



World Federation of Occupational Therapists Statement

14-15 September 2020 70th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe

Statement on Healthy Ageing:

The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) declares strong support for the work completed on the Strategy and Action Plan for Healthy Ageing in Europe and endorses the proposed development of the implementation plan for the Decade of Healthy Ageing. The implementation plan builds on the Strategy and Action Plan for Healthy Ageing to create action to reduce ageism, foster the abilities of older people and promote responsive health services, including access to long-term care when needed.

WFOT endorses the need for an integrated approach among Member States, WHO, other UN agencies and international partners such as non-state actors and civil societies to achieve the vision of healthy ageing for a world in which everyone can live a long and healthy life. WFOT and its members serve as integral partners for the agenda toward this vision.

Occupational therapists promote health and well-being of older people by empowering and enabling participation in everyday occupations, thereby fostering functional ability across the life course. Using evidence-informed processes, occupational therapy addresses factors such as individual ability, design of the built environment, institutional policy and societal attitude to promote the rights and opportunities for older adults to engage in occupations of choice or need. Occupational therapists support the provision of assistive technologies and are experts in grading and adapting occupations to enable participation in everyday activities relating to self-care, productivity and leisure. To promote occupational participation, occupational therapists work collaboratively with key partners to influence social policy and infrastructure in relation to local contexts and population needs.

The vision for healthy ageing seeks to develop and maintain functional ability and well-being throughout the lifespan. Occupational therapists can offer expert knowledge and practical solutions through active participation in the continuing dialogue and action on this vital imperative.