

130th Session Executive Board, World Health Organization, Geneva, January 2012.
Item: 6.1 Prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases.

Speaker: Dr. Julia Seyer, World Medical Association WMA, Joint Intervention.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the World Medical Association, the International Council of Nurses, the International Pharmaceutical Federation, the World Confederation for Physical Therapy and the World Dental Federation, which form the World Health Professions Alliance. We represent the collective views of more than 26 million health professionals, through national associations in over 130 countries.

We commend WHO and Member States for their leadership of programmes to reduce the NCD burden particularly through the UN high level meeting in September 2011 and the adopted Political Declaration. While progress has been made, we have concerns.

In particular, we urge WHO and Member States not to lose sight of person-centred care and people-centred public health, when considering noncommunicable disease targets, indicators and a global monitoring system.

We ask for a common approach that addresses the link between NCDs and social determinants of health, with a focus on prevention, and on factors that influence behaviour and associated health risks.

We call for a holistic approach encompassing physical, mental and oral health and health services, addressing NCDs' shared risk factors, the elimination of inequalities and helping to ensure access to health care as a basic human right.

We call upon Member States to strengthen health systems through a comprehensive approach with emphasis on primary health care and integrating prevention, specialised treatment and rehabilitation.

We encourage WHO and Member States to consider targets which address physical activity levels for children and adults; education and training on NCDs; and oral health.

Working together we can ensure that a child born today can look forward to a life span which is longer than that of his or her parents. We, as the representatives of the professional associations of 26 million health professionals, are committed to reducing the burden of NCDs.

Thank you.