

A letter of commitment to join WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities & Communities

Dear Officials of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities,

This is Chun Young-gee, the mayor of Tongyeong-si.

Tongyeong, the 'Land of the Sea' with three large islands and hundreds of small islands, has a total population of 120,551 (as of December 31, 2023).

Tongyeong's current population of senior citizens aged 65 or older is 23.8% of the total population, and the elderly population is expected to increase rapidly by 2028, when all of baby boomers turn to the elderly population from from the working-age population.

Tongyeong City enacted related municipal ordinances in 2019, established and implemented 60 projects in eight areas and evaluated the results of the three-year action plan for age-friendly cities (2021-2023), and became 27th South Korean city to officially join the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities in 2021.

Following the phase one, the second phase age friendly city of Tongyeong will set and implement the five strategic goals of "Proud Elders," "Respected Elders," "Happy Elders," "Safe Elders," and "Comfortable Elders," under the catchphrase of "A promised land of lifelong residence, age, Age-friendly City Tongyeong."

Instead of understanding the aging population as a social problem, but by actively creating an age-friendly city environment, we want to create a city where Tongyeong citizens of all ages can live safely and healthily while continuing to maintain self-esteem and independence even after they become the elderly, with all the generations communicating and living in harmony

with each other.

Tongyeong City's vision brand is "Land of Promise! Tongyeong, the Land of the Future 100 Years." City of active participation, city of harmony and caring, and city of healing and comfort have been set as goals of the municipal government. The goals are in line with the vision of the global network of age-friendly cities, which is to create a livable urban environment for citizens of all generations along with the elderly.

Tongyeong became a super-aged society in 2021, and was designated as population extinction zone in the year 2022. Considering the fastly aging population, developing the plan for an age friendly city to prepare policies and services to improve the quality of life of Tongyeong citizens is of utmost importance to the municipal government.

Tongyeong City joined the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities in 2021, successfully completed the phase one plan, and aims to take a step further as an age friendly city by developing the phase two plan in December 2023.

Tongyeong City would like to share our efforts with other members of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities and work together to create a better age-friendly city.

I hope to build a closer tie between the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities and Tongyeong. Thank you.

Dec. 2023.

Mayor of Tongyeong, Young-gee Chun

