

Regional Committee for Europe

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Resolution

Reaffirming commitment to health systems strengthening for universal health coverage, better outcomes and reduced health inequalities

The Regional Committee,

Recalling the adoption of Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;¹

Recalling its resolution EUR/RC62/R4 by which it adopted Health 2020, the European policy framework for health and well-being, which supports action across government and society for health and well-being, with health systems strengthening as a central pillar embedded in a whole-of-government and intersectoral approach for better and more equitable health outcomes;

Recalling the commitments of the Ljubljana Charter on Reforming Health Care in Europe (1996) and the Tallinn Charter: Health Systems for Health and Wealth (2008);

Recalling resolution EUR/RC65/R5, welcoming Priorities for health systems strengthening in the WHO European Region 2015–2020: walking the talk on people centredness and resolution EUR/RC66/R11 on an action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases in the WHO European Region;

¹ United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1.

Having considered the outcome statement of the WHO high-level regional meeting, Health Systems Respond to NCDs: Experience in the European Region, held in Sitges, Spain, in April 2018, on accelerating implementation of an equity-oriented, comprehensive and aligned health systems response to reduce the burden of noncommunicable diseases, aiming not only to reach but to exceed global targets;

Having considered the outcome statement of the WHO high-level regional meeting, Health Systems for Prosperity and Solidarity: Leaving No One Behind, held in Tallinn, Estonia, in June 2018, on the importance of inclusion, investment and innovation as essential engines of health system transformation for universal health coverage, better health outcomes and greater health equity;

Understanding that this resolution does not replace any previous Regional Committee resolutions;

1. TAKES NOTE, with appreciation, of the outcome statements of the two WHO high-level meetings on health systems held in Sitges, Spain, and Tallinn, Estonia;
2. EXPRESSES its continued commitment to the values of solidarity, equity, and participation enshrined in the Tallinn Charter and Health 2020 as foundations for health systems strengthening and its commitment to achieving universal health coverage and with particular reference to Sustainable Development Goal target 3.8: achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all;
3. URGES Member States:
 - (a) to prioritize and to adequately resource a comprehensive and integrated health system response to address Europe's main sources of ill health;
 - (b) to ensure a strong focus on equity, gender equality and solidarity in health systems strengthening to provide quality health care and improve outcomes for all people, especially those with greater health and socioeconomic needs, as well as the elderly with multiple chronic diseases balancing universal policies with contextualized and targeted approaches in all sectors of governance, and

connecting global, national, regional and local responses to promote equitable health care;

- (c) to promote gender equal health systems through systematic gender mainstreaming, including sex-disaggregated data, data analysis and interventions;
- (d) to increase investment in health and to direct more sustainable financial resources to primary health care and public health to achieve universal health coverage, to seek and harness efficiency gains, and to strengthen capacities for a more effective fiscal dialogue;
- (e) to support systematic monitoring of financial protection and unmet need for health services, to support the assessment and equity impact of policy changes and to improve access and financial protection for everyone, recognizing that excessive out-of-pocket payments for outpatient services and medicines can be a significant source of financial hardship in many countries in the Region;
- (f) to prioritize sectoral and intersectoral public health action and primary health care with a focus on disease prevention and health promotion that is continuous, comprehensive, coordinated, community-oriented and people-centred, as the most efficient and equitable mechanisms for addressing the main disease burden in Europe, including the scale-up of the best buys for NCDs and to strengthen the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries as appropriate;
- (g) to invest in the health workforce, ensuring a skill mix and competencies fit for the future, and integrated service delivery models centred around people and their needs as well as taking advantage of digital solutions, and to promote management practices that ensure decent work including adequate compensation, meaningful opportunities to exercise the trained skills, for professional development and career progression;
- (h) to achieve integrated people-centred health services, putting the comprehensive needs of people and communities, not only diseases, at the centre of health systems, and empowering people to have a more active role in their own health (WHO Framework on integrated people-centred health services);

- (i) to support policy and research and harness innovations to ensure that health systems have up-to-date information systems, services and technologies to meet people's needs, and that health policy-making is transparent and is informed by the best available evidence;
4. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
- (a) to continue to provide leadership on health systems with a special focus on health promotion and disease prevention, primary health care and integrated care strengthening in collaboration with relevant partners, and advocate for adequate investments;
 - (b) to support Member States, including by facilitating partnerships, in operationalizing equity-oriented and comprehensive health systems strengthening with universal access for improved health outcomes;
 - (c) to continue to create opportunities for regional exchange and sharing of good practices on health promotion and disease prevention, inclusion, investment and innovation in health systems, to promote access to affordable, preventative and curative health care of good quality;
 - (d) to channel the results of the two high-level regional meetings to the United Nations high-level meetings on noncommunicable diseases in 2018 and on universal health coverage in 2019;
 - (e) to report to the Regional Committee on progress made in 2023.

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