

News release

Toulouse, 12th October 2017

The World Health Organization designates the G rontop le of Toulouse as WHO Collaborating Centre

The World Health Organization (WHO) designates the G rontop le of the Toulouse University Hospital, as WHO Collaborating Centre for Frailty, Clinical Research and Geriatric Training. This nomination, starting 1st September 2017 for a 4-year period, confirms that the G rontop le is an internationally recognized innovating organization and a reference center in geriatrics, particularly due to its research work on frailty.

WHO's global strategy on Healthy Ageing

Today, for the first time in history, the majority of the world's population can expect to live up to 60 and older. Combined with a notable decline in fertility rate, this increased life expectancy leads to a rapidly ageing population around the world. It represents a major change and generates considerable impact.

According to WHO, a comprehensive public health action on population ageing is urgently needed. This will require fundamental shifts in how we think about ageing itself. [WHO's World Report on Ageing and Health](#) outlines a framework for action to foster «Healthy Ageing» built around the new concepts of functional ability and intrinsic capacity. This will require a transformation of health systems away from disease-based curative models and towards the provision of older-person-centered and integrated care ([see WHO video on integrated care](#)).

In this context the G rontop le of the Toulouse University Hospital has been designated WHO Collaborating Centre for Frailty, Clinical Research and Geriatric Training, thus supporting WHO's global world strategy on «Healthy Ageing».

The G rontop le's missions as WHO Collaborating Centre

As WHO Collaborating Centre, the missions of the G rontop le, conducted by Professor Bruno Vellas and Associate Professor Matteo Cesari, will be to:

1. **contribute to research:** the G rontop le will collect and analyse scientific data on functional and intrinsic capacities of older people, in compliance with WHO criteria.
2. **disseminate information:** the Toulouse centre will support WHO in the dissemination of its new world strategy on «Healthy Ageing», including the WHO Guidelines on Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE).
3. **develop promotion material:** the G rontop le will assist WHO in developing therapeutic education and medical training programs, for professionals in primary care and referral care centres. This material is intended for old persons with light, moderate or more severe needs. The Toulouse center will also contribute to implement good practice guides and learning tools corresponding to countries and resources.

A new dimension for French geriatrics

Since 2007, the Gérontopôle of the Toulouse University Hospital was commissioned several times by the French state health authorities to conduct research and develop actions on prevention in the field of aging, with a special focus on prevention of disability. By joining today, in 2017, an international network of WHO Collaborating centers, the Gérontopôle can highlight its expertise on the international scene.

But, beyond this prestigious recognition, its designation is a unique chance for France to discover the challenges of ageing and the good practices developed in other countries in the fields of frailty, clinical research and geriatric training. For the Gérontopôle, it also offers an opportunity to attract new industrial and financial partners, interested in setting up clinical trials and/or in developing new innovative products in geriatrics.

WHO Collaborating Centres in the world

WHO Collaborating Centres (<http://www.who.int/collaboratingcentres/en/>) are institutions such as research institutes, parts of universities or academies, which are designated by WHO Director-General to carry out activities in support of the Organization's programs. Currently, there are over 700 WHO Collaborating Centres in over 80 Member States working with WHO on areas such as nursing, occupational health, communicable diseases, nutrition, mental health, chronic diseases and health technologies.

To date, WHO has designated 11 centres worldwide that dedicate their work to ageing issues but the Gérontopôle is the only one devoted to frailty and clinical research.

The Gérontopôle of the Toulouse University Hospital

In 2007, the Toulouse Gérontopôle was the first French center to have obtained the label "Gérontopôle" with the support of the Regional Health Agency (ARS). Since its inception, the Gérontopôle was commissioned four times by the different Ministers of Health and Veteran Affairs to conduct research and develop actions on prevention in the field of ageing. Today, this innovative organization is recognized as a national and international reference center in geriatrics. Its three strategic axes are: Alzheimer's disease, frailty and maintaining autonomy, clinical research in nursing homes.



WHO - Collaborating Centre for Frailty,
Clinical Research and Geriatric Training

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