

# INDONESIA: STATUS OF SELF-CARE

## The Value of Self-Care

Embedding self-care practices into the health care continuum has the potential to improve health and quality of life while simultaneously supporting health system sustainability. Self-care practices empower individuals by providing them with the information and tools to make decisions about their own health and care. An increased ownership over their own health promotes, at a systems level, the efficient use of limited healthcare resources and relieves the burden on healthcare providers - saving 1.8 billion physician hours to attend to more severe health conditions. A related impact of this is the increased focus on improving disease prevention efforts by empowering individuals to address minor ailments at home.

At the global level, current self-care activities are generating substantial monetary savings as well as healthcare workforce savings, totalling at least \$119 billion per year. The above should be coupled with a positive impact on global productivity when over-the-counter treatment is adopted at first, granting approximately 40.8 billion productive days, corresponding to a value of \$1,879 billion in welfare effects. Looking at the future, the cost saving effect is estimated to be approximately \$178.8 billion per annum, with increased productivity gains of 71.9 billion productive days per annum. If we add other positive effects brought by other self-care practices, such as the use of preventive care, oral health care and the use of vitamins and mineral supplements, the overall gain will increase further.

**There are more proven self-care products and practices available today than ever before**, and it is within our collective power to unleash the benefits of truly self-care enabled health systems around the world, if only we set

up adequate policy frameworks that embed self-care seamlessly into the care continuum.

Self-care belongs to individuals, families, communities, health care professionals, and policymakers at different levels and with different responsibilities. However, it is a primary responsibility of policymakers to design the enabling environment for each of the stakeholders to fulfill these responsibilities.

**A deeper international focus on self-care, brought up by a WHO Resolution on Self-Care could help foster the necessary momentum to fully integrate it into health systems for the benefit of individuals and society. This should include a definition of self-care and its enablers, and the self-care interventions countries can undertake according to the WHO Guidelines on self-care interventions for health and well-being.[1]**

The number of productive days, as well as the number of QALYs, are the most notable gains generated through current self-care practices in this region. Over 12 billion days in productivity are saved and more than 6.5 million QALYs are gained. Currently, as a result of individuals living in the South-East Asia region, over \$1 billion is generated through the cost containment, as well as over 800 million individual hours and 40 million physician hours are also observed in this region. [2]

## Indonesia: Overview

The most prominent reference to Self-care appears in the Indonesian Heart Failure Management Guidelines, where the notion of self-care is clearly stated: “Self-care management can be defined as actions aimed at maintaining physical stability, avoiding behaviors that can worsen the condition and detecting early symptoms of worsening heart failure. Self-care management has an important role in the successful treatment of heart failure and can have a significant impact on improving heart failure symptoms, functional capacity, quality of life, morbidity, and prognosis.” [3]

Behavior change is highlighted across a number of medical guidelines. [4] According to the survey conducted as part of the Self-Care Readiness Index 2022, 59% of healthcare providers in Indonesia think “health outcomes improve when patients safely use over-the-counter products as a first-line treatment for appropriate minor ailments,” just behind Germany (69%). Indonesian healthcare providers scored highest when asked whether they agree to “...consider self-care to be a core component of my approach to support and managing my patients” at 65%, followed by India (62%) and Mexico (60%). Based on the same survey, almost 60% of people in Indonesia often to always “have problems learning about their health because of difficulty understanding written information,” a score comparable to India (62%). However, a majority (56%) of Indonesians agree they “feel more educated and empowered to seek out self-care products and practices because of supportive campaigns and programs in their community,” comparable to India (56%) and Colombia (54%). Interviewees said they see health literacy increasing due to the many campaigns conducted at the community-level by the government, patient organizations, and sometimes medical associations and healthcare providers.

In 2015, the MoH launched the Healthy Indonesia Program, which aimed to develop an Indonesian community living with healthy behavior in a healthy environment, and able to access quality health services – all to achieve the highest possible health status. [5]

Self-care is mentioned in the National Strategic Action Plan for the Prevention and Control Non-Communicable Diseases: “Ideally, patients with chronic NCD will have the capacity to implement self-care.”[6] The posyandu, a community initiative to engage in health promotion and preventive activities, provide both curative and public health services which include health promotion, communicable disease control, ambulatory care, maternal and child health and family planning, community nutrition, and environmental health, including water and sanitation.

A number of self-care focused programs have been initiated by the Directorate of Health Promotion and Community Empowerment under the Ministry of Health (MOH), including:

1. The Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS)
2. Smart Use of Medications Movement (GeMa CerMat)
3. Implementing a Clean and Healthy Lifestyle (PHBS)
4. National Campaign for consuming healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables
5. National Movement for Nutrition Awareness

Indonesia’s Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS) was launched in 2016 and continues today. This sustained commitment shows health promotion and prevention remain high on the political agenda.[7] [8] [9] The flagship program, originally spearheaded by the Ministry of Health, now also operates under the Ministry of Education.

**59%** OF HEALTH PROVIDERS THINK HEALTH OUTCOMES IMPROVE VIA USE OF OTCS AS FIRST-LINE TREATMENT

**40 M** PHYSICIAN HOURS SAVED THROUGH USE OF OTCS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

## Recommendations

- Increase awareness towards responsible self-care by increasing self-care literacy and highlight a prominent role for pharmacists, in particular to encourage the safe use of OTCs and educate people living with non-communicable diseases on how to better self-manage their condition.
- Private companies to promote preventive behavior and self-care as part of their corporate social responsibility activities.
- Embed the concept of self-care into the Healthy Indonesia Program and in particular the Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS).
- Formalize the concept of self-care in Indonesian medical guidelines, similarly to what can be found in the current Heart Failure Management Guidelines.

## End Notes

- [1] WHO Guidelines on self-care interventions for health and well-being. World Health Organization, 2022. Available at: <https://app.magicapp.org/#/guideline/Lr21gL>
- [2] Self-Care Socio-Economic Research: The Global Social and Economic Value of Self-Care. Global Self Care Federation, 2022. Available at: [https://www.selfcarefederation.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2022-06/FINAL\\_GSCF%20Socio-Economic%20Research%20Report%2022062022.pdf](https://www.selfcarefederation.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2022-06/FINAL_GSCF%20Socio-Economic%20Research%20Report%2022062022.pdf)
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- [5] [https://extranet.who.int/countryplanningcycles/sites/default/files/planning\\_cycle\\_repository/indonesia/restra\\_2015\\_translated\\_1.pdf](https://extranet.who.int/countryplanningcycles/sites/default/files/planning_cycle_repository/indonesia/restra_2015_translated_1.pdf)
- [6] NATIONAL STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES (RAN PP-PTM) 2016-2019. World Health Organization, 2016 – 2019. Available at: [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/searo/ncd/ino-ncd-action-plan-2016-2019-not-approved.pdf?sfvrsn=ae44c84a\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/searo/ncd/ino-ncd-action-plan-2016-2019-not-approved.pdf?sfvrsn=ae44c84a_2)
- [7] STRATEGIC PLANNING MINISTRY OF HEALTH 2015- 2019. Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia. 2015 – 2019. Available at: [https://extranet.who.int/countryplanningcycles/sites/default/files/planning\\_cycle\\_repository/indonesia/restra\\_2015\\_translated\\_1.pdf](https://extranet.who.int/countryplanningcycles/sites/default/files/planning_cycle_repository/indonesia/restra_2015_translated_1.pdf)
- [8] The Republic of Indonesia Health System Review. Asia Pacific Observatory on Health System and Policies. <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/254716/9789290225164-eng.pdf>
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