



## World Federation of Occupational Therapists Statement

14-15 September 2020 70th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe

### **Statement on the joint progress report on implementation of Strengthening People-Centred Health Systems in the WHO European Region**

As the global representative of occupational therapists, the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) expresses support for work undertaken toward strengthening people-centred health systems in the WHO European Region.

Occupational therapists recognise that a lack of access to health services serves as a significant barrier to participation in everyday life and full inclusion in society. WFOT endorses an intersectoral, person-centred approach for the provision of universal health coverage to tackle health inequalities and ensure that all people have equal access to improve and maintain health.

Strengthening primary health care is recognised as the most inclusive, effective, efficient approach to improve health and well-being<sup>1</sup>. WFOT advocates for rehabilitation to be a key component of primary health care and made accessible to all.

Rehabilitation aims to optimise functioning of persons experiencing disability. Occupational therapy has a substantial role in rehabilitation due to the profession's expertise in the complex interaction of factors that enable participation in daily life activities. Although basic rehabilitation services, assistive technology and long-term follow-up should be reachable for all people experiencing disability, rehabilitation professionals such as occupational therapists in primary health care are scarce in most countries.

WFOT and its member organisations are committed to working with governments at all levels, non-governmental organisations and other partners to expand and decentralize rehabilitation service delivery to make them available to everyone. Optimising occupational participation through the provision of rehabilitation provides a cost-effective opportunity to promote health and enable people to be active and productive in their community.

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<sup>1</sup> Global Conference on Primary Health Care. Astana Kazakhstan 2018.