



Open Letter on Healthy and Active Ageing: A Collective Commitment to the Future

To Brazilian society, public managers, health professionals, educators, and all those committed to building a fairer and more inclusive country for all ages.

We are living through a historic moment of unprecedented demographic transformation. Brazil, once known as a young country, is rapidly moving toward becoming a nation with a significant elderly population. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), by 2025 Brazil will rank sixth in the world in number of older people, with its population of seniors having grown by 7.3 million between 1980 and 2000, totaling more than 14.5 million people aged 60 or older at the beginning of the 21st century.

This transition is, above all, a success story of public health policies and social and economic development. The increase in life expectancy reflects advances in medicine, improvements in sanitation, expanded access to education, and poverty reduction. However, it also poses complex challenges that require coordinated, innovative, and evidence-based responses.

It is in this context that we address this Open Letter to Brazilian society, calling on all sectors for a deep reflection on what it means to age with dignity, health, and active participation in social, economic, and cultural life. It is not only about prolonging life, but

about ensuring that the additional years are lived with quality, purpose, and full social integration.

The concept of active ageing, developed by the WHO, represents a fundamental shift in how we understand and approach old age. Far from being a stage of decline and dependency, active ageing is defined as the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and security with the aim of improving quality of life as people grow older.

One of the most effective strategies for its implementation is the creation of age-friendly cities and communities, a WHO initiative that mobilizes municipalities to develop environments that promote and facilitate healthy ageing.

Social and civic participation is a central aspect of this process. Older people must have opportunities to contribute their knowledge and experiences, maintain meaningful social ties, and actively participate in decisions that affect their lives. Community centers, volunteer programs, seniors' councils, and cultural activities are examples of essential initiatives.

Intergenerationality is another key pillar in promoting active ageing and building an inclusive society. More than simply enabling coexistence among generations, it is about intentionally creating opportunities for people of all ages to interact, learn together, and establish bonds that benefit the entire community.

In Brazil, the legal framework for intergenerationality is found in the Statute of the Elderly, Article 21, Paragraph 2: *"The elderly shall participate in civic or cultural celebrations, transmitting knowledge and experiences to other generations."* This provision formally recognizes the role of seniors as bearers of culture and wisdom while also placing on society the responsibility to ensure this exchange happens effectively.

The benefits of intergenerational programs are widely documented. For older adults, they help combat social exclusion, strengthen family and community ties, improve quality of life, build social capital, and reduce depressive symptoms. For youth, they provide learning about history, values, and life experiences, while fostering empathy, respect, and improved academic and social performance.

Given this context, we call for the development and implementation of integrated public policies that recognize active ageing as a strategic priority for national development. This includes municipal, state, and federal plans with clear goals, adequate resources, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Building truly healthy and active ageing requires both local and national efforts, but also international collaboration and knowledge exchange. In this regard, the International Network for Research on Gerontology and Ageing Care Systems – Rede Geronto is an example of how cooperation between countries can accelerate innovative and effective solutions.

The 2nd International Forum “Wise Experiences”, held on August 25 at the Legislative Chamber of the Federal District (CLDF) in Brasília, with the presentation of works scheduled for October 7 on Rede Geronto’s YouTube channel, is an expression of this collaborative approach. The event was organized by Rede Geronto in partnership with the CLDF’s Office for the Defense of the Rights of the Elderly (PRO60+), with the support of Rede Unida, the CIU/Uniser at the University of Brasília, the Graduate Program in Health Sciences and Technologies (PPGTS/UnB), the Graduate Program in Health Promotion (PPGPS/Unicesumar), the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Assistance at UnB/Ceilândia, ANACEU, the Ceilândia Seniors Association, the 2em1 Educational Portal, the Local Health Authorities (ASL) of Modena and Asti (Italy), and UDLA (Chile).

The Forum brought together experts, government representatives, educational institutions, health services, academia, and civil society organizations to discuss innovations and best practices in elderly care and health promotion, with the goals of:

- Promoting the exchange of knowledge and experiences on healthy ageing;
- Strengthening integration between institutions and services in Brazil and Italy;
- Discussing policies and innovations aimed at the health of the elderly population;
- Stimulating exchanges among researchers, parliamentarians, students, and society.

International collaboration in gerontology enables countries with different demographic trajectories to learn from one another. Brazil, undergoing an accelerated transition, can greatly benefit from the experience of countries like Italy, which have already developed advanced care systems for their older populations.

This Open Letter is signed by all who believe in a Brazil that is fairer, more inclusive, and age-friendly.

This document is presented in the context of the 2nd International Forum “Wise Experiences”, promoted by Rede Geronto in partnership with the Legislative Chamber

of the Federal District through the Office for the Defense of the Rights of the Elderly (PRO60+), and with the support of Rede Unida, CIU/Uniser at the University of Brasília, the Graduate Program in Health Sciences and Technologies (PPGTS/UnB), the Graduate Program in Health Promotion (PPGPS/Unicesumar), the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Assistance at UnB/Ceilândia, ANACEU, the Ceilândia Seniors Association, the 2em1 Educational Portal, the ASL of Modena and Asti (Italy), and UDLA (Chile).

Respectfully,

**International Network for Research on Gerontology and Ageing Care
Systems – Rede Geronto**

contato@redegeronto.com.br | www.redegeronto.com.br

Brasília, DF – Brasil