



EUROPE

**Regional Committee for Europe
Fifty-eighth session**

Tbilisi, Georgia, 15–18 September 2008

EUR/RC58/R4
17 September 2008
82159
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Resolution

**Stewardship/governance of health systems
in the WHO European Region**

The Regional Committee,

Recalling resolution EUR/RC55/R8 on Strengthening European health systems as a continuation of the WHO Regional Office for Europe's Country Strategy "Matching services to new needs" that called on Member States to elaborate their policy objectives guided by the WHO values and principles endorsed by the Member States, supported by transparent processes of monitoring and evaluation;

Recalling its resolutions EUR/RC57/R2 on the Millennium Development Goals in the WHO European Region: Health systems and health of mothers and children – lessons learned and EUR/RC57/R1 on health workforce policies in the European Region;

Recalling World Health Assembly resolutions WHA56.25 on the role of contractual arrangements in improving health systems' performance, WHA58.17 on international migration of health personnel: a challenge for health systems in developing countries and WHA 61.18 on monitoring of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals;

Acknowledging the challenges faced by governments in steering health systems towards better performance and the importance of the health system stewardship function exercised by health ministries within governments;

Mindful of the discussions and comments at the fifty-eighth session of the Regional Committee on lessons learned and practical ways to improve the stewardship function of health ministries and governments;

Having reviewed document EUR/RC58/9 on the stewardship/governance of health systems in the WHO European Region;

Having considered the Tallinn Charter adopted at the WHO European Ministerial Conference on Health Systems: “Health Systems, Health and Wealth”;

1. COMMENDS the WHO Regional Office for Europe on organizing the WHO European Ministerial Conference on Health Systems in Tallinn from 25 to 27 June 2008, in collaboration with partners and stakeholders;
2. THANKS the government of Estonia for hosting the Ministerial Conference and providing excellent arrangements for it;
3. ENDORSES the Tallinn Charter: Health Systems for Health and Wealth adopted at the Ministerial Conference as political guidance and strategic direction for Region-wide action in this area;
4. ACKNOWLEDGES the positive trends that have been initiated by the efforts made to strengthen health systems in the WHO European Region since 2005;
5. URGES Member States to:
 - (a) continue collaborating in the context of the WHO Regional Office for Europe’s Country Strategy;
 - (b) strengthen the health system stewardship roles of health ministries and governments along the lines set forth in document EUR/RC58/9 on the stewardship/governance of health systems in the WHO European Region and in the Tallinn Charter;
 - (c) ensure the systematic production and use of health system performance and other relevant (epidemiological, economic, etc.) information and evidence in decision-making, including that available from the WHO European Ministerial Conference on Health Systems held in Tallinn, in order to better meet the needs of the people and attain health system goals;
 - (d) ensure that robust health system strategies, consistent with WHO and national values and linked to clear performance expectations, are in place;
 - (e) make health care systems more responsive to people’s needs, preferences and expectations, while recognizing their rights and responsibilities with regard to their own health and engage stakeholders in policy development and implementation;

- (f) use the diversity of policy instruments (such as framework laws and incentives) at their disposal to support the attainment of health system goals, as necessary;
 - (g) ensure that the international recruitment of health workers is guided by ethical considerations and cross-country solidarity, and by a code of practice;
 - (h) promote intersectoral collaboration in order to address the broader social determinants of health and to ensure a holistic approach to services, including health promotion and disease prevention;
 - (i) ensure universal access to health promotion, disease prevention and health services as a fundamental means to achieve equity in health;
 - (j) generate further evidence on the effectiveness of health system stewardship through a more systematic evaluation of the way they carry out their stewardship function;
 - (k) ensure aid coordination in accordance with the principles set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability, whenever applicable;
6. REQUESTS the Regional Director to:
- (a) take steps to support ministries of health in developing their competences to carry out their health system stewardship function, including their skills in leading intersectoral efforts across government to address the broader determinants of health;
 - (b) facilitate the further development of relevant evaluation tools, performance indicators and minimum standards to assess the effectiveness of the health system stewardship function in a context of accountability, pluralism and transparency;
 - (c) facilitate the collaboration of Member States on successful health systems stewardship practices and promote the sharing among Member States of case studies from the WHO European Region and beyond;
 - (d) reinforce collaboration on health systems strengthening with other international organizations concerned by and active in the health field, such as the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Organization for Migration, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the European Commission and related institutions, the European Investment Bank and others;
 - (e) report to the Regional Committee in 2011 and again, with a final report, in 2015 on the support provided by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the progress accomplished by Member States in the framework of the follow-up to the WHO European Ministerial Conference on Health Systems held in Tallinn.