



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

Regional Committee for Europe

EUR/RC69/R9

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Resolution

Towards the implementation of health literacy initiatives through the life course

The Regional Committee,

Recalling resolution EUR/RC62/R4 by which it adopted Health 2020, the European policy framework that supports action across government and society for health and well-being, and which includes actions on improving health literacy under priority area 1: Investing in health through a life-course approach and empowering people; as well as resolution EUR/RC67/R3 by which it adopted the roadmap to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on Health 2020, which highlights the fact that the broad promotion of health literacy, supported by digital health technology, has the potential to address health and health equity, empower citizens, decision-makers and investors and support the delivery of a range of Sustainable Development Goal targets;

Building on the adoption of the Shanghai Declaration of 2016 on promoting health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which highlights health literacy as one of the key health promotion pillars for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognizes that health literacy is a critical determinant of health and health equity, and calls for focused investment in its development;

Taking into account document EUR/RC65/13, Priorities for health systems strengthening in the WHO European Region 2015–2020: walking the talk on people centredness, as well as the Political Declaration of the third High-level Meeting of the General

Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (2018), which call on countries to scale up efforts and implement further actions to strengthen health literacy;

Committed to the implementation of WHO's Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023, the achievement of which will be facilitated by using health literacy as an integrative and intersectoral tool;

Acknowledging the need for a coherent health literacy approach in the WHO European Region, based on existing and innovative practices;

Recognizing that putting health literacy into practice empowers people to improve their own, their family's and their community's health, including, inter alia, by influencing their living and working conditions, and requires the creation of healthy environments and choices to enable health-conducive lifestyles;

Taking note of document EUR/RC69/14 Rev.1 on the draft WHO European roadmap for implementation of health literacy initiatives through the life course;

1. URGES Member States,¹ as a contribution to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

- (a) to promote health literacy at population, organizational and systems levels, inter alia, by engaging and working with relevant stakeholders, enhancing governance and creating environments favourable for improving comprehensive health literacy through the life course, which includes literacy on the influence of psychological factors and the surrounding social environment on health; and to develop public health policy options to facilitate cross-sectoral integration of health literacy interventions, including for accelerating progress in reducing health inequities;
- (b) to strengthen implementation of health literacy initiatives in various areas of action, environments and settings, including by using innovations such as digital health literacy or other applications of digital technology;

¹ And regional economic integration organizations, where applicable.

- (c) to develop knowledge on and capacities in health literacy at different levels, from individuals and communities to institutional and government structures, highlighting the importance of intersectoral collaboration;
- (d) to strengthen health literacy measurement, monitoring and evaluation at the population, organizational and systems levels;
- (e) to support the generation and dissemination of evidence and good practices, including at the population, organizational and systems levels, through implementation research and social science, including cross-cultural dialogue and innovative initiatives;
- (f) to consider participating in networks and other ongoing initiatives in relation to health literacy of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, such as the WHO Action Network on Measuring Population and Organizational Health Literacy and the WHO European Action Network on Health Literacy for Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases;

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (a) to provide leadership and advocacy and build trust so that effective multisectoral policies, strategies and interventions are established to strengthen health literacy through the life course and address the social determinants of health and health equity; and to provide expertise, tools, guidelines and evidence, and collect and disseminate good practices, in order to, inter alia, link health literacy and behavioural impact through the application of public health interventions with a special focus on disadvantaged or vulnerable groups;
- (b) to develop an action plan on health literacy, taking into account social determinants of health and health equity, including a monitoring and evaluation framework (building upon the work already done and experience gathered), in consultation with Member States, and as appropriate, with international, regional and national nongovernmental organizations, international development partners and technical agency partners;
- (c) to support Member States, upon request, through the provision of technical assistance and the strengthening of capacities to enhance health literacy and implement health literacy initiatives, including the development, revision and

implementation of national and subnational health literacy policies, strategies, plans and actions;

- (d) to foster collaboration and exchange of information, innovations and experience on health literacy between Member States and, as appropriate, with relevant stakeholders, including United Nations agencies, and to promote intersectoral and interagency action for health literacy through relevant intersectoral mechanisms and platforms;
- (e) to submit an action plan on health literacy to the Regional Committee at its 71st session in 2021.

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