FORUM: World Health Organization

QUESTION OF: Promoting Social Awareness on Neurodiversity

MAIN SUBMITTED BY: Kuwait

CO-SUBMITTED BY: India

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION,

*Acknowledging* the work done by the United Nations thus far on the issue of promoting social awareness on neurodiversity through the use of campaigns such as World Autism Awareness Day,

*Further Acknowledging* that those with neurodiversity often face discrimination and intolerance, especially in nations without anti-discrimination laws in place for neurodiverse individuals,

*Seeking* to further the work and take progressive action in order to ensure that progress is made in the matter of awareness on neurodiversity,

*Recognizing* that the social model of neurodiversity seeks to change society in order to accommodate neurodiverse individuals,

1. Encourages all member nations to raise social awareness on neurodiversity by utilizing social media and mass media in ways such as, but not limited to:
   1. creating a social media campaign, supported by NGOs such as the Neurodiversity Foundation, National Autistic Society, etc. to inform and educate users about neurodiversity and to promote tolerance,
   2. collaborating with celebrities and prominent social media figures through the help of neurodiversity NGOs to promote the topic of neurodiversity and to promote tolerance, similar to the #ALSicebucketChallenge, where figures such as Bill Gates participated to raise awareness about the ALS disease, which would fall under the campaign in sub clause a,
   3. utilizing mass media platforms, especially in LEDCs (Less Economically Developed Nations) where social media platforms are not widely available) such as:
      1. local newspapers,
      2. radio broadcasts,
      3. flyers and posters,
   4. utilizing organizations such as the UN (United Nations) sub-organizations and NGOs to raise social awareness on LEDCs, whose population do not have access to social media to utilize platforms mentioned in sub-clause c to raise awareness, which include organizations such as:
      1. National Autistic Society,
      2. WHO (World Health Organization);
2. Urges all nations to teach students about the importance of tolerance and acceptance of neurodiversity through ways such as but not limited to:
   1. creating a district-specific committee comprised of both education experts and experts on neurodiversity that teach school students and raise awareness through ways such as but not limited to:
      1. developing units and courses to teach students about neurodiversity,
      2. providing resources to school administrators,
      3. assesses schools to provide monetary funding based on school financial need to allow them to better educate students on the topic,
   2. hiring neurodiversity experts at a local level and inviting guest speakers from NGOs such as the Neurodiversity Foundation, Autism Awareness, etc. to schools to speak to students and to inform them of the importance of tolerance and acceptance;
3. Further encourages all member nations to cooperate with other nations in researching neurodiversity to promote more awareness and remove harmful misconceptions on neurodiversity through ways such as but not limited to:
   1. holding annual conferences where representatives from different countries and organizations share and discuss new research findings,
   2. utilizing funding from organizations such as the United Nations or by large-scale fundraising and donations organized by non-profits (e.g. ALS Ice Bucket Challenge which raised over 115 million USD) to invest in research through ways such as:
      1. building research facilities that facilitate research for scientists from multiple countries and organizations,
      2. hiring neurologists and scientists to conduct the actual research is aforementioned facilities,
      3. redirecting some of the funds to carry out actions mentioned in clause 2,
   3. promoting cooperation between different research institutes through samples and data sharing across data banks so that better research could be conducted, especially for government-funded research facilities;
4. Calls upon all member nations to better support citizens with neurological differences to find jobs through ways such as but not limited to:
   1. supporting companies that have hiring initiatives for people on the autism spectrum through ways such as:
      1. providing government loans (especially to newly emerging companies),
      2. giving tax incentives and tax breaks to companies that have autism hiring programs,
   2. directing more funds into government job-training services for people on the autism spectrum to better support autistic people aiming to enter the workforce and using these funds to:
      1. provide monetary support to non-profit organizations that assist neurodiverse individuals to find jobs by helping individuals develop interpersonal and technical skills
      2. creating government facilities and schools that allow citizens on the autism spectrum to receive training on topics such as developing interpersonal skills in the workplace, developing interviewing skills, etc.;
5. Recommends nations to better support the development of neurodiverse children by fitting the education needs of such individuals through ways such as but not limited to:
   1. funding already-existing private schools that are tailored to meet the needs of neurodiverse children by creating a committee to assess and evaluate the private schools and to determine the amount of funding each specific school should receive,
   2. creating nationwide high-school neurodiversity programs and associations that promotes neurodiversity by allowing chapters at each school to conduct school events, create fundraisers, help teach neurodiverse individuals, help neurodiverse individuals adjust to school, etc.,
   3. creating a new branch of public schools aimed to help neurodiverse children, managed by an agency under the education ministry that better helps the development of such children through means such as but not limited to:
      1. hiring experts in teaching neurodiverse students to help government officials design the school system, ensuring to tailor to the needs of students by factoring in differences in learning approaches, behaviors, etc.,
      2. training new teachers without previous experience of teaching neurodiverse students on methods to better teach neurodiverse students, tailoring to specific needs,
      3. incentivizing teachers, especially if there is a shortage of them, by providing benefits such as more pay, paid vacations, etc.,
      4. restructuring schools biannually based on feedback from parents, students themselves, and others;
6. Further calls upon all nations to promote awareness on neurodiversity by creating, or improving upon anti-discrimination laws against neurodiverse individuals through means such as but not limited to:
   1. creating a multi-disciplinary committee composed of policy-makers, prominent members of neurodiversity NGOs, human rights activists, and neurodiverse individuals to discuss ways to improve upon current legislation, with input from different groups,
   2. improving upon legislation, with input from the committee mentioned above, to prevent involuntary participation in medical practices that violate human rights, such as:
      1. electro-impulsive therapies,
      2. chemical and physical restraints,
      3. forcibly put in psychiatric hospitals,
      4. over-prescription of medications and drugs,
   3. better monitoring these laws by providing more funding to already-existing agencies dedicated to enforce civil rights laws against discrimination;
7. Further recommends all nations to promote social awareness on neurodiversity by developing a better system to recognize neurodiverse individuals through screening children for possible types of neurodiversity by conducting voluntary interdisciplinary evaluations in medical facilities.