

Dear IPA member society leaders,

This September, the UN will hold its third High Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases.

Last week, the first report of a WHO Independent High-Level Commission on NCDs was published, available [here](#).

The report provides recommendations on six themes:

1. **START FROM THE TOP:** Political leadership and responsibility.
2. **PRIORITIZE:** Governments should implement priorities within the overall NCD and mental health agenda, based on public health needs.
3. **EMBED AND EXPAND NCDs WITHIN HEALTH SYSTEMS AND UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE:** Governments should reorient health systems to include health promotion and prevention and control of NCDs in their UHC policies and plans, according to national contexts and needs.
4. **COLLABORATE AND REGULATE:** Governments should increase effective regulation, appropriate engagement with the private sector, academia, civil society, and communities, building on a whole-of-society approach to NCDs.
5. **FINANCE:** Governments and the international community should develop a new economic paradigm for funding action on NCDs and mental health.
6. **ACT FOR ACCOUNTABILITY:** Governments should strengthen accountability to citizens for action on NCDs.

While the report contains many strong recommendations, there is also cause for concern. It does NOT recognize the needs of children or the importance of NCD prevention and treatment throughout the life-course. The entire NCD agenda has been slow to recognize the importance of childhood and adolescence in forming health-promoting and avoiding health-harming habits. Children die from preventable NCDs, including Cancer, Heart Disease, Asthma, and Diabetes, as well as from other special health care needs. All children are at risk of NCDs and could benefit from services and policies that prevent NCD risks. Children and adolescents need health systems that plan for services that address their needs.

Pediatricians need to send a clear message about the shortcomings of the report, and about the importance of including children and youth in the NCD agenda. The opportunity to do so is in the “outcome document” for the high level meeting. This outcome document will be negotiated by representatives of our countries at the UN this summer.

What can you do?

Request a meeting with AND/OR write to your national health ministry – to both explain the issues and ask their support for the inclusion of young people in these the high level meeting outcome agenda. Ask your government to advocate for including children, adolescents, and young people in implementing and tracking the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly for [target 3.4 on non-communicable diseases](#) (NCDs).

Urge your government to support an outcome document that highlights the importance of addressing the growing burden of NCDs and the need for action for all people, at all ages, to

ensure healthy lives, and promote wellbeing. To ensure young people are not left behind in SDG/NCD actions needed by countries – it is especially important to integrate NCD prevention with other reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent population health approaches addressing prevention as well as initiation of risk factors, including for tobacco and secondhand smoke, obesity and malnutrition, mental health, and injury.

A sample advocacy letter asking for your government’s support follows this memo. For more information or technical support in addressing this call to action please contact Jonathan Klein, MD, MPH, NCD Strategic Advisory Group Chair at jklein60068@gmail.com

Ask your government to:

- a) Support including language on “the importance of inclusions of prevention and treatment of NCDs for children, adolescents, and young people,” in the outcome document for the third high level meeting;
- b) Support recognizing that NCDs “must address the entire life-course” for target 3.4 (NCD reduction);
- c) Make a statement during the HLM or include a point in their statement referring to the importance of young people to SDG 3 and NCD prevention and control;
- d) Support inclusion of young people from youth-led and youth advocacy organizations at the UN High Level Meeting.

If you are part of a national NCD Alliance or other coalitions supporting youth/health – ask them to also support these efforts to encourage your country’s government to include prioritizing children, adolescents, and young people in the SDG and NCD agendas.

SAMPLE FOR LETTER OR EMAIL TO NATIONAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Hon. MINISTER FULL NAME – OR YOUR BEST CONTACT
Minister of DEPARMENT
COUNTRY

DAY, DATE, MONTH YEAR

Dear Minister LAST NAME:

I am writing on behalf of {NATIONAL PEDIATRIC SOCIETY}, representing pediatricians in [COUNTRY], on a matter of urgency to child and adolescent health.

As you likely know, this fall the United Nations will hold it’s third ever High Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases. However, the health target for non-communicable diseases [Sustainable Developmental Goal 3.4: By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality

from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being], in its current form, does not adequately address the unique health challenges faced by children, adolescents, and young people.

So no one is left behind, we urge our government to:

- 1 Include explicit language on the importance of not leaving children behind in prevention, treatment, and management of NCDs;
- 2 Support including language on “the importance of inclusions of prevention and treatment of NCDs for children, adolescents, and young people,” in the outcome document for the third high level meeting;
- 3 Support recognizing that NCDs “must address the entire life-course” for SDG target 3.4 (NCD reduction);
- 4 Make a statement during the HLM or include a point in your statement referring to the importance of youth to SDG 3 and NCD prevention and control;
- 5 Support inclusion of young people from youth-led and youth advocacy organizations at the UN High Level Meeting.

To discuss these issues further, I would like to request a meeting or call - this coming week, or at your earliest convenience. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME
AFFILIATION
CONTACT DETAILS