Technical Advisory Group on Diabetes

Terms of Reference

The Technical Advisory Group on Diabetes (TAG-D) will act as an advisory body to WHO to further leadership and coordination role in promoting and monitoring global action against diabetes.

WHO’s aims in the area of diabetes include:

- **Leadership:**
  - On the prevention side, raise the priority given on global and national agendas on taking action to reduce obesity, especially among young people.
  - On the treatment side, raise the priority given on global and national agendas on taking action to improve access to diabetes medicines and technologies as part of primary health care strengthening efforts, in particular in low- and middle-income countries.

- **Global goods:** Bring all WHO tools available for the prevention and management of diabetes together in one package, both existing and new.

- **Country support:** Support efforts to set national coverage targets for diabetes, taking into account global ones (under development) to increase the number of people covered with quality essential health diabetes services and quality, safe, effective, affordable and essential diabetes medicines, diagnostics and health technologies, strengthen accountability, and improve monitoring of progress towards the inclusion of diabetes prevention and care as part of primary health care and universal health coverage.

The TAG-D will act as an advisory body to WHO in this field.

I. Functions

In its capacity as an advisory body to WHO, the TAG-D shall have the following functions related to diabetes:

a) To identify and describe current and future challenges in relation to WHO’s aims set out above;

b) To advise WHO on strategic directions to be prioritized;

c) To advise WHO on the development of global strategic documents; and
d) To propose other strategic interventions and activities for implementation by WHO.

II. Composition

1. The TAG-D shall have up to 12 members, who shall serve in their personal capacities to represent the broad range of disciplines relevant to diabetes including but not limited to expertise on early diagnosis and treatment, prevention, and cure for diabetes (and co-morbidities). In the selection of the AG members, consideration shall be given to attaining an adequate distribution of technical expertise, geographical representation and gender balance.

2. Members of the AG, including the Chairperson, shall be selected and appointed by WHO following an open call for experts. The Chairperson's functions include the following:

   - to chair the meeting of the TAG-D;
   - to liaise with the WHO Secretariat between meetings.

   In appointing a Chairperson, consideration shall be given to gender and geographical representation.

3. Members of the TAG-D shall be appointed to serve for a period of two years and shall not be eligible for reappointment beyond 2025 (i.e. the four high-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs). A Chairperson is eligible for reappointment as a member of the TAG-D, but is only permitted to serve as Chairperson for one term. Their appointment and/or designation as Chairperson may be terminated at any time by WHO if WHO's interest so requires or, as otherwise specified in these terms of reference or letters of appointment. Where a member’s appointment is terminated, WHO may decide to appoint a replacement member.

4. TAG-D members must respect the impartiality and independence required of WHO. In performing their work, members may not seek or accept instructions from any Government or from any authority external to the Organization. They must be free of any real, potential or apparent conflicts of interest. To this end, proposed members/members shall be required to complete a declaration of interests form and their appointment, or continuation of their appointment, shall be subject to the evaluation of completed forms by the WHO Secretariat, determining that their participation would not give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest.

5. Following a determination that a proposed member’s participation in the TAG-D would not give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest, the proposed member will be sent a letter inviting them to be a member of the TAG-D. Their appointment to the TAG-D is subject to WHO receiving the countersigned invitation letter and letter of agreement. Notwithstanding the requirement to complete the WHO declaration of interest form, TAG-D members have an ongoing obligation to inform the WHO of any interests real or perceived that may give raise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest.
6. As contemplated in paragraph II.4 above, WHO may, from time to time, request TAG-D members to complete a new declaration of interest form. This may be before a TAG-D meeting or any other TAG-D-related activity or engagement, as decided by WHO. Where WHO has made such a request, the TAG-D member’s participation in the TAG-D activity or engagement is subject to a determination that their participation would not give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest.

7. Where a TAG-D member is invited by WHO to travel to an in-person TAG-D meeting, WHO shall, subject to any conflict of interest determination as set out in paragraph II.6 above, issue a letter of appointment as a temporary adviser and accompanying memorandum of agreement (together ‘Temporary Adviser Letter). WHO shall not authorize travel by a TAG-D member, until it receives a countersigned Temporary Adviser Letter.

