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World Confederation  
for Physical Therapy



## **WHPA intervention on Agenda item 13.4, Multisectoral action for a life course approach to healthy ageing: draft global strategy and plan of action on ageing and health (Document A69/17)**

### **69<sup>th</sup> WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

*Speaker:*

Honourable Delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the international organisations representing the world's physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists and physical therapists. Together, we form the World Health Professions Alliance WHPA, representing over 26 million health professionals in more than 130 countries.

As health professionals (HP), we have a major role in health promotion and prevention to support 'autonomy', 'quality of life' and 'healthy life years' in an ageing society. It would be in the interests of all parties for HP to work closely with WHO and other authorities to integrate into the action plan:

1. Guidelines for health settings that are accessible to the elderly;
2. Recommendations for HP training in care for an ageing population, including new patterns of service delivery, especially preventive services, long-term care for people with co-morbidities, and palliative care, as well as effective polymedication management;
3. Policies related to HP retention and retirement to cope with the double effect of an ageing population and ageing workforce;

4. Health promotion campaigns in general and especially in support of physical activity as good for the individual and for the economy;
5. Policy guidelines on the oral health of the elderly as essential to securing their autonomy, maintaining their ability to chew and avoiding issues such as malnutrition;
6. Our WHPA policy recommendation on collaborative practice. HP working together as a team will also achieve substantial savings;
7. Strategies that support and promote the mental health of older people;
8. Health literacy as a key factor in fostering older people's autonomy.

With current demographic trends, the need for well-integrated primary health services and nursing-home facilities will only grow. The WHPA is committed to working with governments to create a competent health workforce adequate to addressing the needs of older patients.

Thank you.

(296 words)