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Resolution

Strengthening European health systems as a continuation of the WHO Regional Office for Europe's Country Strategy "Matching services to new needs"

The Regional Committee,

Recalling previous resolutions of the Regional Committee on cooperation with countries, in particular resolution EUR/RC50/R5 on the WHO Regional Office for Europe's Country Strategy "Matching services to new needs", and the principles outlined in the WHO Country focus initiative (document EB111/33);

Mindful of the discussions and comments at the fifty-fourth session of the Regional Committee on further developing and increasing the effectiveness of the Country Strategy to enable countries to strengthen their health systems;

Recalling resolution WHA58.34 which emphasizes that strengthening of health systems should be supported by research, resolution WHA58.30 which emphasizes that rapid progress towards the achievement of health-related development goals including those contained in the Millennium Declaration will require adequately staffed and effective health systems, resolution WHA58.33 which notes that health financing systems need to guarantee access to necessary services while providing protection against financial risk, resolution WHA57.16 that emphasizes the need to enable sustainable and effective health promotion measures, and resolution WHA57.19 on international migration of health personnel;

Having reviewed document EUR/RC55/9 Rev.1 “Next phase of the WHO Regional Office for Europe’s Country Strategy: Strengthening health systems”;

1. AGREES that:

- (a) progress is being made by the Regional Office in its efforts to improve the quality of the services it provides and tailor them to the health needs of Member States, as outlined by the Regional Director;
- (b) the Country Strategy approved by the Regional Committee at its fiftieth session should now be expanded to include the provision of support by the Regional Office to assist Member States to improve their health systems to attain better health, equity and responsiveness for their populations;

2. TAKES NOTE of document EUR/RC55/9 Rev.1, “Next phase of the WHO Regional Office for Europe’s Country Strategy: Strengthening health systems”, as a framework for the Regional Office’s Initiative in this domain and related work to be undertaken in the next five years, in collaboration with partners;

3. REQUESTS Member States to collaborate in this new phase of the Country Strategy by:

- (a) ensuring appropriate attention to the quality and skills of human resources, as well as to other resources needed for the health system and to strive towards self-sufficiency of health personnel as agreed in Resolution WHA58.30;
- (b) implementing effective and high-quality disease prevention and health promotion interventions, incorporating a gender-sensitive approach, and advocating for intersectoral action as integral responsibilities of the health system;
- (c) mobilizing adequate funding in an equitable manner and organizing incentives to promote universal access;
- (d) elaborating their policy objectives guided by the WHO values and principles endorsed by the Member States, supported by transparent processes of monitoring and evaluation;

4. REQUESTS the Regional Director to:
- (a) take steps to mobilize the human and financial resources needed to support Member States in developing and implementing their strategies for strengthening health systems, as described in document EUR/RC55/9 Rev.1;
 - (b) organize a European ministerial conference on “Strengthening health systems” in 2007 or 2008, based on a consultative and participatory process with Member States, ensuring collaboration and harmonization with partner agencies;
 - (c) report back to the Regional Committee in 2007 and 2009 on implementation of the Initiative for Strengthening Health Systems in the Regional Office’s work with countries in the European Region.