SELF-CARE INTERVENTIONS FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Communications Toolkit

1. Introduction to this toolkit
2. Overview: Background to self-care and key messages
3. Technical resources
4. Communications resources
5. Academic resources

Click to view the toolkit
Background to this toolkit

This toolkit supports communication on the *WHO guideline on self-care interventions for health and well-being*. This guideline provides a framework for self-care interventions, recommendations, good practice statements, and key considerations for implementation. The guideline is targeted towards policy-makers, programme managers, health workers, civil society, donors and researchers.

Self-care interventions offer solutions to support universal health coverage (UHC), improve health and well-being, and protect the underserved and vulnerable, including in health emergencies.

Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit contains standard language, versatile graphics and tailored resources to support stakeholders interested in disseminating and implementing the *WHO guideline on self-care interventions for health and well-being*.

What are the communication objectives for this toolkit?

- To raise awareness and the profile of the work and goals of WHO around self-care interventions.
- To provide a shared language for communication to support global, regional and national efforts around self-care interventions.
- To provide easy access to a comprehensive list of technical and communications resources on self-care interventions.
Self-care interventions during COVID-19

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has left countries around the world facing a prolonged triple challenge: mitigating the immediate health impact of COVID-19, reducing disruption to other essential health services, and managing the health of their populations as broader economic disruptions affect societies.

 Communities around the world have faced extreme losses, and the pace, scope and scale of the health system response demanded of countries has been unprecedented. Countries have adapted to the pandemic context, delivering more services through community networks and undertaking strategic shifts to ensure safe and timely delivery of services. In particular, the pandemic has placed demands on individuals to self-manage many health needs, and on informal caregivers — including family members, peers, friends and neighbours.
1: INTRODUCTION

Toolkit structure:

3 Technical resources
- Consolidated guideline
- Executive summary
- Global Values and Preferences Survey
- Evidence reviews

4 Communications resources
- WHO website
- Factsheets
- Videos
- Infographics
- Social media tiles
- Hashtags

5 Academic resources
- Evidence reviews
- Intervention implementation lessons
- Other academic resources

How to get involved:
- Access each resource online or by downloading
- Make use of each resource in your work environment
- Share widely across your networks
- Use social media tiles, messages and hashtags to spread the word
- Join the self-care community of practice
- Follow and participate in Self-care Month, held each year from 24 June through 24 July
2: OVERVIEW

What is self-care?
WHO’s definition of self-care is the ability of individuals, families and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a health worker. It recognizes individuals as active agents in managing their own health care in areas including health promotion; disease prevention and control; self-medication; providing care to dependent persons; and rehabilitation, including palliative care.

WHO website:
Self-care interventions for health

What are self-care interventions and who uses them?
Self-care interventions are evidence-based, quality drugs, devices, diagnostics and/or digital interventions which can provide full or partial interventions outside of formal health services and can be used with or without a health worker. Examples of self-care interventions include self-administration of injectable contraception, pregnancy and HIV self-tests, self-sampling for HPV and other STIs, and self-monitoring of blood glucose or blood pressure.

There are interventions that users have good knowledge of and feel comfortable using independently from the outset. Other interventions need to be provided with more guidance and support before they can be accepted and used independently. Self-care interventions should be linked to the health system and supported by it, thereby ensuring health system accountability.
What is the WHO framework for self-care interventions?

The framework for self-care interventions, like the guideline itself, supports people’s needs through comprehensive and integrated health services throughout the entire life course, prioritizing primary care and essential public health functions.

It also supports systematically addressing broader determinants of health through evidence-informed policies and actions across all sectors. Importantly, it is about acknowledging that individuals, families and communities can optimize their health as advocates for policies that promote and protect health and well-being, and as co-developers of health and social services.

Learn more
3: TECHNICAL RESOURCES ON SELF-CARE INTERVENTIONS

Consolidated guideline

This living guideline is also available on a user-friendly and easy-to-navigate online platform, which will allow for continual review of new evidence and information.

Download PDF version

Access interactive version

Guideline annexes and supplementary materials

Download PDF

Global Values and Preferences Survey results

The GVPS results informing the 2021 guideline will be available soon.

Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish versions of the executive summary will be available soon.
Classification of self-care interventions for health:
A shared language to describe the use of self-care interventions

Webinar on the classification document
WHO organized this webinar, hosted by The IBP Network, to present the recently published WHO classification of self-care interventions. This document aims to promote an accessible and bridging language for researchers, policy-makers, donors and health programme managers.
WHO Community of Practice on interventions

This CoP aims to gather and share current evidence. Specifically, this CoP is an online platform for stakeholder engagement and collaboration, and a space to share guidance and tools to support expanding the evidence base and implementation of the WHO guideline on self-care interventions for health and well-being. CoP members will be equipped with the knowledge and tools to raise awareness about self-care interventions. Participants from within and beyond the health sector are invited to join, including researchers, civil society, health workers, programme managers, policy-makers and donors.

