

## Raising NCD voices at WHA 76

Language English



NCD Alliance side event on NCDs and UHC at WHA 76 / Gilberto Lontro

**The 76th World Health Assembly (WHA76) started this week, and we were there with members and partners to raise the voice of the global NCD community, supporting with various [events and resources](#) [1].**

As always, the NCD Alliance team began the WHA week by participating at the WHO Walk the Talk event on Sunday 21 May, also raising visibility of this year's Global Week for Action on NCDs and its theme of 'care'.



The official WHA76 programme started on Monday 22 May. In his opening remarks, WHO Director-General Dr Tedros underlined the crucial role of preventing diseases by addressing their root causes. “One of the key ways countries are doing that is through the use of health taxes in the fight against NCDs,” he noted. Dr Tedros also emphasized the need to accelerate progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the crucial role of primary health care as the foundation of UHC. We agree! Find out more in our [policy brief for the UN High-level Meeting on UHC](#) [2], scheduled for September 2023.

Our [22 May event](#) [3] on NCDs and UHC stressed that now is the time to fight for the inclusion of NCDs in the upcoming UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs. “UHC has been described as the single most powerful concept that public health has to offer, and a key instrument to enhancing sustainable human development,” said NCDA President Dr Monika Arora. Professor Stephen Jan of the George Institute for Global Health highlighted that UHC is crucial for those living with NCDs, especially in low- and middle-income countries where people who are adhering to treatment (of NCDs) are often incurring catastrophic costs - and many of those who are living with NCDs without these catastrophic costs are simply foregoing treatment partially or altogether.



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Accelerating action to advance towards UHC requires strong multisectoral partnerships. "To achieve UHC, we need governments, we need philanthropies, we need community-based organisations, we need people living with NCDs," said Gina Agiostratidou of the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. "Forming partnerships for developing solutions means engaging everyone, starting with people with lived experience, and then care providers, civil society and governments," added Ruchika Singhal of Medtronic Labs. See how our [advocacy briefing](#) [4] helped to prepare the global NCD community for WHA76.



A large crowd at our [23 May event](#) [5] heard an update by WHO NCD Head Bente Mikkelsen on Appendix 3 of the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs, aka the ‘best buys’ — a series of proven and cost-effective investments governments can use to fight NCD risk factors. “We have a really strong package of interventions that we can advocate for. This will also be the foundation for the integration of NCDs into UHC,” said NCDA Policy and Advocacy Director Alison Cox. Implementation of the best buys will be a huge challenge due in large part to interference by health harming industries, and will require meaningful engagement of people living with NCDs and technical support from WHO to national governments. Read [full coverage of this event](#) [6] in Health Policy Watch.



At an event hosted by World Heart Federation, Countdown to 2030: Are we on track to achieving SDG 3.4, NCD Alliance CEO Katie Dain spoke about the double pandemic of COVID-19 and NCDs and the need to prioritise population health as part of health security. Health systems need to respond to NCDs and be built so that they don't collapse in an emergency. Achieving resilient health systems demands the meaningful engagement of people living with NCDs, "whose lived experience complements technical expertise," added Ms Dain.



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[2] <https://actonncds.org/resources/2023/ncda-advocacy-priorities-2023-un-high-level-meeting-universal-health-coverage>

[3] [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_ekKtyJkQJWN0QgsaweXyg#/registration](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ekKtyJkQJWN0QgsaweXyg#/registration)

[4] [https://ncdalliance.org/sites/default/files/NCD Alliance Advocacy Briefing WHA76\\_Final.pdf](https://ncdalliance.org/sites/default/files/NCD%20Alliance%20Advocacy%20Briefing%20WHA76_Final.pdf)

[5] [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_IGbQrGPfRO2TSle4Krpf4w#/registration](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IGbQrGPfRO2TSle4Krpf4w#/registration)

[6] <https://healthpolicy-watch.news/ncd-advocates-call-for-stronger-global-action-to-curb-harmful-industries/>

[7] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/taxonomy/term/1560>

[8] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/taxonomy/term/919>

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[10] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/taxonomy/term/110>

[11] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/taxonomy/term/756>

[12] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/ncd-alliance-advocacy-priorities-for-the-2023-un-high-level-meeting-on-universal-health-coverage-uhc>

[13] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/join-us/2023-global-week-for-action-the-moment-for-caring>