

Global action plan on the public health response to dementia

Joint statement from Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom

Delivered by Australia's delegation to the 70th session of the World Health Assembly

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

As Associate Members of the World Dementia Council, we support the aim of a world where society, governments, industry, researchers and health care systems have worked together to transform the prospects for people affected by Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

Today, we welcome the global action plan on the public health response to dementia and strongly support its adoption by the World Health Assembly.

The global burden is growing, with recent reviews indicating that nearly 10 million people develop dementia each year.

The costs for individuals, families, communities and governments are enormous: in 2015, global costs were estimated at more than US\$800 billion; by 2030, this is predicted to rise to US\$2 trillion.

A coordinated response to dementia requires collaboration among all stakeholders to improve prevention, awareness, diagnosis, care, support and quality of life for people living with dementia, their families and care partners.

We note the considerable lack of relevant data, the severe under-diagnosis or delayed diagnosis of dementia globally, and the very concerning gap between demand for treatment and care and supply of these services.

The global action plan takes an integrated approach in linking with other WHO strategies on mental health, ageing, disability and non-communicable diseases, and sets clear targets for global progress in seven crucial action areas.

In implementing the plan, it will be important that a core set of indicators are developed to monitor progress.

The Global Dementia Observatory will be a valuable resource for knowledge translation and exchange; and we are proud to be among the first countries supporting and sharing our data and resources on this platform.

We thank the WHO for its leadership in addressing this urgent global health issue and urge all Member States to support the global action plan and its implementation.

Through joint action we can change the course of dementia and better support the millions of people living with these devastating diseases