

**WHA43.19      The role of health research**

The Forty-third World Health Assembly,

Noting the conclusions of the Technical Discussions on the role of health research in the strategy for health for all by the year 2000, in particular the recommendations dealing with health systems research, nutrition research, research capability strengthening and recent advances in biological and physical sciences and their implications for health care;

Noting that all national health policies should be based on valid scientific evidence, and that such evidence requires health research;

Recognizing the significant potential of research in promoting health and its vital role in improving health through the application of solutions that are already available and the generation of knowledge for the development of new solutions;

Noting the worldwide mismatch between the burden of illness, which is overwhelmingly in the Third World, and investment in health research, which is largely focused on the health problems of industrialized countries, and the fact that many developing countries lack the scientific and institutional capability to address their particular problems, especially in the critical fields of epidemiology, health policy, social sciences, nursing and management research;

1.      **CALLS ON** all Member States to undertake essential health research appropriate to national needs in order to:

- (1)      identify and understand their own priority health problems;
- (2)      improve the use of limited resources;
- (3)      improve health policy and management;
- (4)      foster innovation and experimentation;
- (5)      contribute to new knowledge;

2.      **URGES** Member States, particularly developing countries:

- (1)      to define national health research policies, and strategies for their implementation;
- (2)      to build and strengthen national research capabilities by investing resources in national institutions, by providing appropriate career opportunities to attract and retain their own scientists, and by creating environments that will foster scholarship and creativity;
- (3)      to create, or strengthen, mechanisms that facilitate consideration of research results at the policy-making level, as well as their translation into health systems operation;
- (4)      to collaborate with other countries through international partnerships in developing research and training capabilities, particularly in relation to their high priority health and organizational problems, thereby also contributing to national development efforts;

3.      **URGES** bilateral and multilateral development agencies, nongovernmental organizations, foundations and appropriate regional organizations:

- (1)      to increase their support for essential health research and for research capability building;

(2) to support and strengthen, in the health and related science and technology sectors, national coordinating mechanisms to promote research, policy-making, planning and management;

(3) to support the development of international partnerships to strengthen national scientific and research infrastructures and countries' capabilities to absorb technology and solve problems;

4. INVITES the research community:

(1) to increase its commitment to the development of essential health research appropriate to national needs and its participation in research on global health problems;

(2) to intensify its efforts in communicating research findings and in developing technology to support decision-making and resource allocation processes;

(3) to mobilize its human and material resources with a view to strengthening international scientific, networks oriented to health development;

5. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to ensure the wide distribution of the report of the Technical Discussions on the role of health research in the strategy for health for all by the year 2000 among ministries of health and other relevant ministries, universities, research centres and institutions dealing with science and technology;

(2) to use appropriate mechanisms, in close collaboration with the global and regional Advisory Committees on Health Research, to: (a) assess new and emerging areas of science and technology; (b) investigate evolving problems of critical significance to health; (c) identify appropriate methodologies for trend assessment and forecasting, including epidemiology to improve health;

(3) to develop further a clearly enunciated health research strategy for WHO in order to translate the research goals, priorities and programmes into coherent and coordinated action in support of health for all;

(4) to promote the harmonization of science and research policies in health between WHO, the United Nations system and other international agencies and organizations;

(5) to develop more effective institutional arrangements for strengthening the research capabilities of Member States, with special emphasis on disciplines of critical relevance to public health;

(6) to explore the possibility of making specific provision within WHO's total resources to support the strengthening of health-related research capabilities in Member States;

(7) to report through the Executive Board to the Forty-fifth World Health Assembly on progress made in implementing this resolution.

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Committee A, third report)