



This month, we celebrate historic leadership transitions, global advocacy wins, and inspiring local initiatives across the Commonwealth. From the appointment of the Commonwealth's first African woman Secretary-General to momentum on a UN treaty for older people's rights, progress is in motion. We're also spotlighting impactful work from our Chapters in Kenya and India, welcoming new members, and sharing insights from global conversations on ethical health workforce strategies.

As always, thank you for being part of our growing community working to ensure older people are recognised, valued and supported to live well in an all-age-friendly Commonwealth.

MEET THE NEW SECRETARY- GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH



On 1 April 2025, Hon. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, former Ghanaian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, officially took office as Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. She succeeds Patricia Scotland, whose nine-year term concluded in March. Botchwey makes history as the first African woman—and only the second African ever—to lead the 56-nation association, which represents over a third of the global population and more than a quarter of United Nations member states.

She said

“The world we woke up to today is unlike any we have seen in our lifetimes. The consequences of lower economic growth, increased defence expenditures, and a frayed multilateralism will affect our pockets directly, increase unemployment and poverty, reduce social protection and weaken our resilience to shocks.

“The value of our Commonwealth stands in bold relief, in a time like this. For over 75 years, the Commonwealth has been a unique and powerful force for good. Now we must seize the moment to realise the transformation our societies seek.”

Inaugural Speech

COMMONWEALTH TRADE AND INVESTMENT SUMMIT



Andrew Larpent OBE, Founder of CommonAge had the opportunity to connect with **David Stevens** of StandardsWise International and **Dame Carol Black GBE**, The Commonwealth Secretary General's Special Envoy on Ageing Well, at the Commonwealth Trade and Investment Summit held at The Mansion House in the city of London.

The focus was on fostering meaningful networking and encouraging investment into Ageing Well initiatives across the Commonwealth, with a shared commitment to advancing innovation, collaboration, and sustainable approaches to support healthy and dignified ageing for all.

COMMONWEALTH DAY



On Monday, 10 March, millions of people across the Commonwealth celebrated [CommonwealthDay](#) with festivals, fairs and faith-based services. The day brought together 2.7 billion Commonwealth citizens across the 56 member countries in celebration of their shared values and in pursuit of a common future. The 2025 theme is 'Together We Thrive'.

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UN TREATY ON OLDER PEOPLE'S RIGHTS GAINS MOMENTUM

[\(A New International Agreement Could Boost Protections for
One of the World's Most At-Risk Populations \)](#)

The United Nations Human Rights Council on April 3, 2025, began an intergovernmental process to draft an international human rights treaty on older people. The consensus resolution is an important victory for human rights and multilateralism at a moment of increasing international uncertainty.

Older people around the world experience a wide range of human rights violations on a daily basis. They include violence and mistreatment; age-based discrimination; social, economic, and political exclusion; denial of access to care and support services; inadequate social security; exclusion from climate change responses; and abuses in armed conflict.

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ACCELERATING POSITIVE HEALTH OUTCOMES IN THE COMMONWEALTH

(The Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Health (CACH) Meeting)



The Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Health (CACH) convened to discuss the key meeting health outcomes for the upcoming Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting in May 2025. Chaired by the Government of Kiribati, the CACH meeting included Jacqueline WM Wong, Vice Chair, CommonAge and representatives from member countries, regional bodies including ECSA-HC and CARICOM, and accredited organisations, including the Commonwealth Health Professions Alliance and CommonAge. Discussions were wide-ranging and included sustainable financing, climate resilience, non-communicable diseases - including cancers, mental health, digital innovations and healthy ageing. Contributions to the agenda items were also made by other health professionals and policymakers from Commonwealth member states who were online. On healthy ageing, CACH engaged with Dame Carol Black, the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Ageing Well, who shared key areas from her publication, Ageing Well in the Commonwealth.

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IFA's 17th Global Conference on Ageing

9 – 12 September 2025 , Cape Town, South Africa



An event where inspiration meets engagement.

