

**150<sup>th</sup> Executive Board of the World Health Organization**  
Geneva, Switzerland  
24-29 January 2022  
**Provisional Agenda Item 15.3 WHO's work in health emergencies**

Honourable Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

People living with or at risk for circulatory conditions have been and continue to be disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The lack of attention given to NCDs in the early stages of the pandemic impeded their inclusion in country strategic preparedness and response plans and few countries included NCDs as part of essential health services packages. This, amongst other factors, has resulted in a deadly interplay between the NCD epidemic and the COVID-19 pandemic.

NCDs including hypertension, kidney disease, diabetes, stroke, and other circulatory health conditions must be a top priority in preparedness, response, readiness and coordination activities and agreements at global, regional and country levels.

As such, our organisations, representing the global circulatory health community (those most impacted by COVID-19), call on Member States to

- Prioritize ongoing prevention, screening, and treatment for circulatory conditions in national COVID-19 response and recovery plans through concerted patient co-creation;
- Increase domestic allocation of resources and develop targeted policies to tackle CVD and NCD risk factors, including the commercial determinants of health, through funding mechanisms such as taxation of unhealthy commodities;
- Integrate monitoring and data collection on NCD prevalence, comorbidities, and risk factors into measures of pandemic readiness, resilience, and response;
- Strengthen Primary Health Care and invest in family medicine to ensure equitable access to essential health services, particularly for people living with NCDs and in low-resource settings; and
- Strengthen the NCD component of emergency preparedness and response by formalizing these actions in a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response.

These steps would go far in making health systems around the world more resilient and are expanded upon in our position paper [Preventing the Next Pandemic: The Case for Investing in Circulatory Health](#) which was launched by Dr Tedros, the WHO's Director General, in October of last year.

As representatives of the global circulatory health community, we look forward to working with you to prevent, and where necessary, respond to future health emergencies.

Thank you.

*Global Coalition for Circulatory Health Members<sup>1</sup>:*

**Framework Convention Alliance for Tobacco Control**  
**International Alliance of Patients' Organizations**  
**International Council of Nurses**  
**International Diabetes Federation**  
**International Society of Nephrology**  
**World Federation of Public Health Associations**  
**World Heart Federation**  
**World Hypertension League**  
**World Organization of Family Doctors**  
**World Stroke Organization**  
**Global Heart Hub**  
**International Atherosclerosis Society**  
**International Hypertension Society**

---

<sup>1</sup> Members in bold are Non-State Actors in Official Relations with the WHO