



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations



World Federation of
Occupational Therapists



ERS

EUROPEAN
RESPIRATORY
SOCIETY

every breath counts



COTEC

Council of Occupational Therapists
for the European Countries



medicus mundi
international network
health for all



europaean
public health
alliance

whpca
worldwide hospice
palliative care alliance



**Alzheimer's Disease
International**

The global voice on dementia



fighting heart disease
and stroke
european heart network

NGO Joint Statement on: 5(c) Action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases in the WHO European Region

66th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe

Honorable chair,
Distinguished guests,

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reaffirms that prevention and treatment of NCDs should be a priority. We congratulate the ongoing work of WHO Europe on this issue, commending the health-in-all-policies approach with intersectoral planning and, in particular, the high investment and commitment to a Life-course approach, through the adoption of the Minsk Declaration.

The challenges facing healthcare services for NCDs include an ageing population and increasing numbers of patients with long-term conditions and multi-morbidities.

We believe that investing in efficient, goal-oriented management of chronic diseases should include, inter Alia, palliative care where appropriate, physical and occupational therapy, and psycho-social support. Such holistic strategies, rather than short-term treatment of symptoms, will ensure improved well being and alleviate suffering, while decreasing healthcare costs. These strategies will also reduce over-diagnosis and overtreatment of chronic disease that we are witnessing and which defeats the purpose of NCD management.

Aside from the direct management of NCDs, promotion of healthy lifestyles should be a priority for WHO and member states. Increasing physical activity is one example of an effective way to prevent the downstream effects of an unhealthy lifestyle. We commend and ask for more initiatives such as the Physical activity strategy for the WHO European Region 2016–2025, and welcome all efforts to



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ensure physical, mental and social well-being, particularly among children, adolescents and vulnerable groups.

Moreover, we need to go beyond the individual behaviour approach and address the social and environmental determinants of health, including inadequate living and working conditions. This requires addressing the political and economic systems that drive unhealthy lifestyles and social and health inequalities. There are diverse potential negative health effects from industry action, such as pharmaceutical pressure leading to overdiagnosis and overtreatment, or air pollution, the most significant environmental determinant affecting citizen's health. Furthermore, industry products, such as foods high in sugar, salt, saturated and trans fat, alcoholic beverages and tobacco, can also limit the impact of any policy targeting a reduction in the prevalence of NCDs.

We hope the implementation of this action plan will take into account already ongoing processes such as the UN Interagency Task Force on NCDs, for a joint and coordinated action to reduce NCDs burden worldwide.

Thank you for your attention.

Supporters of this Statement:

- **IFMSA:** International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)
- **WFOT:** World Federation of Occupational Therapists
- **COTEC:** Council of Occupational Therapists for European Countries
- **MMI:** Medicus Mundi International
- **WHPCA:** Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance
- **ERS:** European Respiratory Society
- **ADI:** Alzheimer's Disease International
- **EPHA:** European Public Health Alliance
- **IAHPC:** International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care
- **EHN:** European Heart Network