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Title

The global need for assistive technology – a WHO perspective

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Summary

WHO estimates that there are more than 1000 million people now and 2000 million by 2050 would benefit from one or more assistive products. However, today only 1 in 10 people in need have access to assistive products, WHO wants to change this scenario.

Introduction

To support countries in realizing their obligations in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities towards increasing access to assistive technology, WHO has established the Global Cooperation on Assistive Technology (GATE) in partnership with international with international organizations, donor agencies, professional organizations, academic institutions and user groups.

This Global Cooperation has one goal: to improve access to high-quality, affordable, assistive products for everyone, everywhere - no one to leave behind. To ensure universal access, WHO has developed and launched priority assistive products list was during the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly in 2016 and now working with the Member states and other stakeholders for its implementation.

Methods

WHO used Delphi, Global Survey in 52 languages and a consensus conference to develop the WHO Priority Assistive Products List, which is the first step of WHO's GATE initiative towards improving global access to assistive products for everyone, everywhere.

WHO is also developing several tools for implementing APL and some of its key focused areas are:

1. Policy framework with financing options
2. Need Assessment toolkit

3. Specification, Standards and Procurement manual
4. Community-level training package and
5. Model of integrated AT service provision.

Results

Launch of the GATE initiative and Priority Assistive Products List (APL).

Conclusion

WHO is taking several steps for improving access assistive products for everyone, everywhere focusing more on 6P: People-centered care, Place or accessible environment, Policy, Products, Personnel and Provision.

References

WHO Priority Assistive Products List. Geneva World Health organization; 2016. available at http://www.who.int/phi/implementation/assistive_technology/global_survey-apl/en/