Outlook

Friday three - 5 April 2024

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International Longevity Centre UK

Latest news

ILC Friday three

- Reasons for optimism - more holistic occupational health
- Going for gold - imagine an Olympics for healthy ageing
- Healthy conversations - a pod, a blog and a video

Reasons for optimism - more holistic occupational health



According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, modern occupational medicine probably started in the 17th century with an Italian physician Bernardino Ramazzini, who advised his colleagues to ask about their patient's occupations to help understand the cause of a patient's complaint.

Initially, occupational health programmes were directed toward the treatment of injuries or diseases that resulted from or during work. However, during the Industrial Revolution it was soon apparent prevention was more economical than treatment. Even so, for decades preventing ill-health at work has tended to focus on protection against physical injury by machinery or toxic materials.

During the First and Second Industrial Revolutions, concern about the general health of workers grew, not only because of an interest in their welfare but also because it was good business. Attention to occupational health improved industrial relations, reduced staff turnover and absenteeism and lead to increased productivity.

Most workers globally don't even have access to basic occupational health services, which include prevention of occupational risks, health surveillance, and training in safe working. And there is inadequate knowledge and reporting of occupational ill-health.

However, Scandinavian countries such as Denmark lead the way in adopting a more holistic approach to healthy workplaces fostering greater autonomy and trust, valuing equality over hierarchy and prioritising work-life balance. Partly due to the work of organisations like What Works Wellbeing (which is sadly closing at the end of April), the UK too is waking up to the importance of wellbeing at work, not just physical health and safety.

The ILC's report "One hundred not out" called for a more holistic approach to mid-life MOTs and the development of Occupational Health and Learning Hubs alongside all JobCentres Plus to ensure access for all employees and self-employed people. Similarly, the Society for Occupational Medicine and Policy Exchange are calling for universal access to occupational health services. And, perhaps, policymakers are now listening.

Earlier this year, the UK Government announced the establishment of a New Occupational Health Taskforce chaired by Dame Carol Black to "review occupational health services available to employees across businesses of all shapes and sizes and then create a framework to support better employee health and wellbeing."

If you have any positive stories or solutions for ways policy needs to adapt to sustain our ageing populations, please tell us via the button below.

Going for gold - imagine an Olymics for healthy ageing



Imagine if there was an Olympics for healthy ageing. If your country was competing, how would it perform in our medal table? Would it get on the podium for life expectancy? Do you think it would win gold for preventative health?

These are some of the questions we're exploring as part of our Going for gold project that has been financially supported by Sanofi. In the run-up to the Paris 2024 Olympics, we'll be looking at how countries perform across a range of "healthy ageing" events and disciplines. With the 2024 Olympics just four months away, this Summer presents a perfect opportunity to engage with global policymakers and health stakeholders heading to Paris for the world's biggest sporting event.

Using existing data from ILC's Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index, as well as other global health data sources, we will be compiling our very own "Healthy Ageing Medal Table" ranking countries across eight events. We'll be using the titles of existing Olympic disciplines but putting our own spin on them, tying them to healthy ageing and prevention topics such as immunisation, physical activity, and life expectancy.

Our preliminary findings have highlighted some interesting results. While two countries stand out, other perhaps less obvious countries also perform well. So far, we've found:

- A country that competed at the Commonwealth Games, but never at the Olympics, wins both a gold and a bronze medal.
- Another country in gold medal place has never won an actual medal at the Olympics since first participating in 1920.
- Three countries have won more than one medal; two are from Asia, one is from Oceania.
- Two silver medal countries are in the Top 10 on our Index.
- One gold medal country has a population of 1,600, while another has a population of 126 million.

Over the coming weeks, we'll be releasing more details about our eight events and our medallists. Until then, have a guess at who our winners are by emailing us via the button below.

GUESS WHO?

Healthy conversations - a pod, a blog and a video



If you have time this weekend, do catch up with these conversations on healthy ageing.

Financial Times' The Next Five podcast: The Future of Preventative Healthcare
In the FT's The Next Five series, Tom Parker asks experts what will happen over the next five years and how it will affect our lives. In this episode on the Future of Preventative Healthcare, ILC's David Sinclair joins Kate Hashey, Director of Communications and Government Affairs at GSK and Murray Aitken, Executive Director of the IQVIA Institute for Human Data Science, offering insights on health care prevention in ageing societies, with a particular focus on vaccine uptake.

LISTEN HERE

In an ageing Europe, investing in preventative health is key
In a recent blog published by the European Public Health Alliance, Patrick Swain, ILC's Research and Development Manager draws on the findings from the ILC's Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index. While the average EU citizen can expect to live for an average of 81.2 years, the number of years spent in good health is just 70.7 years. EU Member States must take more action now to ensure a healthier, happier, more prosperous society in the future.

READ HERE

Promoting health through the life course: A focus on health span, not life span
If you were not able to attend our Future of Ageing Conference last December keep an eye out for the videos of certain sessions that we're publishing over the course of the year. In this session chaired by Cynthia Bullock, Deputy Director, UKRI's Healthy Ageing Challenge the speakers include:

- Dr Hannah Behrendt, Director, Health & Well-being, The Behavioural Insights Team;
- Jennifer Blainey, Director of Government Affairs, Novavax;
- Anna Dixon MBE, former-Chair, Reimagining Care Commission;
- Arunima Himawan, Senior Health Research Lead, ILC; and
- Prof. Dame Louise Robinson, Professor of Primary Care and Ageing, Newcastle University.

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