

Purpose

Constituency statement for agenda item 12.1 (follow-up to the Political Declaration on non-communicable diseases) to support coordinated input ahead of the Seventy-ninth World Health Assembly (WHA79).

Lead contact

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Thank you, Chair.

The Multiple Sclerosis International Federation delivers this statement on behalf of Alzheimer's Disease International, the International Bureau for Epilepsy, the International Society of Radiology, the International Union of Psychological Science, and the World Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology, with supporting partners including the European Federation of Neurological Associations, HelpAge International, the International Alliance of Patients' Organizations, the International Association for Dental Research, the International Federation on Ageing, the International Progressive MS Alliance, the OneNeurology Partnership, and the World Federation of NeuroRehabilitation.

On behalf of this coalition, including partners from the OneNeurology Partnership, we welcome the Political Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly on non-communicable diseases and mental health, and support its implementation. We emphasise the need for integrated, person-centred approaches to non-communicable diseases, including neurological conditions, mental health conditions, and oral diseases, across the life course.

People affected by neurological conditions, including Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, epilepsy, headaches, and multiple sclerosis, continue to face delays in diagnosis and unequal access to medical imaging, treatment, care, rehabilitation, and support. Many experience multimorbidity and require coordinated support over time.

We recognise the role of civil society and lived experience in designing, delivering, and monitoring effective responses. The World Health Organization Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders 2022–2031 provides a framework for action, alongside Rehabilitation 2030 and the World Health Organization's work on healthy ageing.

We call on Member States to adopt or update national neurology and neurorehabilitation plans by 2030, and integrate neurological conditions within national non-communicable disease strategies and universal health coverage, including age-responsive primary health care.

Implementation should meaningfully involve people affected by neurological conditions, families, carers, patient organisations, professional bodies, and wider civil society.

Now is the time to act.