



# A blueprint for dementia research



World Health  
Organization



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# Foreword

**Addressing dementia is one of the greatest health challenges of our generation.**

In the years ahead, societies and health systems will have to cope with a staggering increase in the number of people with dementia, which is set to reach 78 million by the end of this decade, with most of these people living in low- and-middle-income countries.

Now, more than ever, we need to work together as a global community, leveraging the unique knowledge and expertise that each of us has to offer. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have learned how fast we can advance research and development if we act in a coordinated manner. It is now time to translate these learnings to address another global health challenge that we've been confronted with for years: dementia. It is therefore timely for WHO to publish this blueprint for dementia research, the first WHO initiative of this kind in the context of non-infectious diseases.

This blueprint builds on and applies key lessons learned from previous WHO efforts to prioritize and coordinate research for infectious diseases, and considers the entire dementia research spectrum, incorporating diagnostics and therapeutics, as well as emerging scientific and technological advances such as artificial intelligence, multiomics, and biomarkers. It also encompasses epidemiology, health economics, care and carer research, risk reduction, and brain health across the life course. The blueprint emphasizes that advances in these areas will only be fully accomplished if appropriate and sustainable funding is allocated, diversity and equity become the norm, and people with lived experience are included throughout the entire research process.

Achieving these goals means reaching beyond our traditional ways of doing research and finding better strategies to coordinate between sectors and stakeholders. As a key component to support the implementation of the global action plan on the public health response to dementia 2017–2025, the blueprint for dementia research identifies knowledge gaps and defines actions and milestones to achieve strategic research goals. This blueprint is designed to provide guidance to policy makers, funders, and the research community on dementia research, making it more efficient, equitable, and impactful.

We must come together globally, and in a coordinated manner, to tackle dementia and halt the debilitating impact it has on people and communities.



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