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Turning the Silver Tsunami into a Silver Lining ...

Healthcare is becoming more and more successful, allowing us to endure into an unprecedented old age. At the same time, in developed countries, the fertility rate is lowering. These two phenomena have led to what international organisations have been saying for years: the population is getting older. Now, the question of the ageing population is no longer a theoretical scenario earmarked for the future; we are engaging in the present – in the welfare state, the labour market, and in healthcare.

Growth isn't plateauing either; the rate of ageing is gaining momentum with the proportion of the globe's population aged over 60 years projected to continue rising from 12% in 2015 to 22% in 2050 (WHO 2018).

To meet this challenge, head-on, all nations, from emerging to established economies, must undertake a significant shift in their healthcare systems on both a micro and macro level.

Is healthcare ready to deal with the ensuing economic impact, pressures on sustainability of existing systems, need to adapt service delivery, and the broader implications of public health? How can technology be leveraged horizontally and vertically in the healthcare spectrum to accommodate the older patient? Is healthcare in denial about how ageist it is and how can management address such an entrenched and self-defeating stance? How can we go to the core of frailty and heal it before it develops? Does pharma have the answer on slowing down the ageing process altogether and can we learn anything about healthy ageing from 'Blue Zones,' the spots in the world with the highest percentage of octogenarians? Are we ready and willing to redesign healthcare?

In Silver Tsunami, expert contributors provide insight into the question of ageing from multiple healthcare perspectives. A silver lining is ahead: healthcare will be transformed and become more people-centred.

Elsewhere, we look at how Brexit could impact healthcare and how physicians can lead change effectively when the focus is on patient-centred healthcare. The merging of imaging and AI through a meeting of practical needs and bold innovation is also in the spotlight.

We hope this journal offers insights that take your practice to the next level. Let us know your news and views. ■

Happy Reading!



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