ISPRM’s Statement

The International Society for Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (ISPRM) strongly supports the resolution on disability. From the point of view of rehabilitation medicine we would like to underline:

- that rehabilitation is a core health strategy which is
  - based on WHO’s integrative model of functioning, disability and health
  - and applies approaches to assess functioning, to optimize a person’s capacity, to strengthen the resources of the person, to provide a facilitating environment, and to develop a person’s performance
  - with the goal to enable persons with health conditions experiencing or likely to experience disability to achieve and maintain optimal functioning
- that equity of access to rehabilitation programs as well as to all health services is a basic human right and
- that “lack of reliable research hinders the development and implementation of effective rehabilitation policies and programmes” (WRD). Thus lack of research may be a barrier for persons with disability to improve in functioning.

This last point is addressed in the resolution in paragraph 2 (3) that deals with the need of data collection by using the ICF.

However, ISPRM is convinced that it is of great importance

- to urge member states to undertake and promote scientific research on functioning and disability, to strengthen international cooperation in research on disability, and to facilitate access to scientific and technical knowledge relevant to the lives and living conditions of persons with disabilities.

Even if this point is inherent in the resolution we suggest that it should be explicitly stated in the action plan that will be established as a next step.

All in all we strongly support the resolution, as it will be a big step forward to increase awareness on the situation of persons with disabilities worldwide and to overcome barriers for persons with disabilities and to empower them to achieve optimal functioning.

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