neurodegenerative conditions and dementia, to ensure equitable access to prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care services;
- b. **creation of enabling environments, including age-friendly cities and communities, to empower individuals across the life-course to engage with their communities, and improvement of service accessibility by:**
 - i. involving older people to foster age-friendly environments, combating loneliness through community-based initiatives, and fostering social engagement and intergenerational solidarity;
 - ii. addressing ageism, creating supportive environments, and valuing the manifold contributions of older people;
 - iii. promoting an age-friendly and inclusive digital age through user-friendly tools, digital skills promotion, and accessible information and services;

¹ Functional ability is determined by the intrinsic capacity of individuals, the environments they inhabit and the interaction between them. Moreover, healthy ageing is a process that spans the entire life-course and can be relevant to everyone, regardless of disability, health status and other identity factors.

² Quality of care is the degree to which health services for individuals and populations increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes. It is based on evidence-based professional knowledge and is critical for achieving universal health coverage. Quality-of-care frameworks pursue health services that are effective, safe and people-centred.

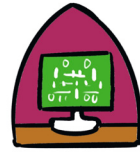
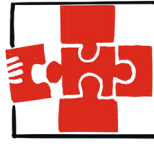
- iv. addressing intersectionality of disability and ageing, and supporting individuals with physical, cognitive and mental impairments, along with their families and caregivers who provide a pivotal caring role for older people with comorbidities, including cognitive impairment;
- c. provision of accessible, affordable, high-quality care and support for older people, their caregivers and families across care settings, encompassing primary health care, hospitals and long-term care, while integrating all levels of care within a continuum by:**
 - i. strengthening integrated, high-quality care delivery, with a focus on enhancing community-based care resources and evidence-based interventions for healthy ageing and patient safety;
 - ii. expanding protection from neglect and all forms of abuse across care settings and services promoting community living, with effective preventive measures and complaint mechanisms;
 - iii. investing in and protecting the health and well-being of caregivers – both formal and informal, valuing and supporting their contributions, promoting gender equity, and strengthening integrated care and support services and systems;
 - iv. enhancing high-quality palliative care, expanding access and delivery across care settings to ensure dignity at the end of life for all, and prioritizing and respecting the personal preferences of older people;
- d. effective implementation of policies to leverage the potential of older people by:**
 - i. recognizing healthy ageing as a whole-of-government and society-wide responsibility for all individuals to enjoy health in the well-being economy³ throughout the life-course;
 - ii. enhancing protection for older people, addressing ageism, stigmatization, violence, abuse and marginalization – especially for older women and other disadvantaged groups, and adopting clear policies and strategies to prevent institutionalization and promote community living;
 - iii. promoting inter- and intra-generational cooperation and solidarity, considering the needs, preferences and expectations of present and future generations;
 - iv. leveraging the potential of emerging technologies to promote digital inclusion, accessible and cost-effective interventions, and sustainable delivery of health and care services;
- e. strong data and evidence to inform actions that foster healthy ageing by:**
 - i. ensuring availability of age-disaggregated data for older people, enhancing their representation in population-based surveys, and implementing evidence-based data collection methodologies;
 - ii. enhancing integrated information systems for evidence-informed policy-making on health, ageing and social policies, including surveillance, projection, planning and monitoring;
 - iii. supporting research and innovation for healthy ageing, including capabilities and tools to assess and enhance intrinsic capacity and functional ability, as well as cost-effective interventions.

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We urge all stakeholders, including individuals in international, intergovernmental, civil society and nongovernmental organizations, academia, the media, the private sector and relevant entities, to collaborate on these five interconnected priorities. We call for endorsement of:

- a. development of the WHO Regional Office for Europe's Regional Framework of Action on Ageing and Health;**
- b. prioritization of ageing and health in the WHO European Region and in national and subnational agendas, alongside active promotion of social participation;**
- c. facilitation of knowledge exchange and innovation in regional and global networks; and**
- d. pooling of resources to advance common goals and address shared challenges effectively.**

³ A policy orientation and governance approach which aims to put people and their well-being at the centre of policy and decision-making.



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The Lisbon Outcome Statement acts as a concise guide, encapsulating the key priorities and actions outlined during the Regional summit on policy innovation for healthy ageing in the WHO European Region held in Lisbon, Portugal, on 10–11 October 2023. Endorsement of the Statement does not imply commitment from Member States, entities or represented organizations participating in the summit. Its purpose is to provide a clear and succinct overview of the summit's discussions and outcomes, contributing to the advancement of healthy ageing policies and initiatives. The creation of the Lisbon Outcome Statement has resulted from collaboration between the Directorate-General for Health of Portugal and the WHO Regional Office for Europe, with valuable contributions from summit participants.