

WHO Regional Committee for Europe EUR/RC62/Conf.Doc./4
Sixty-second session
Malta, 10–13 September 2012

29 August 2012

Dear Sirs

The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) is responding to the Call on International nongovernmental organisations to support the Draft resolution on **Strategy and action plan on healthy ageing in Europe, 2012–2020** by stating its concurrence with request from the Regional Director and offers its assistance to Member states and the Regional Committee in implementing the Action plan.

The values, concepts and language employed throughout the reports and documents for this meeting are totally congruent with those embraced by occupational therapy profession.

The WFOT applauds the WHO Regional Committee for Europe for their attention to an integrated approach to creating supportive environments across the life course, which aim at ensuring healthy ageing and futures for the region's citizens. The occupational therapy profession's practice is framed by a client-centred approach to person-centred care; we cross institution and community boundaries with our knowledge base integrating medical, social, psychological and environmental domains. This is what is needed to have a vision of holistic system, policy and program development.

Within Europe, the WFOT has 73 member countries at varying degrees of professional development. The WFOT offers its assistance to alert these professional groups to the developments of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe and to stand ready to respond to the requests of member states.

Occupational therapy's focus particularly addresses the call for member States:

- (b) to identify and address barriers to and gaps in access to health and social care for older persons, addressing the challenges of the growing incidence of multiple chronic conditions and of neurodegenerative disease.

Occupational therapists provide resources, information and share their expertise and experience with clients and families wishing to optimize their life circumstances and ameliorate situations caused by illness, injury, or tragedy.

The profession can participate in multi-sectoral initiatives contributing to a broad view of health care, social services and environmental priorities through our multi-faceted knowledge base. In European member states where the profession is not advanced, the WFOT and its other members can provide additional support to these emerging initiatives. The Federation's member network includes many specialists such as researchers, educators and practitioners who can be resources for this critical work.

From our broad perspective, we offer strong support for the vision and strategies highlighted in the documents that support this regional meeting. The relationship between society and the health of the population is complexly interwoven; both are integral components of the other. As stated in the WHO Europe Region document “Health and Wellbeing Policy Framework”,

“Good health can support economic recovery and development”

Occupational therapists are deeply committed to assisting governments at all levels, as well as non-governmental organisations and clients, to promote wellness, community participation and to support productivity through remaining connected to the workforce actively or as volunteers.

Respectfully,



Samantha Shann
Vice President Finance
Senior Lecturer/Practice Placement Liaison Tutor
on behalf of the President and Executive Management Team
World Federation of Occupational Therapists

