Osteoporosis and fragility fractures in the United Kingdom

Osteoporosis is a chronic disease which weakens bones and leaves people at risk of a fragility fracture. These fractures are often life-changing events, bringing pain, isolation and dependency.

- Around 520,000 fragility fractures occur each year.¹
- 22% of women and 7% of men over 50 in the UK are living with osteoporosis.¹
- 2017: over £4.5bn Fragility fracture costs¹
- 2030: nearly £6bn
- Only 38% of people who have a fragility fracture are followed up in primary care.²
- Only 1 in 5 people who are prescribed osteoporosis medication are still taking it after one year.²

As populations age, osteoporosis and fragility fractures will become more prevalent. This issue is under-recognised at policy level. If governments are to take seriously their commitments to gender equality, healthy ageing and healthcare sustainability, they must recognise the critical importance of addressing osteoporosis and fragility fractures as an immediate priority.

We are calling on policymakers to take action in five key areas:

1. **Building a system that works:** policies for scrutiny, accountability and investment
2. **Catching it early:** detection and management in primary care
3. **Getting people back on track:** facilitating multidisciplinary care post-fracture
4. **Supporting quality of life as part of healthy and active ageing:** prevention of falls and fractures in later life
5. **Engaging patients and public:** awareness, activation and self-management

Find out more at: hpolicy.co/osteo

References