

<http://knowledge-gateway.org/ahaa>

# Alliance for Healthy Active Ageing

*World Health Organization, University of Iowa Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence, and Partners invite you to join a Virtual Online Global Network*

## 1 - 12 October 2010

### **Register at:**

<http://knowledge-gateway.org/ahaa>

**All are welcome to join! Please forward this invitation on to your colleagues.**

Your knowledge, experience and opinions will contribute to policy and practice dialogue!

### *Issues we would like to discuss:*

**On this United Nations Day of the Older Person, what are the challenges and opportunities we are facing to support healthy active ageing?**

**If healthy active ageing is our goal, how can we achieve this? What are your success stories? What community based care models have you used in your country? What challenges are you experiencing and how can we manage them?**

**How do you care for the older persons in your community? In what ways can we better care for people with dementia in our communities?**

Join us to create an interprofessional network involving representatives from health professions, policy makers, programme managers, international organizations/agencies, universities, research institutes and our clients to share our knowledge and experience on issues that affect healthy ageing

**All contributions will be acknowledged and you only receive two emails per day.**

# Alliance for Healthy Active Ageing (AHAA)

## Background paper

### Global on-line Discussion Forum

#### *Sharing our knowledge to promote healthy active ageing globally across professions and borders*

*1<sup>st</sup> - 12 October 2010*

*Health professionals are in a prime position to facilitate local communities in using the best evidence based knowledge, blended with the local culture and experience, to build communities where all citizens have optimum support for healthy, active ageing and appropriately focused care when it is needed*

Global ageing is a success story and a triumph for public health. Life expectancy has increased, in particular for women (1). Global ageing brings opportunities for older person's active participation in society, but also the potential increased risk for development of chronic diseases, functional disabilities with decreased healthy life expectancy, and social marginalization. With the epidemiological transition from infectious to chronic disease, 60% of all deaths are attributed to chronic disease with expectations for continued increase. Eighty percent of the chronic disease deaths occur in low and middle income countries (2) many of which may carry a "double burden" for health care of managing both infectious and chronic non-communicable diseases. Additionally, unlike developed countries, this is at a time when they will "become old before they become rich".

**The WHO (3, 4) Active Ageing: A Policy Framework** defines active ageing as "the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age". It is intended to enable people "to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well being throughout the life course and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capacities, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they require assistance".

According to HelpAge International (5) "High numbers of older people are unaware of healthy lifestyles and active ageing; the prevention, self-management, and treatment of chronic disease". The access to knowledge and culturally appropriate interventions can improve the quality of life of older people and the quality of life in the communities in which they reside. Our concern is whether resources are in place across the lifespan to enable older people to realize their potential for wellbeing.

Considering the daunting challenges countries face, as members of the global **Alliance for Healthy Active Ageing**, we are committed to promoting the *UN Principles for Older Persons (6)*, facilitating engagement in life across health conditions and environmental contexts. Our mission is to set forth issues, facilitate interprofessional and interdisciplinary discussion, and create possibilities for responses to common global concerns in our ageing societies.

With a growing shortage in the global health care workforce, strained economic resources, and knowledge and access gaps, this forum discussion will focus on:

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- On this "**United Nations Day of the Older Person**" what are the challenges and opportunities we are facing to support healthy active ageing?
  - What are your opinions on this issue?
  - What are the challenges, issues and opportunities that you face in your country?
- If healthy active ageing is our goal, how can we achieve this?
  - What are your success stories?
  - What community based care models have you used?
  - What challenges did you experience and how did you manage these challenges?
- What are the challenges and opportunities we are facing to support healthy active ageing in the area of dementia care?
  - What are your success stories?
  - What community based care models have you used?
  - What challenges did you experience and how did you manage these challenges?

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## References

1. Kinsella, K. and Wan, H. (2009). U.S. Census Bureau, International Population reports, P95/09-1. *An Aging World: 2008*. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington DC.
2. Kinsella, K., (July, 2000). Demographic Dimensions of Global Ageing. *Journal of Family Issues*. 21(5); 541-558.
3. WHO (2002). *Preventing chronic disease: A vital investment*. (World Health Report). Geneva: World Health Organization.
4. WHO (2002). *Active Ageing: A policy framework*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
5. United Nations. (1998). International plan of action on ageing and the United Nations Principles for older person.. NewYork: United Nations Dept. of Public Information.
6. HelpAge International (2008). *Primary healthcare for older people. A participatory study in 5 Asian countries*. HelpAge International: Chiang Mai, Thailand.

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## **Our partners:**

World Health Organization, Department of Ageing and Life Course (WHO/ALC)

World Health Organization, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, Implementing Best Practice Initiative (WHO/RHR/IBP)

World Health Organization, Department of Health Professions Nursing and Midwifery (WHO/HPNM)

WHO Collaborating Center on Ageing and Wellness, University of the West Indies, Jamaica, West Indies

University of Iowa Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence

University of Iowa, College of Nursing, Adult and Gerontology Area of Study

University of Iowa, Center for International Rural and Environmental Health

University of Stavanger, Department of Health Studies, Norway

Stavanger University Hospital, Center of Medicine and Aging, Norway

School of Nursing/Institute of Nursing Research, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland

School of Nursing, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

School of Nursing, Queensland University of Technology

Research Unit of Nursing, Institute of Clinical Research, University of Southern Denmark

New York University College of Nursing, Hartford Center for Geriatric Nursing

New York University College of Nursing, World Health Organization Collaborating Center on Geriatric Nursing Education

Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center for Knowledge Management

Global Alliance for Nursing and Nurse Midwifery, GANM

Duke University School of Nursing, Office of Global and Community Health Initiatives

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