



Rotary

Rotarian Action Group
Healthy Pregnancies / Healthy Children

“PREPARING FOR LIFE”: ORGANIZE A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE

Join leaders, exchange ideas, take action: the following outline is a short roadmap to a multi-stakeholder round table conference ‘Preparing for Life’. Please contact the Rotarian Action Group Healthy Pregnancies / Healthy Children for further information, advice and references via www.raghphc.org.

For the benefit of a safe motherhood and the birth of healthy children the pre-conception phase is crucial. Ideally, future parents are aware of their responsibility for the next generation. Amply before conception of their child, they should be properly informed and counseled; they should create a safe and stable home; and they should take proper measures concerning their own health.

Various expert meetings and consultations led to scientifically sound pre-conceptive recommendations regarding environment, lifestyle, nutrition and health. These recommendations may differ geographically and may be prioritized depending on political, social and economic circumstances and the state of public health. Recommendations should be cohesive and lead to effective interventions with broad public and professional support.

For the implementation of an evidence based, effective, sustainable and accountable packet of interventions, a multi-stakeholder round table conference should be scheduled on a national level according to **WHO policy brief 2013**. For such a conference, each national Ministry of Health should ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of services and facilities needed for its organization (Resolution WHA 64.8, WHO, Geneva, 2011). Until now, this has been achieved in a minority of countries only.

Rotarians can play a major role in organizing such a stakeholder conference on a national level, or on a state or provincial level. A Rotary Club or District can take the lead through its varied vocational and co-operative character, its leadership and its widespread network. With such a definite and time-limited project for the community, Rotary creates awareness and initiates further professional collaboration to improve lives of mothers and children and their families.

JOIN LEADERS: PARTICIPANTS

The multi-stakeholder round table conference will gather all relevant organizations and institutions already working in pre-conception care through dedicated representatives of:

- patient/family organizations;
- community-based, social and religious groups, as well as women empowerment organizations;
- medico-scientific experts (public health and epidemiology, genetics, gynecology and obstetrics, pediatrics, etc.);
- governmental officials (peace and justice, public safety, environment, public health);
- schools and other educational or training institutions;
- industry (pharmacy, food, labor circumstances, etc.);
- PR and communication experts; and:
- health insurance organizations.

EXCHANGE IDEAS: SURVEY

The meeting shall provide a survey of:

- who is already doing what, how and for which target groups;
- what is already available (facilities, services, education, materials);
- what is lacking;
- what should be common priorities; and:
- options of existing ideas how to fill the gaps on a basis of continuity.

The conference could also facilitate in arranging distinguished experts to brief its participants, and in enhancing participation in the planning and realization of the business plan.

TAKE ACTION: PLANS AND PROJECTS

The outcome of the meeting can and should be focused on different levels:

- to create an opportunity to develop jointly a feasible action and business plan in line with existing documentation, reports and possibly new perspectives;
- to demonstrate best practices (from each other and from other countries in the region);
- to develop guidelines to acquire human and financial resources;
- to discuss concrete proposals such as the production of a national reproductive health passport, a nationally or regionally focused interactive web-based preparation for pregnancy, or a national or regional awareness campaign;
- to chart options for demonstration projects, best practices, or feasibility and pilot studies; and:
- possibly to establish a more permanent platform for the purpose of coordination, communication and continuity.