



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



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### **REPORT ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE ROUNDTABLE ON HEALTHY AGING**

#### **Introduction**

1. World Health Day has been celebrated for over 60 years to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO). The theme for 2012 is aging and health, which offers a new opportunity to draw attention to a vital issue for our Region. For this reason, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is organizing a roundtable on this year's World Health Day theme in order to promote further study and encourage activities related to this issue. The roundtable should spur new progress in the priorities established for the 2009-2018 period.

#### **Background**

2. Since the 26th Pan American Sanitary Conference held in September 2002 adopted resolution CSP26.R20 "Health and Aging," the Member States have been urged to "... advocate for the promotion and protection of the human rights and basic freedoms of older persons...." (1). Seven years later, with the approval by the 49th Directing Council of the Plan of Action on the health of older persons including active and healthy aging (2), the Region became the first on the planet with a Strategy and Plan of Action in place to improve the health of older persons, based on the United Nations Principles for Older Persons.

3. Since 2002, the countries of the Region have signed numerous international and regional mandates related to the well-being of older persons. In 2012, the United Nations will evaluate the implementation of the commitments assumed at the Second World Assembly on Aging in 2002. One of the three priority actions of these mandates is advancing health and well-being into old age. (3)

4. The Permanent Council of the Organization of American States has continued to consider the viability of an inter-American convention on the rights of older persons to advocate for the advancement and protection of the human rights and basic freedoms of older persons through the adoption of legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms. (4, 5)

### **Situation analysis**

5. Life expectancy in the Region increased by over 25 years during the latter part of the 20th century. Current life expectancy at 60 years of age has been calculated at 21 years; 81% of the people born in the Region will live past the age of 60, and 42% will live longer than 80 years. While in 2000, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) had approximately 50 million people 60 years of age or older, there will be 100 million people in this age group in the region in 2025, 15 million of which will be 80 years of age or older. By 2050 one in four inhabitants of the Region will be an older adult. (6) There are few places on the planet where such a rapid demographic transition is taking place.

6. However, longer survival has not been accompanied by comparable improvements in the well-being, health, and quality of life of older adults. In Latin America and the Caribbean, fewer than 50% of people over 60 years of age indicate that they are in good health and women's health is even poorer. Twenty percent of the people in this age group have impairments in their basic functional capacity, requiring permanent care at home or in institutions. In Latin America and the Caribbean it is families, and especially women (90%), who care for older persons, but their capacity to do so is changing. (7)

7. Although the consequences of this phenomenon for social security and public health are tangible, the Region still lacks a comprehensive view of the health of older persons.

### **Proposal**

8. Hold a roundtable on healthy aging in the Americas during the Pan American Sanitary Conference, with the following objectives:

- (a) To increase knowledge on aging trends and their impact on the health of the population of the Americas.
- (b) To examine the lessons learned in the implementation of the regional Plan of Action on the Health of Older Persons.
- (c) To promote essential measures to put the strategic areas set out in the Plan of Action into practice.

***Development of the roundtable***

9. Preparations for the roundtable will begin through consultations with experts during the first half of 2012 in order to prepare a position paper based on the Plan of Action. The intention is to involve the majority of Ministries of Health of the Region in the expert consultations.

10. The roundtable would include:

- (a) Introduction by the President of the Pan American Sanitary Conference.
- (b) Situation analysis of the issue and the main challenges for public health in the Region presented by a high-level expert. Some of the experts who could potentially be invited to offer this analysis are the director of the National Institute on Aging of the United States or Canada, the director of the Administration on Aging of the United States, or the dean of the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health (United States).
- (c) Three discussion rooms will be available to study the position paper. Each room will focus on certain strategic areas of the Plan of Action. The discussions in each group should include, as an essential component, specific recommendations for action (with the participation of ministers, ambassadors, experts, and strategic associates involved in the issue).
- (d) Presentation to the Conference of the roundtable' report, including the participants' recommendations, by the manager of the Family and Community Health area.

**Proposed roundtable to be held during the Pan American Sanitary Conference**

| <b>Topic: Healthy aging</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| <p><b>Opening:</b> <i>A brief outline of the importance of World Health Day and the theme chosen for 2012: aging and health.</i></p> <p>Speaker: President of the Pan American Sanitary Conference. (5 minutes)</p> <p><i>Why include aging in the Health Agenda for the Americas?</i></p> <p>An invited expert will examine the main reasons why healthy aging one of the most significant challenges for the health systems of our Region in the coming decade.</p> <p>Speaker: to be determined (20 minutes)</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Discussion panels (60 minutes)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Discussion group 1</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <i>The primary health care needs of older persons</i>                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Moderator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | President of the Pan American Sanitary Conference<br>(to be confirmed)                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Introduction of the discussion topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Speaker to be determined                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Discussion guide                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Proposed specific recommendations for action that contribute to the establishment of quality services for older persons in health systems based on primary care.                                                                             |
| <b>Discussion group 2</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <i>How to prepare human resources in health to work in aging societies</i>                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Moderator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Vice President of the Pan American Sanitary Conference<br>(to be confirmed)                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Introduction of the discussion topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Speaker to be determined                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Discussion guide                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Health systems must rise to the challenge of providing care for a user whose characteristics and needs differ from the norm. Workers in the sector require new competencies in order to meet the health care needs of this population group. |

