

## **75<sup>th</sup> WHO Regional Committee for Europe on the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in the WHO European Region 2016–2025**

### **Agenda item 12**

30 OCTOBER 2025, COPENHAGEN – This statement is delivered on behalf of IFPMA and its European member organization EFPIA. We welcome the progress report on implementation of the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) in the WHO European Region 2016–2025. We would like to thank WHO and its European Commission partners for support given to public health community over the decades in addressing NCDs, starting with the identification of ‘Quick Buys’ earlier this year and the promising practices available at the EU Best Practices Portal on Public Health.

We are not short of actionable goals and targets for NCDs, including a one-third reduction of premature mortality from these diseases by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 3.4). Despite this, progress is lagging. The WHO reports that no country will achieve its original 2025 NCD targets, and, in 2019, only 19 out of 194 countries are on track to reach SDG 3.4. Today, NCDs remain the main cause of ill health in the WHO European Region, causing 90% of deaths and 85% of years lived with disability and progress has stalled since 2021. Beyond the burden on patients and families from ill-health and premature death, this creates a huge cost for health systems and societies through unnecessary hospitalization and reduced labour market participation.

At the same time, medicines and vaccines have transformed how we prevent, treat, and cure chronic disease over the past few decades, and advances in biopharmaceutical innovation will bring further progress. In the past 10 years, 1,400 NCDs medicines have been launched, and 75% of our R&D pipeline is dedicated to NCDs and their risk factors, in step with the global burden of disease. With many unmet health needs remaining, we need to ensure continued robust incentives to research and develop new medicines for patients.

The UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health in September was an important milestone to rally global efforts to tackle the rise of non-communicable diseases including cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes.

We were encouraged to see the emphasis on scientific innovation and research on NCDs, as well as the call for greater investment, set targets – including 150 million more people receiving treatment for hypertension – and the importance of an integrated approach to prevention, treatment, and care for early action and to reduce co-morbidities and co-occurrence of diseases, including from infectious diseases.

If we are going to maximize the opportunity that this scientific innovation can bring, we need to focus on implementation in every country, ensuring that healthcare systems are supported with the right investment, effective regulatory systems, and sustainable procurement.

We have achievable ways to do this. Measurable reductions in mortality within five years could be achieved by accelerating the implementation of high-impact, cost-effective interventions. A more proactive approach to early detection, such as screening programs and health checks carried out in primary care settings to check for common risk factors, followed by early and appropriate intervention, is key in preventing people with risk factors from developing disease or serious complications.

Looking ahead, we have an opportunity for countries to go further to support healthier populations, resilient healthcare systems, and stronger economies. Our industry is a central partner in this effort, and we remain committed to improving access to innovation alongside other key stakeholders.