

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the report of the Regional Director;¹

Recognizing that advocacy for health in general, and particularly advocacy directed towards the fostering of individual and community responsibility for one's own health, is essential for achieving the goal of health for all;

Considering that rapid advances, in the electronic media in particular, offer new possibilities and new challenges for using the advocacy approach;

Noting the undoubted impact that well-designed health education and social marketing messages can have, with specific groups as their target, in modifying public behaviour, and their potential benefits in the health field;

Noting also that the social marketing approach is most effective when incorporated into the major health programmes of each Member State;

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to develop leadership in the field of advocacy for health, which will include the capability to motivate a wide range of health and media personnel in advocacy work, to manage communications, and to stimulate creative ideas in relation to health for dissemination through the mass media;

(2) to strengthen or to establish health education programmes in schools as well as in the community as an integral part of overall primary health care;

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director, in building up the capabilities of Member States in communication and health:

(1) to collaborate in strengthening the relevant institutions and in initiating training activities for planning, designing and executing social marketing initiatives for health, in the context of the health-for-all strategy;

(2) to continue programmes for improving the capability of journalists and others working in the mass media in reporting on health issues;

(3) to keep Member States informed of new developments in the field of communication and health;

(4) to promote exchanges of information on approaches, problems and successes in advocacy for health, using the mass media.

Ninth meeting, 14 September 1987

¹Document WPR/RC38/12.