



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Global Coalition on Aging and Nutricia Call on Stakeholders to Leverage Nutrition as an Essential Component of Healthy and Active Aging

New report examines the health benefits of nutrition to maintain functional ability as we age

Highlights crucial role of medical nutrition to rebuild strength in the face of chronic disease and conditions of aging

(New York & Amsterdam – 14 November 2018) – Today, the Global Coalition on Aging (GCOA), in collaboration with Nutricia, released a new report titled ***Nutrition: A Solution for the Unprecedented Challenge of 21st-Century Aging***, which explains the need for policy-makers, health systems and individuals to focus on nutrition as a core element of healthy and active aging. The report recognizes that the rapid aging of the global population demands attention to nutrition as an under-recognized but powerful solution to the health challenges associated with aging.

“As we face an unprecedented demographic shift – the aging of our global population – our new report provides leaders around the world with a better foundation to understand the role of nutrition across the life course,” said Michael W. Hodin, PhD, CEO of GCOA. “It also offers a call-to-action for stakeholders to recognize and utilize nutrition to maintain functional ability, as well as to fight disease, as we age.”

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), functional ability, which enables older people to be and to do what they have reason to value” – and not merely the absence of disease – is the new metric by which we must measure health as we age. The WHO also recognizes that nutritional care, as a driver of healthy aging, should be integrated into health and social systems.

“Aging exhausts our reserves, which can make us more vulnerable to health conditions or traumatic health events like a fall,” said Prof. Dr. Juergen M. Bauer, MD, PhD, Center for Geriatric Medicine at Heidelberg University in Germany. “Nutrition is a key element in building and maintaining our reserves and can both play a role in overall health and have an impact on our recovery.”

Nutrition can be an important solution to measurably enhance healthy aging and combat conditions that often occur with aging, such as frailty, decreased bone and muscle mass and a compromised immune system. Malnutrition and physical inactivity can lead to muscle and bone mass loss, which in turn, can result in falls or other health problems requiring hospitalization, a poorer quality of life and a risk of increased mortality.

Research shows that patients suffering from malnutrition have 75% longer hospital stays, but conversely when optimal nutritional care is part of a comprehensive medical strategy, patients with access to medical nutrition have between 25% and 50% fewer medical complications compared to patients who receive only routine care.

“The nutrition choices we make throughout our lives have a substantial impact on our life-long health and day-to-day quality of life,” said Dominique Poiroux, Executive Vice President of Nutricia Advanced Medical Nutrition. “This is also true as people age, and especially if they are coping with illness or health issues. We need to revisit the role of nutrition, ensuring it is integrated into the care systems that support good health in old age.”

Report Summary: Good Nutrition Is a Powerful Solution for Combating Disease and the Conditions of Aging

The global population is aging very rapidly with a projected 2 billion people over the age of 60 by 2050 compared to 929 million today; and the oldest age group is growing even faster: by 2050, researchers project that 434 million people will be 80 or over – more than triple the number today. This will only magnify the already significant health and financial challenges for governments and societies. The report notes that more research will be needed to fully understand the impact of nutrition on specific populations, but it is also clear that promoting the benefits of good nutrition in older people represents a powerful opportunity to enable people to age in good health.

Governments, NGOs, academia, and industry all have important roles to play in supporting the health of older people. Even in countries with younger populations, bending the cost curve on health is essential today, and innovation should integrate solutions, like good nutrition, to combat disease and the conditions of aging.

Key recommendations from the report include:

- **Build on the trend of health literacy and individual health empowerment:** People are increasingly looking at good nutrition as a healthy lifestyle choice. This trend toward greater individual ownership of health can be leveraged into a lifelong commitment toward understanding nutrition as a crucial factor in healthy aging.
- **Launch public campaigns grounded in facts and evidence:** Governments, the private sector and the global healthcare community should work together to raise awareness about the role of nutrition in maintaining health and rebuilding strength as we age.
- **Conduct new research on the impact of nutrition on healthy aging:** The global healthcare community should engage in coordinated research to pinpoint the most effective nutritional approaches to deal with modern conditions of aging, such as muscle mass and bone density deterioration and frailty.
- **Make nutrition a centerpiece of the global health agenda focused on active and healthy aging:** Nutrition must be a core component of the work of international policy-making bodies, as well as for nation-state leadership convened on global health.
- **Engage new partners and test new approaches:** New and coordinated public private partnerships and coalitions will help explore new routes, care pathways and models toward healthy aging.
- **Lead a cultural change across the healthcare community:** Healthcare providers should have access to training in order to take a proactive approach to nutrition when managing chronic disease and conditions that inhibit healthy aging.

These recommendations included in the report require the engagement and education across all stakeholder groups: policy-makers, the medical community, caregivers, family members and older

people themselves.

“Policymakers need to be engaged in creating tailored solutions that work within each country’s health system,” said Hodin. “The public is focusing on nutrition, but it needs to be better understood in the context of aging, supported through research, and made a priority among healthcare providers.”

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About the Global Coalition on Aging

The Global Coalition on Aging aims to reshape how global leaders approach and prepare for the 21st century’s profound shift in population aging. GCOA uniquely brings together global corporations across industry sectors with common strategic interests in aging populations, a comprehensive and systemic understanding of aging, and an optimistic view of its impact. Through research, public policy analysis, advocacy, and strategic communications, GCOA is advancing innovative solutions and working to ensure global aging is a path to health, productivity and economic growth.

For more information, visit www.globalcoalitiononaging.com.

About Nutricia Advanced Medical Nutrition

Nutricia Advanced Medical Nutrition is a specialized business of Danone, focused on pioneering nutritional solutions that help people live healthier and longer lives. Nutricia aims to establish medical nutrition as an integral part of healthcare, to fulfill Danone's mission to bring health through food to as many people as possible.

Nutricia's extensive range of evidence-based nutrition products and services offer proven benefits and better patient outcomes. The company works with doctors and healthcare professionals in 40 countries to deliver better care and lower healthcare costs, serving patients in hospitals, care homes and in the community.

Nutricia offers nutritional products and services in the areas of oncology, critical care, stroke, frailty and memory loss, as well as pediatric care solutions for cow’s milk allergy, genetic metabolic disorders and faltering growth.

For more information, visit www.nutricia.com.