Join us for an insightful and impactful event dedicated to exploring the diverse dimensions of ageing and its implications on society. As the world's population continues to age, it's imperative that we come together to address the challenges and opportunities associated with this demographic shift. Our conference features thought-provoking keynote addresses, inspiring symposiums, skill-building workshops, interactive oral and poster sessions and most importantly the voices of older people from around the globe.

The 17th Global Conference on Ageing, organized by the International Federation on Ageing (IFA), is scheduled for September 10–12, 2025, in Cape Town, South Africa. This conference aims to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders—including advocates, researchers, policymakers, industry leaders, healthcare professionals, caregivers, and individuals passionate about ageing issues—to explore and address the multifaceted aspects of ageing in society.

- **Keynote Addresses:** Insights from internationally renowned speakers.
- **Symposiums:** Discussions on current research and best practices.
- **Workshops:** Skill-building sessions for professionals and caregivers.
- **Oral and Poster Sessions:** Opportunities to present and engage with research findings.
- **Voices of Older People:** Platform for older adults to share experiences and perspectives.

The conference will delve into various themes, including Age-friendly Environments, Family and Intergenerational Dynamics, Immunization for All Ages, Capacity Building in Low- and Middle-Income Countries, Healthy Ageing, Digital Technologies in Practice, Economic Aspects of Ageing, Human Rights, Long-term Care, and Brain Health across the Lifespan.

Early bird registration began on May 1, 2024, with discounted rates available for IFA members, delegates from low- and middle-income countries, and students or older individuals. The conference expects over 1,200 attendees from more than 70 countries, offering a unique platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration to drive positive change for ageing populations worldwide.

[Register Here](#)

CommonAge Country Chapters Updates



KENYA CHAPTER

AgeWatch Africa Foundation Hosts Workshop to Empower Retired Football Legends

Richard Waindi, founder of AgeWatch Africa and Head of our Kenya Chapter, played a key role in organising workshops held in Nairobi on December 18, 2024 and January 24, 2025. The events brought together former legendary footballers from the Nyanza and Western regions and focussed on providing practical solutions to emotional, mental and financial hurdles often faced by retired players. Through collaborations with experts and stakeholders, the workshops aimed to foster long-term support systems for these sports icons. The event was graced by legendary footballers like Bobby Ogola, Peter Dawo and key officials from Kenya Football Welfares Association (KEFWA).

The workshops included interactive sessions on personal finance management, entrepreneurship, mental health care and community leadership, tailored to meet the unique needs of retired athletes. Additionally, it served as a platform for networking, collaboration and resource-sharing among former players and industry stakeholders.

AgeWatch Africa Foundation is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the lives of aging populations through advocacy, education and targeted interventions. Its programmes are designed to promote wellness, financial security and mental health for individuals in their post-retirement years. The foundation is committed to supporting aging populations across Kenya, with a particular focus on athletes who often face unique challenges after their careers. This initiative is part of the foundation's broader mission to enable individuals to live with dignity and purpose.

In the news: <https://youtu.be/4x9VUCsnDE8?si=X9V4fbbgavcSp648>

[Read More](#)

Train the Trainer Success story - Dementia Care Training in Kenya

On April 2nd, 2025, our Kenya Chapter and Charis Eagle Springs successfully organised a Train-the-Trainer Programme on Elder Care, building on the expertise gained by Margaret Njagi (Vice Chair, Kenya Chapter) through a CommonAge-led initiative. The participants were enthusiastic and eager for more training opportunities. They expressed a strong commitment to sharing their knowledge, engaging others, and supporting the CommonAge Kenya Chapter in achieving its mission.

This training—developed in collaboration with TAFTA and led by Fulbright Scholar Dr Renu Abraham Varughese—focussed on dementia care, neurological diseases & disorders associated with old age. The Programme was designed to create a ripple effect across organisations. By empowering trainees to become trainers themselves, we're not just raising awareness—we're transforming aged care practices from within.

