

UN High-Level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases and the Promotion of Mental Health

Panel Topic: Reshaping and strengthening health systems and all forms of financing to meet the needs of people living with and at risk of noncommunicable diseases and mental health conditions

The Global Self Care Federation welcomes the recommendations of the Political Declaration on the *Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases and the Promotion of Health and Well-Being*. To reshape and strengthen health systems as called for in the declaration, we must adopt sustainable, person-centered approaches that reduce demand on clinical services while empowering individuals to actively manage their health. Integrating self-care into health systems is a practical and cost-effective way to achieve this.

Evidence-based self-care interventions—including responsible use of non-prescription medicines, health technologies, lifestyle practices, and preventive actions—enables people to prevent and manage conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory illness, cancer, oral health conditions, and mental health challenges. These everyday actions complement formal healthcare services and extend care beyond clinical settings while contributing to the reduction of key NCD risk factors, including tobacco use.

Evidence shows self-care combined with the use of non-prescription medicines already contributes \$119 billion in global healthcare savings annually and frees 1.8 billion physician hours. With proper investment and policy support, these benefits can be scaled significantly—especially in resource-constrained systems. In low- and middle-income countries alone, enhanced self-care adoption could generate over \$230 billion in economic benefits by 2030.

To truly reshape health systems and financing for NCDs and mental health, we call for:

- **Dedicated investment in self-care infrastructure**, including digital health tools, education campaigns, and equitable access to self-care products;
- **Incentivizing self-care within financing models**, such as through value-based care, universal coverage schemes, and public-private partnerships;
- **Integrating self-care into primary care strategies**, enabling earlier intervention, better health outcomes, and reduced system strain;
- **Embedding self-care in health workforce planning**, allowing care teams to focus their expertise where it's most needed, while individuals take more control over routine management.

To accelerate the implementation of the declaration's core commitments will require rethinking the way health is delivered and financed. Self-care is a proven solution that bridges gaps, builds resilience, and supports a sustainable future for global health systems.