

Meeting Report

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Impact of Population Ageing Research Development Programme

A Research Proposal Development Workshop

26–29 March 2018

Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan

*hosted and co-organized by Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan, and
WHO Centre for Health Development (WHO Kobe Centre – WKC)
in collaboration with the Japan Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare*

A research proposal development workshop on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Impact of Population Ageing in ASEAN countries was hosted and co-organized by the Kanagawa Prefectural Government and WHO Centre for Health Development, Kobe, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan, in Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan, from 26 to 29 March 2018.

The workshop had the following objectives:

1. To stimulate the exchange of information between short-listed ASEAN researchers who responded to the July 2017 WHO research call for proposals about UHC research relevant to the planning and strengthening of national health systems.
(http://www.who.int/kobe_centre/mediacentre/news/asean_loi/en/)
2. To support short-listed ASEAN research teams with the development of high quality health systems and public health research that is relevant to UHC and the pressures brought on by population ageing in accordance to calls for research by ASEAN Health Ministers.

Expected outcomes were as follows:

1. All ASEAN country research teams have proposals at the completed or advanced stage of development for final submission to WKC for funding consideration.
2. All ASEAN country teams have complete understanding of the WHO Research Ethics Review Committee (ERC) procedures and be prepared for the ERC submissions process.
3. All ASEAN country teams fully understand WHO's contracting procedures and reporting mechanisms.
4. All ASEAN country teams understand WKC's quality assurance framework for research.



Photo caption: Participants at the Research Proposal Development Workshop co-organized by WHO Kobe Centre and Kanagawa Prefecture on the theme of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Impact of Population Ageing in ASEAN countries. The participants were joined by Kanagawa Prefecture's Governor, Mr Yuji Kuroiwa (front row, fourth from the right), 26 March 2018.

Day 1 started with a summary by Dr Sarah Louise Barber, Director, WKC, about the outcomes and commitments of the July 2017 high level meeting, followed by a talk that offered perspectives on UHC from the viewpoint of Kanagawa Prefecture. Mr Yuji Kuroiwa, Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture, presented an overview of Kanagawa Prefecture's strategy for healthy longevity, including the introduction of Kanagawa Prefecture's Me-Byo concept, which aims to create a new social model for responding to a super-aged society. "ME-BYO" is the physical and/or mental condition of the healthy or sick. It is drawn from Kampo, or traditional Japanese medicine, which stresses that many people exist in a continuum between states of complete health and illness rather than inhabiting simple binary states of healthy and ill.

The remaining of the morning session focused on setting the scene for WKC's Programme of Research on UHC in ASEAN countries. WKC recognizes that different ASEAN countries are at different stages of economic and health systems development and also possess different capacities to conduct health systems research. As such, in order to enhance understanding of the objectives and goals of WKC's Programme of Research on UHC in ASEAN countries, WKC presented overviews on 1) the development of ASEAN health systems, past and present, within the context of population ageing and burden of disease, and implications for the realization of UHC; and 2) WKC's quality assurance framework for research.

Additionally, Dr John Beard, Director, Ageing and Life Course, WHO Headquarters, presented WHO's Global Action Plan and Strategy on Ageing, highlighting five priority areas for action between now and 2030. These five areas were: 1) commitment to action on Healthy Ageing, 2) age-friendly

environments, 3) health systems aligned to the needs of older populations, 4) systems for long-term care, and 5) better measurement, monitoring and research.

The afternoon session offered ASEAN research teams the opportunity to present their research proposals in order to enhance mutual understanding and stimulate discussions among researchers from different countries. The presentations and discussions highlighted the fact that health systems are the foundation for healthy ageing and good quality of life in older age. Discussions also indicated the importance of shifting away from dualistic thinking, such as illness/wellness and acute/chronic disease. In order to understand health in older age, it was necessary to consider what health or being healthy could mean, even in the face of chronic progressive illness.

To summarize, WKC's Programme of Research on UHC in ASEAN countries, Dr Laragh Golligly, Coordinator, WHO Press, WHO Headquarters, suggested that all the research projects possessed a common understanding of the struggles in executing effective UHC for older people in practice on the ground within communities in ASEAN countries. She proposed that all of the research and subsequent findings be aggregated and jointly disseminated so that the sum of the results could be understood as a holistic package, rather than disseminating them as disembodied data from individualized and unconnected programs of research.

Day 2 started with a morning session that provided support by WHO staff to individual projects. In the afternoon, participants made field visits to Kanagawa Prefecture's Life Innovation Center (LIC) in Kawasaki City and other health institutes in Kawasaki City's Tonomachi International Strategic Zone.



Photo caption: Participants of the Proposal Development Workshop on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Impact of Population Ageing Research Development Programme, visit AOI Universal Hospital in Kawasaki City, 27 March 2018.

Day 3 was dedicated to providing more support and guidance on key stages of the full protocol development. Besides tailored discussions with WHO staff, the following sessions provided participants with practical information to improve their proposals and disseminate their research results. These sessions were: 1) publishing in international journals; 2) contractual arrangements, budgeting and reporting; and 3) ethical considerations and quality control for research outcomes including requirements for the WHO ERC process.

Day 4 started with an additional session of support for individual proposals. Finally, at the last session of the workshop, each research team presented their revised research proposals, including individually tailored timelines and key milestones for implementing the project.

The following is the finalized list of revised research projects as presented by the short-listed teams:

1. Cambodia: Developing the foundation for a tailored approach to implement basic universal NCD care in Cambodia.
2. Indonesia: Developing a program to decrease family caregiver burden in the Yogyakarta region, Indonesia.
3. Lao People's Democratic Republic: Assessment of the adult population 60+ with low cognitive function in different areas of Lao PDR: implications for sustainable communities and health systems in the future.
4. Malaysia: Determinants of health status and Universal Health Coverage in older adults in selected populations in Myanmar and Malaysia.
5. Myanmar: Service availability, readiness and quality assessment of health services for population ageing in Myanmar.
6. The Philippines: Workforce development aimed at providing quality health and social care services for older adults in ASEAN countries through inter-professional training towards acceleration of Universal Health Coverage.
7. Singapore: Evaluating a novel enhanced community of care (ECoC) model for high-risk elderly in public rental housing in Singapore: What works, why and for whom?
8. Thailand: Enhancing family-based, long-term care using a model of community integrated intermediary care (CIIC) service for Thai elderly people in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
9. Viet Nam: Assessment of financial protection policies and their effectiveness in reducing out-of-pocket payment for health care in older populations in Vietnam.
10. Japan: Cross-border comparisons of prostate cancer treatment in Asia: A model study of a non-communicable ageing disease to assess the social and economic impact for the realization of Universal Health Coverage.



Photo caption: Participants receiving one-to-one support with WHO staff for their proposals.