



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

Regional Committee for Europe

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Resolution

Accelerating primary health care strengthening

The Regional Committee,

Recalling the global commitments regarding universal health coverage in United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/81 (2012) on global health and foreign policy, and in General Assembly resolution 70/1 (2015) adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

Recalling the International Conference on Primary Health Care held in Alma-Ata and the commitment made there to primary health services as a measure towards health and well-being of populations;

Welcoming the convening of the Global Conference on Primary Health Care: from Alma-Ata Towards Universal Health Coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals (Astana, Kazakhstan, 25–26 October 2018), during which Member States renewed their commitment to strengthening primary health care, taking a whole-of-society approach, as the cornerstone of a sustainable health system that provides universal health coverage and of efforts to achieve the health-related SDGs, in particular 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);

Recalling resolution WHA72.2 of the World Health Assembly on primary health care, which welcomed the Astana Declaration and requested the Director-General to develop, in

consultation with Member States, an operational framework for primary health care for consideration by the 73rd World Health Assembly;

Reaffirming the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023, in which primary health care is noted as being an essential platform for the pursuit of universal health coverage and the SDGs;

Valuing the long-standing tenets of health systems strengthening in the WHO European Region, as enshrined in numerous commitments over the years, from the Ljubljana Charter in 1996 to the Tallinn Charter in 2008; as embedded and expanded on in Health 2020, the European health policy framework, which includes people-centred health systems as one of its four pillars; and as endorsed in the following Regional Committee resolutions:

(i) EUR/RC65/R5, on priorities for strengthening people-centred health systems (2015);
(ii) EUR/RC66/R5, on the European Framework for Action on Integrated Health Services Delivery (2016); (iii) EUR/RC67/R5, on a framework for action to achieve a sustainable health workforce in the WHO European Region (2017); and (iv) EUR/RC68/R3, which reaffirmed commitment to health systems strengthening for universal health coverage, better outcomes and reduced health inequalities (2018);

1. EXPRESSES its continued commitment to the values of solidarity, equity and participation, as enshrined in the Tallinn Charter and Health 2020, as the foundations for strengthening health systems based on primary health care and for pursuing universal health coverage, with particular reference to SDG target 3.8 on universal health coverage;

2. URGES Member States:¹

- (a) to prioritize the implementation of a primary health care approach in strengthening their health systems, including universal and targeted health promotion and disease prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care through the life course;
- (b) to place people at the centre of their health systems by focusing on: (i) identifying health needs and tailoring service delivery interventions to proactively and

¹ And regional economic integration organizations as appropriate.

equitably respond to these needs through the life course; (ii) engaging with and providing appropriate information to and education for their populations and to individuals to ensure that they are able to take control of their own health; and (iii) ensuring continuity of care in health service delivery within and between the different levels of specialization of care, as well as by other providers of care, including social services and the private sector;

- (c) to proactively measure and monitor the impact, performance and capacity of primary health care to meet the health needs of the population, and contribute to the strengthening of health data and information at national and regional levels;
- (d) to advance, as appropriate within national contexts, the implementation of the 10 evidence-based, high-impact actions (policy accelerators) for strengthening primary health care as set out in document EUR/RC69/13 Rev.1;
- (e) to promote, as appropriate within national contexts, the integration of health and social services at community level;
- (f) to ensure that the primary health care workforce has the knowledge, skills, competencies and capacity, and is sufficiently empowered, to take timely and effective actions in order to improve the responsiveness of the health system to the needs of individuals and of the population;
- (g) to take action to empower patients and carers to engage in joint decision-making in treatment- and care-related issues, including through creating favourable conditions, and providing training and assistance;
- (h) to accelerate the uptake, implementation and scale-up of digital innovations;
- (i) to actively participate in the global consultation for the development of the operational framework for primary health care;

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (a) to support Member States, upon request, in improving and strengthening the delivery of comprehensive primary health services in line with national conditions and needs;

- (b) to strengthen the measurement and monitoring of primary health care impact, performance and capacity across countries, signal opportunities to accelerate improvements and identify proven policy options that can be shared among countries;
- (c) to strengthen partnerships and knowledge sharing with the support of WHO collaborating centres and think tanks, universities and academics, and facilitate dialogue between professional associations and patient organizations, governments and other stakeholders;
- (d) to strengthen the capacity of the Regional Office on primary health care, in alignment with the implementation of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work across the Organization;
- (e) to encourage the participation of Member States in the global consultation for the development of the framework for primary care;
- (f) to report on this resolution together with resolution EUR/RC66/R5, to the 70th, 75th and 80th sessions of the Regional Committee.

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