

**Communiqué de presse
Pour diffusion immédiate**

Improving World Health through 12 Priority Actions

Montreal, 9 May 2017 — The World Health Summit (WHS) Regional Meeting organizers have made a passionate appeal to the 700 conference participants during the Closing Ceremony on May 9. The M8 Alliance declaration covers 12 priority actions aimed at improving health and healthcare across the world.

"We must prepare ourselves to confront numerous health challenges. With this in mind, the Regional Meeting of the WHS sets forth solutions. The message is clear: interdisciplinarity is key and health professionals, public authorities, community groups and civil society must work hand in hand in order to give our fellow citizens a world where they can thrive and be healthy," states Hélène Boisjoly, Dean of the UdeM Faculty of Medicine and WHS 2017 President.

The established priorities can be categorized according to the four greater subthemes of the conference:

New frontiers in medical treatments

We are living in a globalized world that is increasingly generating more diverse societies. This new reality must be taken into account by focusing on inclusive approaches that:

- Ensure new state-of-the-art treatments and diagnostics are accessible to populations within developed countries, countries in transition, developing countries alike;
- Introduce new technologies, including precision medicine, human genome engineering, and stem cell applications, while addressing ethical issues;
- Adapt innovative medical treatments to aging populations and to the increased number of patients living with neurodegenerative diseases;
- Prepare the healthcare system to better address viral infections and antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Health and healthcare benefits for different populations

In pluralistic societies, it is essential to accept and promote leadership, as well as to engage communities involved in establishing priorities and means for healthcare and social services delivery. In this regard, we recommend:

- Offering high-quality, safe healthcare in a timely manner to entire populations;
- Respecting Aboriginal autonomy, culture, and knowledge, especially in matters of health governance;
- Welcoming and treating migrants and people affected by crises and climate change with special attention directed toward to women and children;
- Offering safe and healthy environments for workers especially those who work in extreme conditions.

Environmental, social, and cultural determinants of healthcare

The health of individuals and populations are determined by the environment in which they work, study, socialize, recreate and receive treatment. Taking these health determinants into account in order to protect and promote healthcare and equity incontrovertibly requires:

- Developing a scientific knowledge base that allows for an understanding of how living environments create favourable conditions for promoting health and preventing disease;
- Adopting evidence-based approaches to equitably transform environments by involving healthcare professionals, stakeholders working outside the health sector, industry representatives, community groups, and civil society;
- Evaluating the impact of interventions implemented and widely sharing evaluation findings in order to continuously improve systems and actions that shape life settings.

Medical training for optimal healthcare

Training curricula for physicians and other healthcare professionals as well as their extra curricular activities, should prepare them to fully assume their role as citizens and actors of change in order to promote a more stable, fair and just world. To achieve this end, we must:

- Adapt training for healthcare professionals to the realities of globalization with its risks and opportunities all the while maintaining the technical and caring expertise required for the adoption of these practices.

For the first time in North America, the WHS Regional Meeting brings together 700 participants and 80 speakers from various health-related backgrounds. Speakers include Jane Philpott, Health Minister of Canada, Gaétan Barrette, Quebec Minister of Health and Social Services, and Joanne Liu, international president of Doctors without Borders.

The WHS Regional Meeting is an important gathering for the M8 Alliance, a collaborative network of 24 universities and research centres spread across 24 countries.

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