WHO Academy learning module

Counselling and prescribing of contraception in pharmacies

Training of health workers – Competency framework and training modules.

Policy portal on self-care interventions for SRHR

Instructions on accessing the Self-care CoP
3: TECHNICAL RESOURCES ON SELF-CARE INTERVENTIONS

Ethical, legal, human rights and social accountability implications

Download

Economic and financing considerations

Download
HIV self-testing

WHO recommends self-care intervention flyers

3: TECHNICAL RESOURCES ON SELF-CARE INTERVENTIONS

Self-care intervention flyers

WHO recommends HIV self-testing

Self-collection of samples for sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

Human papillomavirus (HPV) self-sampling as part of cervical cancer screening

Self-management of medical abortion

Self-administration of injectable contraception
Remarks of WHO Director-General on the WHO guideline on self-care interventions

Importance of self-care interventions to reach UHC

Self-care interventions advance health, well-being and UHC

Health workers can facilitate access to self-care interventions for contraception
Social media hashtags

You can make use of these hashtags to spread the word about self-care and share WHO’s resources widely across your networks:

#SelfCare #SRHR
#UHC #PHC
@WHO @HRPresearch

Social media infographics

Infographics are available in all six United Nations languages

- Self-care interventions bring health services to people
- Self-care is a new approach to primary health care
- Individuals can self-manage medical abortion in the first trimester
- Access to self-care interventions improves people’s autonomy
- Self-collection of samples can improve delivery of STI testing services
- Self-administration of injectable contraception
- HPV self-sampling improves screening for cervical cancer
- Self-care interventions grounded in human rights
- Health workers can promote access to and correct use of self-care interventions
- Gender equality in delivering self-care interventions
- Self-care interventions can help reduce health costs
- Self-care interventions for sexual and reproductive health
Evidence reviews (the BMJ supplement)

- Editorial: Recognising self-care as an integral component of the health system
- Reaching populations in humanitarian settings through self-care interventions
- Environmental considerations of self-care waste management
- Self-care interventions to advance health and well-being: a conceptual framework
- Financing and economic considerations of self-care interventions to reach universal health coverage
- Human rights and legal dimensions of self-care interventions
- Self-care among women and girls: insights from ethnographic studies
- Oral contraceptive pills: a systematic review of over-the-counter and pharmacy access availability
- Home-based ovulation predictor kits: a systematic review and meta-analysis
- Self-collection of samples for common sexually transmitted infections
- Self-sampling for human papillomavirus (HPV) testing: a systematic review and meta-analysis
- Self-administration of injectable contraception
- Prioritising gender, equity, and human rights in a GRADE-based framework to inform future research on self care for sexual and reproductive health and rights
- HPV self-sampling for cervical cancer screening: a systematic review of values and preferences
- Self-management of iron and folic acid supplementation during pre-pregnancy, pregnancy and postnatal periods: a systematic review
5: ACADEMIC RESOURCES ON SELF-CARE INTERVENTIONS

Catalysing policy change to introduce and scale up self-care interventions for SRHR: Lessons from the Eastern Mediterranean Region (the BMC Health Research Policy and Systems supplement)

- Changing national health policies for introduction, uptake and scale-up of self-care interventions for sexual and reproductive health and rights in the Eastern Mediterranean Region
- Community-led HIV self-testing for men who have sex with men in Lebanon: lessons learned and impact of COVID-19
- The role of partners in promoting self-care for misoprostol and subcutaneous DMPA in Pakistan
- The role of parliamentarians in promoting self-care interventions for sexual and reproductive health and rights: applying COVID-19 lens in the Eastern Mediterranean Region
- Regulatory standards and processes for over-the-counter availability of hormonal contraception and drugs for medical abortion in five countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region
- The role of community pharmacists in increasing access and use of self-care interventions for sexual and reproductive health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: examples from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Somalia
- Sexual and reproductive health self-care interventions in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: findings from a cross-sectional values and preferences survey to inform WHO normative guidance on self-care interventions

Other academic resources

- The role of self-care interventions on men’s health-seeking behaviours to advance their SRHR
- Self-care interventions for sexual and reproductive health and rights for advancing universal health coverage
- Uptake and provision of self-care interventions for sexual and reproductive health: findings from a global values and preferences survey
For further information contact: selfcare@who.int