

## **Procedures for the Development and Approval of AGE-WELL Position Papers in Technology and Aging**

### **I. Definition of an AGE-WELL Position Paper**

An AGE-WELL Position Paper is an official statement by this organization. It uses evidence and expert advice to summarize best practices in the technology and aging field as related to the mission and goals of the AGE-WELL NCE, including issues related to technology development and implementation, practice, and policy. Position Papers provide a rationale for decision-making and professional skills for researchers, clinicians, practitioners, care providers, industry, and policy-makers.

### **II. The Contents of an AGE-WELL Position Paper**

Some specific topics and content for these position papers may include:

- A comprehensive literature review and summary of current scientific evidence in a specific area of technology and aging.
- Documented best practice on a specific topic related to technology and aging.
- Focused summaries of the evidence and best practices that can assist in defining processes or preparing justification for service delivery.
- Comprehensive reviews of the benefits and application of these technologies, practices, and services.

### **III. The Uses of an AGE-WELL Position Paper**

Some specific uses of these positions papers may include:

- A guide to clinicians and practitioners, including caregivers, in the development and provision of interventions.
- A pedagogical tool in colleges and universities to guide education in technology and aging related knowledge and skills.
- A clinical teaching tool for educating clients or other team members.
- Evidence in organized efforts for policy and regulatory changes.
- A contribution to the development of a professional standard of practice.

### **IV. Development, Submission, and Review of an AGE-WELL Position Paper**

1. The idea for a Position Paper generally arises from an issue affecting areas of research, development, practice, and policy for devices or services in the technology and aging field, or defining professional roles. While topics typically are generated from within AGE-WELL, a topic proposal may also come from outside of the

network, with sponsorship by an AGE-WELL member (i.e. a WP/CC leader, project investigator, trainee, or network partner).

2. The appropriate Workpackage (WP) or Crosscutting activity (CC) coordinates the development of a Position Paper.
3. The WP or CC leader appoints or accepts the offer of a volunteer Group Leader (GL).
4. The primary responsibilities of the GL are:
  - a. to lead and manage the development (or review and updating of) a Position Paper; and
  - b. to submit a 1 - 2 paragraph proposal to the WP/CC leader and the AGE-WELL Scientific Director(s). The proposal outlines the rationale for the Position Paper, the plan for creating the document (e.g., who will participate, the expected tasks, the resources needed, etc.), and the anticipated impact of the Position Paper, and
5. The GL assembles a Working Group (WG) of three or more individuals to create the Position Paper. This group must be transdisciplinary, and may consist of clinicians, practitioners, researchers, manufacturers, policy makers, and end-users who have experience and expertise in the topic.
6. When a draft is ready for circulation, all pages must be marked as “Draft,” including the front cover. Care should be taken to ensure access to the content for all WG members.
7. The completed draft will be reviewed by the WP/CC leader as well as by the AGE-WELL Scientific Director(s), with feedback being provided to the WG as needed.
8. Following the review by the WP/CC leader and the AGE-WELL Scientific Director(s) the WG should seek input from the broader AGE-WELL community. The GL submits the Draft Position Paper to the AGE-WELL Network Management Office, who will post it on to the AGE-WELL Community (via Forum) for a 30-day comment period. All AGE-WELL members are notified electronically of the beginning and end dates of the comment period. AGE-WELL members are provided with a means to submit or direct comments or questions regarding the Draft to the WG. The WG will only consider comments from respondents who provide name, affiliation, and email.
9. Following this opportunity for member input, the WG updates the draft based on this feedback.
10. At this point, the WP or CC leader submits the updated Position Paper to the AGE-WELL Research Management Committee (RMC).
11. When submitted to the RMC, the Position Paper is accompanied by a chronology of the developmental steps, feedback acquired, and responses to key points, including a summary of substantial disagreements about the content of the paper.

12. The RMC reviews the updated Position Paper within 30 days and either votes to approve or provides comments or requests for changes to the WG. The purpose of this review is to allow the RMC to determine whether the updated draft Position Paper aligns with AGE-WELL's mission and standards for communication.
13. When a Position Paper is completed and has preliminary RMC approval, the GL forwards the finalized draft to the leader of the originating WP or CC, who confirms that all changes recommended by the RMC have been addressed and incorporated.
14. The Position Paper will then be passed to the Board of Directors for their approval.
15. The final Position Paper will be posted on the AGE-WELL website and promoted through its various online and social media outlets.

#### **V. Expiration of AGE-WELL Position Papers**

- AGE-WELL Position Papers are valid for five years from RMC approval date.
- The process for updating the Position Paper parallels the steps for developing a new Position Paper can begin on the fourth anniversary of the existing paper
- The Leader of the sponsoring WP or CC notifies the original GL and/or the primary author, and invites him or her to lead the review of the Position Paper. If this individual is unwilling or unable to take on the task, the opportunity is offered first to co-authors, and then to members of the sponsoring WP or CC.
- After five years, if not updated or re-submitted for RMC review, the original Position Paper is moved to a section of archived Position Papers on the AGE-WELL web site.

#### **VI. Expiration of AGE-WELL Position Papers**

- If the GL and the co-authors wish to submit their Position Paper for consideration in an external peer-reviewed journal or conference, they must choose a lead author, and go through the standard submission and peer review processes that is required for that particular journal or conference.
- The GL and co-authors must consider in their submission that the original Position Paper will continue to be made available through AGE-WELL.

#### **VII. Paper Outline**

- 1) Title: Use title that includes "AGE-WELL Position Paper on topic, (date)"
- 2) Introduction (or Purpose)
  - a) Statement of Position
    - i) The Position
    - ii) Populations & Subpopulations Affected (who benefits under what circumstances and who would not)
    - iii) Contraindications (if the position is an intervention)

- b) Provide Reader with Context of the Expertise of the Authors: e.g. Who has participated in development, their credentials, and the process of developing the position paper. (In this way the reader can judge the competence and context of the position paper.)
- c) Relevance of Position
  - i) AGE-WELL and Constituencies (include implications on AGE-WELL related activities such as practice, professional education, policy and research. How should this document be used?)
  - ii) Significance to Society
- 3) Rationale for the Position: This section must demonstrate that all of the evidence has been considered.
  - a) *Review of the Literature.* Summarize the relevant literature, emphasizing peer-reviewed sources published in the past five years. The literature review should be comprehensive and include both literature that supports and literature that refutes the position held by the WG.
  - b) *Limitations of the Current Literature.* Recognizing that research may not always be available on some innovations or issues related to assistive technologies, this section should summarize both supports and controversies related to the position paper in this section. This section should include related peer-reviewed scientific sources, credible clinical data and/or case examples, and expert opinion from cited sources.
- 4) Relation of this Position Paper to other Position papers or AGE-WELL Official documents Papers: Note if this paper serves as a stand-alone position or if it relates to and existing position paper or AGE-WELL official document.
- 5) References: Include all references used in the position paper document including references to other AGE-WELL documents and citations for personal communications.
- 6) Appendices: Should include supporting materials
  - a) Summary of the Position Paper Development (Process and Chronology Used to Develop and Review the Position Paper)
  - b) Detail of the Development and Review Process (including Expertise Contributing to the Position Paper)
  - c) Additional supporting materials as determined by the WG.