

International Federation on Ageing and Bayer HealthCare Release Report Raising Awareness of How Pets Contribute to Healthy Ageing

The first-of-its-kind report investigates how pets may contribute to physical, mental and societal well-being, in an ageing global demographic

Toronto, Canada, September 25, 2014 – With advances in global public health, people around the world are living longer than ever before^[1]. In response to the ageing population, healthcare systems and governments are actively working to manage the expected healthcare costs associated with the ageing process and chronic conditions of older people. The health impact of pets on older people is explored in a new report published by the International Federation on Ageing, through an educational sponsorship from Bayer HealthCare. The report, “Companion Animals and the Health of Older Persons,” provides a comprehensive literature review into the ways pets contribute to the physical and mental health of individuals and the well-being of society.

“This field of research has important implications across generations and also for the future of our broader societies,” says Dr. Jane Barratt, International Federation on Ageing. “Many studies have broadly discussed how pets, such as dogs and cats, contribute to health by reducing anxiety, loneliness and depression, but until today have not yet been published in a single resource. This new report advances our understanding of the value of companion animals in the framework of human health and the broader society.”

The therapeutic benefits of companion animals is an area of study attracting increasing interest among health and social science professionals. “Companion Animals and the Health of Older Persons,” is a review of the research literature on companion animals and older people from 1980 to 2013, with two goals: to summarize the health, social and economic benefits of companion animals, animal-assisted activities and interventions in the care of older adults as determined through evidence-based research; and to use this unique data to inform future research in the fields of rehabilitation, active ageing and aged care policy and programs at local and national levels.

“The interaction between humans and animals is powerful. Animals can educate, motivate, and enhance the quality of life for people around the world,” says Michael Devoy, Chief Medical Officer, Bayer HealthCare. “Given the scope of this report, we are excited that this research has the ability to reach human healthcare practitioners, veterinarians, doctors, nurses, gerontologists, and social workers.”

Companion Animals & the Health of Older Persons Web Conference Press Event

Today, the International Federation on Ageing and Bayer HealthCare formally release “Companion Animals and the Health of Older Persons,” with a global web conference on the topic. Moderated by “America’s Veterinarian,” Dr. Marty Becker, and featuring panelists Dr. Jane Barratt, Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing; Dr. James Gillett, Chair of Health, Aging and Society, McMaster University; and Michael Devoy, Chief Medical Officer, Bayer HealthCare, the web conference provides detailed insights and narrative, framing the topic for journalists, policy makers and healthcare professionals. “This topic is timely and will become another way in which veterinarians and healthcare professionals can collaborate to solve challenges for humans and animals,” says Dr. Marty Becker. “As policy makers tackle the challenges associated with the oldest population the world has ever seen, it is important to consider the impact of companion animals to physical, mental and societal health.”

The “Companion Animals and Older Persons” press event will also feature a live Twitter feed, available @Bayer4Animals and @IntFedAgeing, using hashtags: #Pets4Health #Aging.

About the International Federation on Ageing

The International Federation on Ageing (IFA) is an international non-governmental organization with a

membership base of NGOs, the corporate sector, academia, government, and individuals. The IFA believes in 'generating positive change for older people throughout the world by stimulating, collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information on rights, policies, and practices that improve the quality of life of people as they age.'

About Bayer HealthCare

The Bayer Group is a global enterprise with core competencies in the fields of health care, agriculture and high-tech materials. Bayer HealthCare, a subgroup of Bayer AG with annual sales of EUR 18.9 billion (2013), is one of the world's leading, innovative companies in the healthcare and medical products industry and is based in Leverkusen, Germany. The company combines the global activities of the Animal Health, Consumer Care, Medical Care and Pharmaceuticals divisions. Bayer HealthCare's aim is to discover, develop, manufacture and market products that will improve human and animal health worldwide. Bayer HealthCare has a global workforce of 56,000 employees (Dec 31, 2013) and is represented in more than 100 countries. More information is available at www.healthcare.bayer.com.

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^[1] [United Nations Population Fund \(UNFPA\), Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge](#)