

2nd NİLÜFER ONE HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

FINAL DECLARATION

4 Nov 2024, Nazım Hikmet Kültürevi



In the 2nd Nilüfer One Health Symposium, organized with the theme "Zoonotic Diseases" in cooperation with Nilüfer Municipality and the Bursa One Health Platform; the inevitable interaction of human, animal, and environmental health was discussed on a scientific and political ground. In the sessions held within the framework of the Zoonotic Diseases main theme, it was emphasized that a single discipline (medicine, veterinary medicine, or environmental sciences) cannot be successful alone and that preserving this integrated structure is mandatory.

1. Key Findings and Conceptual Framework

Health is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity; it is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being. In this context, the fundamental factors determining health are "social determinants" such as peace, shelter, education, food security, a sustainable ecosystem, and social justice.

1.1. Definition: One Health is an equal and integrated cooperation strategy among all stakeholders (FAO, WHO, WOA, UNEP) at local, regional, and global levels for the protection of human, animal, and environment/ecosystem health.

1.2. Pandemic Lessons: The COVID-19 process has proven that humankind is forced to face zoonotic diseases when it destroys the environment and intervenes in the natural boundaries of animals. It has been understood that systems prioritizing only humans are not sustainable.

2. Zoonotic Diseases and the Scale of the Global Threat

Zoonoses, which are infections transmitted between vertebrate animals and humans, are one of the greatest threats to global public health.

2.1. Current Situation: Approximately **1 billion cases** of zoonotic origin and millions of deaths occur every year.

2.2. Future Risk: Approximately 60% of epidemic diseases are of zoonotic origin, and **75%** of new human pathogens identified in the last 30 years are of animal origin.

2.3. Triggers: Factors such as the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity, uncontrolled urbanization, international food trade, and poverty increase the risk.

3. Prevention Strategies

Combating zoonoses is only possible with integrated (human-animal-environment) strategies.

3.1. Measures for Animal Health:

3.1.1. Hygiene and Disinfection: Regular sanitation in shelters and living areas.

3.1.2. Vaccination: Use of genotype/serotype compatible vaccines in epidemic control.

3.1.3. Border Protection: Protection of boundaries between wildlife and human/domestic animal living areas.

3.2. Measures for Human Health:

Instead of treating after the disease occurs, preventive medicine that prevents risks should be taken as a basis.

3.2.1. Primordial Prevention: Improvement of risk factors (environmental and social conditions) at the societal level.

3.2.2. Paradigm Shift: A health perspective that sees humans not as the "owner of the ecosystem" but as "a part of it," and that is compatible with nature rather than fighting against it, should be adopted.

4. The Role of Local Governments and the Nilüfer Model

Considering the social determinants of health, local government decisions are policy choices that directly affect public health. Nilüfer Municipality has confirmed its commitment to the WHO's declaration on "Operationalizing the One Health Approach".

- **Good Practice Examples:** Works such as zero case success in nursing homes, free mask production, air/water quality monitoring studies, increasing sports and green areas, SPP (Solar Power Plant) projects, and compost culture demonstrate the critical role of local governments in preventive health services.

5. Conclusion and Joint Action Plan Recommendations

As symposium participants and stakeholders; we demand and pledge the implementation of the following principles and actions in order to increase the welfare of humans, animals, and the environment, and to survive in the age of climate crisis and pandemics:

5.1. Basic Principles

5.1.1. The necessity of interdisciplinary collaboration.

5.1.2. Intercultural equality, equality of rights and opportunities, socio-ecological justice.

5.1.3. Humans adapting to the ecosystem by adopting a "humble" approach towards nature.

5.2 Policy Recommendations and Concrete Steps

5.2.1. National Integration: The "One Health Joint Plan of Action" prepared by WHO, WOA, FAO, and UNEP should be adapted to national guidelines; local projects should be generated using EU funds.

5.2.2. Education Mobilization: A wide-ranging awareness campaign extending from children to adults should be conducted by integrating climate change, waste management, zoonotic diseases, and food safety issues into the curriculum.

5.2.3. Inter-institutional Coordination: An effective cooperation mechanism that reduces bureaucracy between public institutions and local governments should be established in the fight against zoonotic diseases (contact tracing, case management, prevention).

5.2.4. Special Project Proposal: Bursa Epidemiological Database: In Bursa, where rural and urban life are intertwined; a "Bursa Epidemiological Epidemic Diseases Database" should be established immediately for the purpose of early diagnosis of epidemics, prevention of spread, and monitoring of infection dynamics.

In conclusion; One Health policies that observe the right to a healthy life for animals and the environment should spread from the local to the general. We respectfully announce to the public that we, as academic chambers and civil society, are followers of the process and expect effective, concrete steps from central/local governments in this regard.

Compliers:

- Veterinarian Melike Baysal, Chamber President, Bursa Chamber of Veterinary Surgeons
- Mehmet Can Yılmaz, Nilüfer Municipality Climate Change and Zero Waste Directorate, Healthy Cities Project Coordinator (also the Turkish-English translator of this declaration)