



World Health
Organization

Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health (2016-2020)

**A framework for coordinated global action by the World Health Organization,
Member States, and Partners across the Sustainable Development Goals**



Why a global strategy?

For the first time in history, most people can expect to live into their 60s and beyond. By 2050, 1 in 5 people will be 60 years or older.

A longer life brings great opportunities. Yet the extent to which we as individuals, and society more broadly, can benefit from these extra years depends heavily on one key factor: **health**.

Evidence suggests that older people are not experiencing better health than previous generations, and that those who have experienced disadvantage across their lifetime have a higher risk of poor health.

Implementing the strategy will help all older people continue to do the things that they value.

What will the strategy achieve?

The **vision** of the Strategy is a world in which everyone can live a long and healthy life.

Over the next five years, **goals** include implementing existing evidence to maximize functional ability, filling the evidence gaps and establishing partnerships to ensure a Decade of Healthy Ageing from 2020 – 2030.

The strategy will be achieved through a focus on **↳ five strategic objectives**.

The Strategy's implementation should be underpinned by the following **principles**: human rights, equity, equality and non-discrimination (particularly on the basis of age), gender equality, and intergenerational solidarity.

What are the key concepts?

Healthy Ageing is relevant for everybody. It is defined as the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age.

Functional ability is determined by the person's **intrinsic capacity** (the combination of all the individual's physical and mental capacities), relevant **environmental factors**, and the interaction between the two. Environmental factors include policies, systems, and services related to transport, housing, social protection, streets and parks, social facilities, and health and long-term care; politics; products and technologies; relationships with friends, family, and care givers; and cultural and social attitudes and values.

A stylized, hand-drawn illustration of a person's profile, facing right. The person has a large nose, a slight smile, and is wearing a dark blue jacket. The drawing is done in a simple, sketchy style with visible lines and flat colors.

↳ Commit to action

Fostering *Healthy Ageing* requires leadership and commitment. To ensure that the political and operational platforms exist for effective multisectoral action, collaboration is needed between government and non-government actors, including service providers, designers, and academics.

Key actions include:

1. Establishing national frameworks towards *Healthy Ageing*
2. Strengthening national capacities to formulate evidence-based policy
3. Combatting ageism



↳ Align health systems to the needs of older populations

As people age, their health needs tend to become more chronic and complex. A transformation is needed in the way that health systems are designed to ensure affordable access to integrated services that are centred on the needs and rights of older people. In most care contexts, this will require fundamental changes in the clinical focus of care for older people, as well as in the way care is organized, funded, and delivered across health and social sectors.

Key actions include:

1. Orienting health systems around intrinsic capacity and functional ability
2. Developing and ensuring affordable access to quality older person-centred and integrated clinical care
3. Ensuring a sustainable and appropriately trained, deployed, and managed health workforce

↳ Develop age-friendly environments

Creating age-friendly environments requires collaboration and coordination across multiple sectors and with diverse stakeholders, including older people. Because age-friendly environments promote health, remove barriers, and provide support for people experiencing losses in capacity, they can ensure older people age safely in a place that is right for them, are free from poverty, can continue to develop personally, and can contribute to their communities while retaining autonomy and health.

Key actions include:

1. Fostering older people's autonomy
2. Enabling older people's engagement
3. Promoting multisectoral action



↳ Strengthen long-term care

Worldwide, the number of older people requiring care and support is increasing. Every country needs to have an integrated system of long-term care. Each system should help older people maintain the best possible level of functional ability to allow older people to live with dignity and enjoy their basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Key actions include:

1. Establishing and continually improving a sustainable and equitable long-term-care system
2. Building the long-term care workforce and supporting informal caregivers
3. Ensuring the quality of person-centred and integrated long-term care

↳ Improve measurement, monitoring, and research

The current metrics and methods used in the field of ageing are limited, preventing a complete understanding of the health issues experienced by older people and the usefulness of interventions to address them. Focused research and improved measurement are essential to better understand and act on *Healthy Ageing*.

Key actions include:

1. Agreeing on ways to measure, analyse, describe, and monitor *Healthy Ageing*
2. Strengthening research capacities and incentives for innovation
3. Building and synthesizing evidence on *Healthy Ageing*



Development of the strategy

The Strategy underwent extensive regional and global consultation involving Member States, non-governmental organizations, representatives from United Nations agencies, technical and scientific experts, WHO departments, and the general public. The Strategy was adopted by WHO's 194 Member States at the World Health Assembly on May 26, 2016.



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AGEING and HEALTH

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For more information and the full Strategy, visit <http://www.who.int/ageing/global-strategy>