8. TAG-D members do not receive any remuneration from the Organization for any work related to the TAG-D. However, when attending in-person meetings at the invitation of WHO, their travel cost and per diem shall be covered by WHO in accordance with the applicable WHO rules and policies.

III. Operation

1. The TAG-D shall normally meet each year. However, WHO may convene additional meetings. TAG-D meetings may be held in person (at WHO headquarters in Geneva or another location, as determined by WHO) or virtually, via video or teleconference.

   TAG-D meetings may be held in open and/or closed session, as decided by the Chairperson in consultation with WHO.

   (a) Open sessions: Open sessions shall be convened for the sole purpose of the exchange of non-confidential information and views, and may be attended by Observers (as defined in paragraph III.3 below).

   (b) Closed sessions: The sessions dealing with the formulation of recommendations and/or advice to WHO shall be restricted to the members of the TAG-D and essential WHO Secretariat staff.

2. The quorum for TAG-D meetings shall be two thirds of the members.

3. WHO may, at its sole discretion, invite external individuals from time to time to attend the open sessions of an advisory group, or parts thereof, as “observers”. Observers may be invited either in their personal capacity, or as representatives from a governmental institution / intergovernmental organization, or from a non-state actor. WHO will request observers invited in their personal capacity to complete a confidentiality undertaking and a declaration of interests form prior to attending a session of the advisory group. Invitations to observers attending as representatives from non-state actors will be subject to internal due diligence and conflict of interest considerations in accordance with FENSA. Observers invited as representatives may also be requested to complete a confidentiality undertaking.
Observers shall normally attend meetings of the TAG-D at their own expense and be responsible for making all arrangements in that regard.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, observers may be asked to present their personal views and/or the policies of their organization. Observers will not participate in the process of adopting decisions and recommendations of the TAG-D.

4. The TAG-D may decide to establish smaller working groups (sub-groups of the TAG-D) to work on specific issues. Their deliberations shall take place via teleconference or video-conference. For these sub-groups, no quorum requirement will apply; the outcome of their deliberations will be submitted to the TAG-D for review at one of its meetings.

5. TAG-D members are expected to attend meetings. If a member misses two consecutive meetings, WHO may end his/her appointment as a member of the TAG-D.

6. Reports of each meeting shall be submitted by the TAG-D to WHO (the Assistant Director-General of the responsible Cluster). All recommendations from the TAG-D are advisory to WHO, who retains full control over any subsequent decisions or actions regarding any proposals, policy issues or other matters considered by the TAG-D.

7. The TAG-D shall normally make recommendations by consensus. If, in exceptional circumstances, a consensus on a particular issue cannot be reached, minority opinions will be reflected in the meeting report.

8. Active participation is expected from all TAG-D members, including in working groups, teleconferences, and interaction over email. TAG-D members may, in advance of TAG-D meetings, be requested to review meeting documentation and to provide their views for consideration by the TAG-D.

9. WHO shall determine the modes of communication by the TAG-D, including between WHO and the TAG-D members, and the TAG-D members among themselves.

10. TAG-D members shall not speak on behalf of, or represent, the TAG-D or WHO to any third party.

IV. Secretariat

WHO shall provide the secretariat for the TAG-D, including necessary scientific, technical, administrative and other support. In this regard, the WHO Secretariat shall provide the members in advance of each meeting with the agenda, working documents and discussion papers. Distribution of the aforesaid documents to Observers will be determined by the WHO Secretariat. The meeting agenda shall include details such as: whether a meeting, or part thereof, is closed or open; and whether Observers are permitted to attend.
V. Information and documentation

1. Information and documentation to which members may gain access in performing TAG-D related activities shall be considered as confidential and proprietary to WHO and/or parties collaborating with WHO. In addition, by counter signing the letter of appointment and the accompanying terms and conditions referred to in section II(5) above, TAG-D members undertake to abide by the confidentiality obligations contained therein and also confirm that any and all rights in the work performed by them in connection with, or as a result of their TAG-D-related activities shall be exclusively vested in WHO.

2. TAG-D members and Observers shall not quote from, circulate or use TAG-D documents for any purpose other than in a manner consistent with their responsibilities under these Terms of Reference.

3. WHO retains full control over the publication of the reports of the TAG-D, including deciding whether or not to publish them.