

## WHO's role and responsibilities in health research

The Executive Board,

Having considered the report on WHO's role and responsibilities in health research,<sup>1</sup>

RECOMMENDS to the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolution WHA58.34 on the Ministerial Summit on Health Research;

Having considered the report on WHO's role and responsibilities in health research;

Acknowledging the critical role of the entire spectrum of health and medical research in improving human health;

Recognizing that research into poverty and inequity in health is limited, and that the ensuing evidence is important to guide policy in order to minimize gaps;

Reaffirming that research to strengthen health systems is fundamental for achieving internationally agreed health-related development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

Noting in particular the work of IARC, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, and the Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction;

Convinced that research findings and data derived from effective health-information systems should be used to inform decisions about the delivery of interventions to those who need them most;

Mindful that the Organization should lead by example in the use of research findings to inform decisions about health;

Reaffirming the role of WHO's cosponsored research programmes in support of neglected areas of research relevant to poor and disadvantaged populations, and recognizing the contributions of WHO to strengthening research capacity;

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<sup>1</sup> Document EB117/14.

Committed to ensuring ethical standards in the conduct of health research supported by the Organization,

1. URGES Member States to mobilize the necessary scientific, social, political and economic resources in order:

- (1) to consider implementing the recommendation made by the Commission on Health Research for Development in 1990 that “developing countries should invest at least 2% of national health expenditures in research and research capacity strengthening, and at least 5% of project and program aid for the health sector from development aid agencies should be earmarked for research and research capacity strengthening”;<sup>1</sup>
- (2) to integrate research in the mainstream of national programme activities and plans, and to promote wider access to research findings;
- (3) to strengthen the capacity of national and institutional ethics committees that review health-research proposals;

2. CALLS UPON the health-research community, other international organizations, the private sector, civil society and other concerned stakeholders to provide strong, sustained support to research activities across the entire spectrum of health, medical and behavioural research, especially research into poverty and inequity in health; and to maintain support of activities that promote the use of research findings to inform policy, practice and public opinion;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to strengthen the culture of research in the Organization and to ensure that research informs its technical activities;
- (2) to develop a reporting system on WHO’s activities in health research;
- (3) to improve coordination of research activities, including integration of research into disease control and prevention;
- (4) to review the use of research evidence for major policy decisions and recommendations within WHO;
- (5) to establish standard procedures and mechanisms for the conduct of research and use of findings by the Organization, including registration of research proposals in a publicly accessible database, peer review of proposals, and dissemination of findings;
- (6) to promote better access to research findings;
- (7) to provide support to Member States to develop capacities for health systems research.

Eighth meeting, 26 January 2006  
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<sup>1</sup> See *Commission on Health Research for Development. Health research: essential link to equity in development*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1990.