



# IAGG-GARN

## News Release

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Dear Colleague,

We are happy to update you with the most recent actions setup by the IAGG-GARN Network. It highlights IAGG's interest in older people's health and the need to promote research in many geriatric fields. Frailty is a specific syndrome that can easily be identified. With the assistance of appropriate specialists and with a few tools, frailty prevention should be made available in all health facilities around the world. We hope that these actions will raise awareness and help you implement frailty into clinical practice in your country.

### **1. WHO Knowledge Network on Frailty and Sarcopenia**

IAGG-GARN was commissioned by WHO's Department of Aging and Life Course to setup a group of 15 international experts to finalize a background paper on Frailty intended for the 2015 WHO Global Report on Ageing and Health. Held on October 8-9, 2014 at WHO Headquarters in Geneva, the meeting's aim was to raise awareness on the need to identify, assess and implement frailty around the world. In addition, the group worked on the development of a simplified geriatric assessment tool to be used in primary health care by non-specialized health professionals in low & middle income countries. The background paper will be available shortly on the IAGG-GARN website at <http://www.garn-network.org>

## 2. Interview of Dr John BEARD, Director, WHO's Department of Ageing and Life Course (ALC)

John Beard, MBBS, PhD, is an Australian physician who initially worked in primary health care, including several years as medical officer for an Aboriginal Medical Service. From 1991 he held a wide range of senior public health and academic roles in Australia, followed by three years as Senior Epidemiologist with the New York Academy of Medicine in the USA. Appointed in 2009 Director of WHO's Department of Ageing and Life Course (ALC), he supports the international community to meet the challenges, and to realize the potential benefits, associated with the rapid ageing of their populations.



*1. WHO's world program on aging:* In 2013, the World Health Assembly agreed to ageing becoming one of the work priorities for WHO. To deliver on this commitment, a number of concrete processes have been commenced. These include the development of a World Report on Ageing and Health to be released on Oct 1 2015. The Report will summarise the current situation and state of knowledge on ageing and provide a framework for future action. This will be followed by a Global Strategy and Action Plan (complete with performance indicators), that would be endorsed by the 194 WHO Member States. With the support of AgeUK, WHO has also commenced a program on Knowledge Translation that works with individual countries to help them identify priority issues and develop evidence based policy. The program was piloted last year in Ghana and this year is being undertaken in China. The WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities now includes over 220 cities responsible for close to 100 million people, all committed to become better places in which to grow old (see <http://www.agefriendlyworld.org> for details). WHO has also been collaborating with the Lancet to develop a series on ageing that will be released on November 3.

*2/ Frailty, its importance for WHO:* Frailty is central to WHO's thinking on ageing which will seek to refocus health systems from approaching older people as vessels of independent diseases to instead focusing on the functional capacity and resilience of people across the life course. This holistic perspective will be used to promote the need for older person centred and integrated health and social care. While there are many definitions of frailty, it is a crucial point on the continuum of functioning where an older person becomes particularly vulnerable to adversity. Identifying this vulnerability (and those people at risk of developing it) and addressing their needs in a comprehensive way, needs to be central to any health system response. To progress this, WHO is working with IAGG to develop a background paper on frailty that will feed in to the World Report and hopefully provide a platform for further work in this area. WHO is also working with researchers in India and experts from around the world to provide guidelines on how to manage frailty and other geriatric challenges in low income settings. WHO website <http://www.who.int/ageing/en>

### 3. IAGG-GARN Silver Book on Frailty

The publication and launch of the Silver Book on Frailty was realized under the auspices of the IAGG-GARN Network in collaboration with the Toulouse Gérontopôle. The aim of this “Silver Book” is to raise awareness about the necessity to further implement frailty into clinical practice.

The book will be published in a special issue of the Journ Frailty Aging (JFA) <http://www.jfrailtyaging.com>. It will also be distributed during the next International Conference on Frailty and Sarcopenia Research (ICFSR2015) that will take place on March 23-25, 2015 in Boston, USA.

**Reminder of the abstract submission deadline: November 18, 2014.**

Visit the congress website for more information at <http://www.icfsr.com>

### 4. IAGG-GARN website

Visit the IAGG-GARN website and see all the centers involved in Frailty research at <http://www.garn-network.org>

Best regards,

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