Scaling Self-Care Can Be a Game-Changer in Global Fight Against Non-Communicable Diseases

- *Ahead of the upcoming UN General Assembly to set a new vision for non-communicable diseases, the Global Self-Care Federation is calling for self-care strategies to be integrated into health plans*
- *Non-communicable diseases account for 76% of global deaths, and their impact continues to rise*[1]
- *Current self-care activities are generating substantial global monetary savings ($119 billion per year) as well as healthcare workforce savings – with huge potential to unlock further savings*[2]

Geneva, 24 July 2025 – On International Self-Care Day, and as world leaders prepare for a landmark United Nations General Assembly meeting on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) this September, the Global Self-Care Federation (GSCF) is calling for an urgent paradigm shift: integrate self-care strategies into national health systems to stem the rising tide of preventable illness and death.

NCDs – including cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, and mental health conditions – account for 76% of global deaths, and this number continues to rise. These conditions place a growing burden on individuals, families, and health systems worldwide, underscoring the urgent need for scalable, person-centered solutions like self-care that support prevention, early management, and long-term wellbeing.

In response to the escalating global burden of NCDs, Heads of States and Government will meet at the United Nations General Assembly NCD meeting in September to establish a new vision for the prevention and control of these conditions.

Amid rising healthcare costs and increasingly stretched health systems, self-care stands out as a powerful and proven solution. On this International Self-Care Day, the GSCF – the global voice of the self-care life sciences industry – highlights the role of non-prescription medicines, self-care health products, and self-management tools in supporting the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of a wide range of conditions through evidence-based, person-centered care. Self-care is a low-cost, high-impact approach that empowers individuals to prevent, manage, and control NCDs through sustainable, everyday actions. Realizing its full potential requires supportive government policies that promote health literacy, enable access to quality self-care products, and encourage healthy choices across populations.

Evidence-based self-care involves making healthy lifestyle choices and avoiding unhealthy habits, making responsible use of prescription and non-prescription medicines, recognizing symptoms, managing one's own treatments of self-treatable conditions, and self-monitoring health conditions more closely. The GSCF is therefore calling for supportive policy frameworks–such as improved health literacy, better access to self-care tools, and environments that enable and encourage healthier choices for all.

Recent work by the GSCF found that self-care practices are already producing over $119 billion in global savings annually, freeing up to 1.8 billion physician hours. Scaling up these interventions could unlock over $230 billion in economic benefits in low- and middle-income countries by 2030, while significantly relieving pressure on healthcare workers.[3]

"Self-care is not a luxury – it's a public health imperative," said Greg Perry, Director General of GSCF. "When people have access to effective self-care products–such as fluoridated toothpaste, smoking cessation aids, skincare treatments, allergy relief, and cough and cold remedies–they're empowered to manage their health proactively, relieve symptoms early, and reduce the burden on health systems. These everyday solutions already support

millions in maintaining wellness and preventing more serious illness. As the UN Meeting on NCDs approaches, it's essential to recognize self-care as a vital foundation of resilient, sustainable healthcare."

Tamara Rogers, Chair of the GSCF, added: "Self-care is a proven, scalable, and people-centered solution that enables individuals and communities to take control of their health every day. We're encouraged that self-care is increasingly being recognised as an essential health component, but there is more to be done to embed this into systems worldwide. Integrating self-care into national strategies is paramount to reduce healthcare burdens, close access gaps, and build sustainable systems."

As part of its *Self-care is healthcare* movement, the GCSF is outlining four recommendations for countries to scale self-care practices to address NCDs, support health ageing and ensure integration of self-care into the healthcare delivery continuum:**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

- Formally integrate self-care into national health plans and strategies
- Mobilize the entire multidisciplinary care team in service of self-care
- Leverage digital health technologies to increase access to self-care products and services
- Promote self-care as a key piece of healthy ageing

On International Self-Care Day, the Federation invites global partners, health leaders, and citizens to rally behind the #SelfCareIs campaign to elevate awareness and accelerate action. To find out more and get involved, please visit https://self-care-is-healthcare.org/.

Notes

The Global Self-Care Federation (GSCF) represents associations and manufacturers in the self-care industry, promoting sustainable and better global health outcomes for all. For more information, visit: www.selfcarefederation.org.

International Self-Care Day is held annually on 24th July (7/24), to highlight that the benefits of self-care are experienced 24 hours a day, seven days a week. International Self-Care Day raises awareness of the value of self-care and the benefit that effective self-care can bring to both individuals and healthcare systems.

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[1] GSCF. Self-Care Readiness Index 2025. https://www.selfcarefederation.org/resources/self-care-readiness-index-2025.

[2] GSCF. Economic and Social Value of Self-Care. https://www.selfcarefederation.org/ecosoc-report.

[3] GSCF. Policy Paper: How self-care contributes to the risk-reduction, prevention & management of NCDs. https://www.selfcarefederation.org/resources/how-self-care-contributes-risk-reduction-prevention-management-ncds.