

European Respiratory Society Statement on Harnessing innovation for public health in the WHO European Region 2025-2030 (agenda item 12)

74th meeting of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe
29-31 of October 2024

The European region is faced with a complex set of health challenges. While the proposal for a new strategy importantly emphasises “the need for innovation to promote healthy ageing and creating living environments that do not contribute to illness,” there is also an obligation to address the health challenges we are facing now.

Technological advances present a major opportunity to promote health and alleviate the burden of disease. A new strategy for innovation for public health needs a major focus on risk reduction before disease development and identifying people early to minimise progression. Research is needed to further understand risks, including genetic, epigenetic, and environmental, the underlying mechanisms of disease development, and how non-pharmacological interventions, repurposed therapies, and new therapies can help tackle them. Additionally, improved care pathways through innovations such as remote monitoring, digital health, decision support systems, and artificial intelligence will be essential to address the growing burden of disease and promote healthy ageing.