GLOBAL HEALTH DRIVE

Sir, This week more than 25 of the world’s leading health organisations, including the World Heart Federation, British Heart Foundation and World Stroke Organisation, signed the Mexico Declaration on Circulatory Health, the most comprehensive global declaration for the prevention of heart disease and stroke. Every three minutes someone dies as a result of heart disease and stroke in the UK; the healthcare costs alone are estimated to be up to £1 billion a year. The global picture is more frightening: more than 17 million deaths each year. We know the causes of heart attacks and strokes and how to prevent them, so we need action. That requires political leadership to create and implement national action plans to prevent disease.

The World Health Organization’s aim is to reduce premature mortality from heart disease and stroke by 25 per cent by 2025, and we have now pledged to achieve this together; this is an international call to action to tackle one of the most pressing health issues of our time.

Professor Nicky Topham, President, World Heart Federation; Simon Gillespie, Chief Executive, British Heart Foundation and President of the European Heart Network; Professor Stephen Davis, MD FRCP Edin FRACP, President, World Stroke Organization; Professor Michael Kidd, President, World Organization of Family Doctors; Professor David Wood, President-Elect, World Heart Federation; Professor Martin McKee, President, European Public Health Association; Professor John Ruckley, Professor of Applied Exercise Science, University of Cumbria.