INDIA CHAPTER

Setting the Stage for an Age-Friendly Initiative

The CommonAge India Chapter team, Mansur Dalal, Chair; Dr Renu Varughese, Director and Head India Chapter; Jiji Philip, Vice Chair; along with Dr Praveen Pai, Chairman, CEDAC finalised the draft proposal for the first on the ground initiative to roll out a comprehensive agenda on an age friendly city with a dedicated centre and with tie ups with a local medical college and council.

The Community Ageing Resource Center (CARC) in Mundiappally is pioneering a proactive ageing model in Kerala, integrating healthcare, learning, and social participation. Partnering with Believers Church Medical College and CEDAC, it fosters independence, intergenerational collaboration, and economic engagement, aligning with WHO's healthy ageing framework to reduce hospitalisations and enhance social inclusion.



(L to R Mansur Dalal, Chair; Dr Renu Varughese, Director and Head India Chapter; Jiji Philip, Vice Chair; Dr Praveen Pai, Chairman, CEDAC)

The Mundiappalli Model, developed by Believers Church Medical College, enhances community-based geriatric care. Initially focused on homecare and palliative services, it expanded in 2024 with a dedicated geriatric centre in Mundiappalli. Partnering with CEDAC and CommonAge India, the model integrates WHO's Healthy Ageing Framework, emphasizing preventive care, social inclusion, and economic participation. The Community Ageing Resource Center (CARC) now leads this effort, reducing hospitalisations and empowering seniors.

Through CommonAge's international network, the initiative will establish academic linkages fostering joint research projects, and training programs, aligning research outputs with the WHO Healthy Ageing Framework. This academic integration will not only build evidence-based age-friendly interventions but also position the Mundiappally Model as a national and global reference for community-driven geriatric care and education.

MEET OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



Maria McLaughlin-Rolfe (Pacific)
Group General Manager, Blue Care at
UnitingCare, Queensland



Kaye Coates (Pacific)
Head of Clinical Practice at Southern Cross Care
Queensland



Dr. Tonymon A.O (Asia)
Assistant Professor in the Department of Social
Work of St. Albert's College Autonomous, Kerala,
India



Margaret Njagi (Africa)
Vice Chair of Kenya Chapter and Director of
Charis Eagle Group.

Lets Hear it from the BOARD



The Global Ageing Network

Roundtable 2: Joseph Musgrave, (CEO of Home & Community Care Ireland) moderated a thought-provoking discussion with panellists Mansur Dalal (Chair, CommonAge) and Dr Robyn Stone (Senior Vice President of Research at LeadingAge and Co-Director of the LeadingAge LTSS Center at UMass Boston). The session explored the ethical dimensions of recruiting and supporting foreign-born healthcare workers, as the global shortage of health human resources reaches a critical tipping point.

The discussion centred around: - Strategies used by countries to attract foreign-born workers, the impact of these programmes on countries of origin and how global collaboration can ensure ethical and sustainable workforce solutions.

[Tune In Here](#)

CommonAge Membership Badge



We have developed this exclusive badge for members to support their credibility and commitment on working towards an all age-inclusive Commonwealth, as well as being part of a Commonwealth affiliated organisation that is committed to ensuring older people are fully recognised in society, and are supported and enabled to live well.

Accreditation



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THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE
FOR THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PEOPLE

Our Board

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Join us!

We are a charity and our voluntary Board of Directors is committed to making changes to older people's lives across the Commonwealth.

Help us deliver the ideal of an "All Age Friendly" Commonwealth that values the dignity of older people, respects their wisdom and experience, and that leaves no one behind in the journey towards a sustainable, peaceful future.

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Get in Touch! We'd love to share your stories and help us to grow the conversations about our mission and vision, and to celebrate the great achievements of organisations and older people themselves.

Thank you for your continued support.

Team CommonAge

Visit our website www.commonage.net for more information about our work and for regular updates.

Email Reneta Dsouza, Executive Assistant at secretariat@commage.org or connect with us on social media.



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