



Agenda Item 11: Health Promotion in the Sustainable Development Goals

Honourable chair, distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the International Council of Nurses, International Society of Nephrology and World Heart Federation, we welcome the draft Regional Action Plan on Health Promotion in the Sustainable Development Goals (or SDGs).

Addressing the region's burden of non-communicable diseases (or NCDs) will be essential to achieving both Health Goal 3 and goals beyond health, as NCDs remain the leading cause of death and disability among WPRO Member States.¹ Both cardiovascular disease (CVD) and chronic kidney disease (CKD) – and shared risk factors such as hypertension and diabetes – contribute significantly to this burden.

Engaging in health promotion to create healthy environments and policies designed to protect public health is, therefore, a vital component of achieving the SDGs, for which practical solutions exist.

For example, investment in infrastructure and security that supports active transport and free open-air exercise in community parks can promote physical activity, while taxes on tobacco and sugar-sweetened beverages can reduce CVD risk factors and fund other interventions aimed at tackling the burden of NCDs.

Health workers also play a vital role in health promotion, through providing counselling on lifestyle changes – such as tobacco cessation – to support individuals and communities to stay healthy.² They can also enable person-centred care to maximise community and individual self-reliance, participation and control.

We reiterate our support for the Regional Action Plan, and to complement ongoing health promotion efforts in the region, we call on Member States to act in 3 key areas:

- 1. Prioritize the development and implementation of multi-sectoral action plans on NCDs.** As the report notes, misaligned policies have the potential to negatively impact public health; ahead of the UN High-level Meeting next year, governments should fast-track action to achieve policy coherence on NCDs.
- 2. Adopt an integrated approach in developing screening and disease management programs for NCDs.** This approach can keep services focused on the patient, by recognizing the synergies between the four major NCDs and other diseases such as kidney disease.
- 3. Allocate resources to health professionals to engage in health promotion.** It is important that health professionals prioritize those most in need, address the social determinants of health, and ensure collaboration with other sectors to promote public health.

Thank you for your attention.

¹ http://www.wpro.who.int/topics/noncommunicable_diseases/en/

² World Health Organization. Global HEARTS Technical Package, page 25, accessed at: <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/252661/1/9789241511377-eng.pdf>