

Statement of the NCD Alliance Supporters Group in Relation to the September 2011 UN High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

Working together to address NCDs

NCDs -- cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes and chronic lung diseases -- affect us all, our families and our friends. They have a major impact on peoples' health and the economic and social development of all countries. The UN High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases in September 2011 represents a first important step towards a real recognition of the problem. It is a unique opportunity to secure commitments from governments and other stakeholders on a coordinated global response to the challenge. And the common challenge, and opportunity, is to save millions of people from premature death and debilitating health complications, and promote social and economic development.

We believe that the private sector is in a unique position to help improve the health and well-being of people around the world. Already today, the private sector serves as a value-adding partner to governments, NGOs, academia and other stakeholders due to our ability to deliver innovative ideas and tangible solutions that are needed to support health promotion, disease prevention, health system strengthening and chronic disease management. But more can and should be done.

The NCD Alliance Supporters Group includes companies in the pharmaceutical, medical technology and over-the-counter health products sectors, with employees, customers and business operations around the world, as well as Foundations working to improve access to prevention and care for NCDs. We have joined forces to help prevent, diagnose, treat and manage NCDs. Our efforts are aimed at easing the burden that such diseases place on our society by proactively addressing the determinants of health and disease, and prolonging the time that individuals and populations remain healthy, productive and independent.

We believe global businesses, also have a vested interest in maintaining: a healthy workforce, to drive higher productivity and lower cost; healthy populations, to create and maintain a sustainable customer base; and healthy economies, to create and maintain the conditions required for continuing innovation and successful business operations around the world. We need solutions and we intend to do our part.

What are we doing today to address the global burden of NCDs?

We are supporting the NCD Alliance, the World Economic Forum, the Global Health Council and other initiatives in order to build a multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnerships that will help ensure effective preparations for the UN NCD High-Level Meeting -- and beyond.

We are helping to create greater public and stakeholder awareness of the burden of NCDs to motivate organizations and people to pursue their personal and collective health and well-being, and strengthen health systems.

We are already today using our competencies and partnering with other stakeholders to support numerous health promotion/education, disease prevention, health system

strengthening & innovative healthcare delivery initiatives. We want to share our learnings with each other to maximize our reach and impact.

- For example, so far over 40 organizations have come together to join the newly-established Workplace Wellness Alliance, a consortium committed to advancing workplace health, well-being and productivity by sharing knowledge and promoting the use of standardized metrics. In the future, we seek to secure the commitment of a broader range of employers to join this initiative.

To match our ambitions we have created a framework outlining a variety of ways in which companies, across many sectors, can help development, implement and partner on solutions to support NCD prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, adherence and ongoing disease management.

We are eager to enter into more partnerships with key public and private sector stakeholders, to bring innovative ideas and solutions to address the global burden of NCDs in a sustainable manner.

What are our desired outcomes for the UN NCD High-Level Meeting, and beyond?

We are working with other stakeholders to ensure that the UN NCD meeting, and subsequent implementation measures, will:

- Encourage multilateral and national government agencies to take a holistic approach to addressing NCDs in multiple areas, including health, finance, labor, education, transport and environment.
- Prioritize measures to reduce the NCD burden in developed and developing countries by strengthening health systems and primary care infrastructures across the continuum of care -- prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, adherence and ongoing disease management.
- Validate and support the critical role of companies, across a broad variety of sectors, as value-adding partners to governments, civil society and other stakeholders.

The NCD Alliance Supporters Group