

World Heart Federation Statement – Agenda Item 12.2 – Physical Activity for Health

Honourable Chair, distinguished delegates,

The World Heart Federation thanks WHO for its report. We commend the GAPPAs practical recommendations for collective action by different stakeholders, its clear positioning within the context of the SDGs and Global Monitoring Framework (GMF) for NCDs, and its recognition of physical activity as not just a health promotion tool, but also as a disease management tool for many NCDs.^{1 2}

Physical inactivity increases the relative risk of coronary artery disease, stroke and hypertension, by 45%, 60% and 30% respectively.³ With the number of annual cardiovascular disease (or CVD) deaths projected to rise to over 22 million in 2030 if current trends continue,⁴ a collective response is urgently needed.

Physical inactivity is a global problem requiring decision, but affordable actions from governments. We therefore urge Members States to focus efforts on implementation of the Action Plan; we look forward to the development of indicators to measure its success, and offer three comments:

1. We suggest including an indicator to measure the number of countries with a national budget allocated to financing a national plan on physical activity, and the number of countries with a designated unit responsible for its implementation and monitoring. These indicators would help to focus efforts on making national plans for physical activity operational.
2. Readers may differ in their definition of the word ‘safe’ with regard to safe access to physical activity programmes and public areas, an issue highlighted by the gender disparity in physical activity between men and women. We suggest that the Secretariat include a definition of, and indicator for, safety under Strategic Objective 2.
3. The two core indicators in the GAPPAs measure insufficient physical activity among those aged 11-17, and 18 and over. This focus should not prevent countries from also striving to encourage physical activity and active play among young children to help reduce childhood overweight and obesity.

Thank you for your attention.

¹ <http://www.fyss.se/fyss-in-english/>

² <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25456575>

³ Booth FW, Lees SJ. Fundamental questions about genes, inactivity, and chronic diseases. *Physiol Genomics*. 2007;28:146–157. doi: 10.1152/physiolgenomics.00174.2006.

⁴ HEARTS: Technical package for cardiovascular disease management in primary health care, page 8