

Written statement by Iceland WHO

Executive Board 158th session (EB158)

Agenda item 22: Strengthening rehabilitation in health systems (EB158/26)

Iceland welcomes the report of the Director-General on strengthening rehabilitation in health systems and thanks the Secretariat for its continued work in implementing resolution WHA76.6 (2023).

Iceland emphasizes that rehabilitation must be informed by the best available evidence and data, including research related to neurological conditions such as spinal cord injury. There is a clear need to better consolidate and utilise existing research data, registries and clinical knowledge in order to strengthen rehabilitation outcomes, inform service planning and support innovation in rehabilitation and, where possible, recovery. This work should be closely aligned with the Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders 2022–2031, which provides an important global framework for addressing rehabilitation needs related to neurological conditions. Iceland is aware of non-governmental organizations that would very much welcome the opportunity to cooperate and contribute to this work.

Iceland further underlines that progress in this area requires ambitious and timely action. While recognising current capacity constraints, Iceland encourages taking larger steps where possible and making use of existing knowledge, partnerships and WHO Collaborating Centres to advance the work.

In this context, Iceland supports continued progress towards establishing baseline data and global targets and does not favour postponing the first global status report on rehabilitation. Timely reporting is essential to maintain momentum, accountability and political attention to rehabilitation as a core component of health systems.

Iceland looks forward to continued collaboration with WHO, Member States, civil society and other stakeholders to advance this important agenda.