



Executive Summary

Purpose

Health and personal wellbeing are among the highest priorities for both the individual and for a whole society. Therefore, health and health care need to be more firmly integrated into societal and political agendas worldwide. To reach this goal and to improve the state of global health, all stakeholders need to collaborate closely to develop new visions to address global health challenges. The explosive progress of medical science and technology opens up exciting new possibilities for diagnosis, therapy and prevention. However, the mechanisms to facilitate and evaluate the implementation of innovations in health care are largely absent from global governance structures. Consequently, the huge potential of medical progress is far from being sufficiently realized.

As a measured, concerted response to this set of contextual factors, the Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin, together with the Université Paris Descartes, is organizing a high-level international conference, the World Health Summit, Charité Berlin on the occasion of the Charité's 300th anniversary. This event will bring together researchers, physicians, leading government officials and representatives from industry as well as from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and health-care systems. Its aim is to address the most pressing issues that medicine and health-care systems will face over the next decade and beyond and to develop cogent and timely responses regarding the health of populations worldwide. The Summit's results and recommendations will serve political, economic, and healthcare decision-makers with their advice and function as a roadmap for the future. As a global medical forum the World Health Summit aims at high visibility and sustainability.

Accordingly, the World Health Summit will be an ongoing forum. The first Summit will be held in Berlin, October 15-19, 2009, with 500 international participants. October, 10-13, 2010, the second World Health Summit will gather again to further advance this new initiative.

Challenges

The World Health Summits will recognize and reflect the fact that the international community now confronts substantial challenges of scientific and economic competition in a globalized world, the rapid development of new technologies, and other significant medical complexities, such as an aging population, the threat of new kinds of pandemics, health threats induced by a changing climate and rising costs for health care.

The molecular understanding of human evolution creates a new basis for biology and the scientific fundament of medicine. At the same time, there is a stronger inter-relationship between different research activities and between medicine, on one side, and economic forces and technology on the other.

Towards new solutions

The World Health Summit will therefore focus on this complex relationship between medicine, science, economy, civil society and politics while mapping out relevant ways in which all of these stakeholders can work more collaboratively on health care needs in the light of scientific progress. With such an integrative approach, the Summit aims at solution-oriented results to improve global health and health care systems. Establishing the World Health Summit as the foremost international gathering of its kind in health care, the Summit is envisaged to have an advisory role for governments, policy makers, and health-care professionals.

Partners

The creation of the World Health Summit is strongly supported by the German and French governments. President Nicholas Sarkozy and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel have endorsed the conference and extended their patronage of the 2009 Summit.

To give the project a firm academic basis, an international network of prestigious medical faculties and academies of medical science, the "M8 Alliance", is also being established. Its participants are:

1. Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin
2. Université Paris Descartes
3. Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, Moskow
4. Kyoto University Graduate School of Medicine
5. Peking Union Medical College (PUMC) - Peking Union Medical Hospital (PUMCH) & Shanghai Jiao Tong University
6. Imperial College, London
7. Monash University, Melbourne
8. Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore

As well as: the Inter Academy Medical Panel (IAMP), a global network of 65 national academies and the Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC)

The Alliance will be formally inaugurated at the first World Health Summit 2009. It will then act as a permanent platform for framing the future considerations of global medical development and health challenges.

Strong media partner, such as the Lancet, the Journal of Molecular Medicine and the Deutsches Ärzteblatt (German Medical Journal) support the Summit's visibility.