



World Confederation
for Physical Therapy



19 July 2011

Your Excellency,

The World Health Professions Alliance WHPA, representing 26 million health professionals in 130 countries, is a committed participant in the ongoing United Nations debate on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).

On 16 June 2011, we made a number of recommendations to a UN Civil Society Hearing in New York, in anticipation of a UN Summit on NCDs on 19 September in the same location. It was our hope that those recommendations would be included in the 'Draft Outcomes' document of the 19 September Summit, an advance version of which was made available to us on 24 June.

In the event, this is not the case: the draft document is brief, fragmented and, in our view, lacks focus and a clear statement of actions, steps and priorities. We are deeply concerned by this: the aim of this letter is to solicit your support for the position expressed in our submission of 16 June in relation to ongoing negotiations on the 'Draft Outcomes' document.

In brief, our recommendations were:

- to adopt a holistic approach based on common risk factors. This approach, incidentally, would be equally applicable to communicable diseases.
- not to restrict the scope of the outcomes document to a limited number of diseases, but to include other areas, notably mental health and oral health. to focus on equitable access to health care as a human right so as to address the dramatic disparities within and between countries.
- to pay due attention to the link between noncommunicable diseases and the social determinants of health, with a particular focus on the broader factors that influence behaviour and associated health risks. These include the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, as well as societal influences.
- to strengthen health care systems through a comprehensive approach that places emphasis on primary health care and integrates prevention, specialised treatment and rehabilitation.

Please do not hesitate to contact WHPA for further information. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Robert Vianna

President of FDI World Dental Federation

On behalf of the members of the World Health Professions Alliance WHPA

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