| <b>Discussion group 3</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| Subject                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <i>Older persons and long-term care.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Moderator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Vice President of the Pan American Sanitary Conference<br>(to be confirmed)                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Introduction of the discussion topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Speaker to be determined                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Discussion guide                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Proposed specific recommendations for action that contribute to the development of human rights-based legal and regulatory frameworks related to long-term health care services in the Region. Integration of monitoring and establishment of common measures with other sectors. |
| <b>Report from the Roundtable</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Rapporteur reports:</b> The rapporteurs from the three discussion groups meet and prepare a joint report.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Presentation of the report in the plenary session</b><br>(10 minutes)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Dr. Gina Tambini, Manager of the Family and Community Health area, presents the report at the plenary session of the Pan American Sanitary Conference.<br><br>Comments from the Delegates.                                                                                        |
| <b>Participants and guests</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official delegates from the Member States to the Pan American Sanitary Conference</li> <li>• American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)</li> <li>• American Geriatric Society (AGS)</li> <li>• American Society on Aging (ASA)</li> <li>• Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (US)</li> <li>• Canadian Association on Gerontology</li> <li>• Canadian Geriatrics Society</li> <li>• Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Institute of Aging</li> <li>• Canadian Public Health Association</li> <li>• Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies (CIESS) (Mexico)</li> <li>• Council on Foreign Relations (US)</li> <li>• District of Columbia Office on Aging: DCOA</li> <li>• Economic Commission for Latin America &amp; the Caribbean (ECLAC)</li> <li>• University of Puerto Rico Graduate School of Public Health, Gerontology Program</li> <li>• Fogarty International Center (US)</li> <li>• General Hospital/McGill University, Quebec (Canadá)</li> <li>• Gerontological Society of America (GSA)</li> <li>• Health Foundation of South Florida</li> <li>• Healthy Aging Regional Collaborative Health Foundation of South Florida</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

- Healthy Aging Research Network: Institute on Aging, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- HelpAge International (La Paz, Bolivia)
- Inter-American Development Bank
- International Federation on Ageing(Canada)
- International Federation on Aging (US)
- International Labor Organization (ILO)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- International Society for Aging and Physical Activity (US)
- National Academy of Sciences (US)
- National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (US)
- National Council on Aging (US)
- National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCA)
- National Hispanic Medical Association
- National Institute on Aging (US)
- NGO Committee on Ageing, New York
- North American Region, International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (Canada)
- Organization of American States (OAS)
- The World Bank
- Tufts University School of Medicine
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Human Nutrition and Research Center on Aging at Tufts University
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Aging Initiative, Office of Children's Health Protection
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations, Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- Vida Senior Centers (US)
- WHO Collaborating Centre in Gerontological Nursing Education (New York University)
- WHO/PAHO Collaborating Center on Aging and Health (University of Galveston)
- World Health Organization, Department of Ageing and Life Course

### **Action by the Executive Committee**

11. The Executive Committee is asked to take note of the report on the preparations for the roundtable and offer any observation or recommendation that it deems necessary.

### **References**

1. Pan American Health Organization. Health and Aging. [Internet]. 26th Pan American Sanitary Conference, 54th Session of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas. 2002 Sep 23-27. Washington (DC), US. Washington (DC): PAHO; 2002 (Document CSP26.R20)  
<http://www.paho.org/english/gov/csp/csp26index-e.htm>
2. Pan American Health Organization. Plan of Action on the health of older persons including active and health aging [Internet]. 49th Directing Council of PAHO, 61st Session of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas; 2009 Sep 28-Oct 2; Washington (DC), US. Washington (DC): PAHO; 2009 (document CD49/8) [cited on 2 December 2011]. Available from:  
<http://new.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2009/CD49-08-e.pdf>.
3. United Nations. Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing; 8-12 April 2002; New York (NY): United Nations; 2002 (document A/CONF.197/9).
4. United Nations – Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Second Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean: towards a society for all ages and rights-based social protection. Brasilia, 4-6 December 2007; Brasilia, Brazil. Brasilia Declaration. (document ECLAC LC/G 2359); ECLAC: 2008.
5. United Nations. United Nations Principles on Older Persons, adopted through Resolution A/RES/46/91 of the General Assembly of the United Nations of 16 December 1991. New York (NY). United Nations; 1991.
6. United Nations. Population Division. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. World Population Prospects: 2006 Revision. New York, (NY): United Nations; 2007.
7. United Nations – Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Report of the Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing: towards a regional strategy for the implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing; 19-21 November 2003; Santiago (Chile). Chile: ECLAC; 2003.