



# United for Self- Care Coalition

UHC toolkit



This toolkit is designed to accelerate action on UHC and to empower members of the United for Self-Care Coalition (U4SC) with assets and messaging needed to advocate for the achievement of universal health coverage (UHC) through the adoption of a WHO resolution on self-care.

It includes data points on benefits of self-care, a messaging architecture on UHC, a Q&A and key talking points.

## What is self-care?

Self-care is defined by WHO as the ability of individuals, families and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health and cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider.



# What are the benefits of self-care?



Self-care can help individuals address their basic needs without barriers and the need for medical advice. Self-care increases individuals' productivity, saving

**11 billion** hours per year globally.<sup>1</sup>



Self-care allows healthcare providers to focus on highly dependent and acute care that requires their specialised skills and knowledge by saving physicians

**1.8 billion** hours per year globally.<sup>2</sup>



Self-care enabled by enhanced health literacy, over-the-counter medicines, devices, and preventative care allows people to manage their health conditions and everyday health conveniently and successfully at every stage of life. People's productivity improves by

**40.8 billion** days globally when they are self-care enabled.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> The Global Social and Economic Value of Self-Care

We know that giving individuals access to safe and effective care options for common conditions and infectious diseases significantly improves health outcomes and quality of life. These options include preventative care, knowledge through education, over-the-counter medicines and health devices. For example, WHO has shown that citizens reducing their personal risk factors such as tobacco use and physical inactivity can reduce cardiovascular disease risk by **81%**.<sup>4</sup>



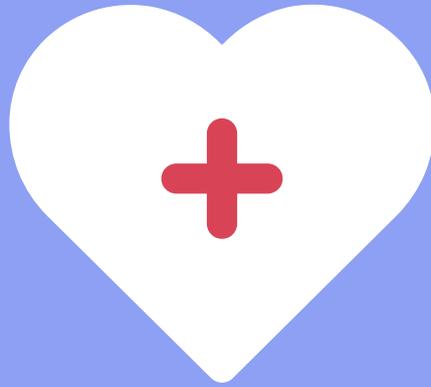
Self-care has the potential to improve the sustainability of national and local healthcare systems. We know that in some developing countries, self-care will need to be the principal source of healthcare when health resources continue to be severely constrained. Self-care has the potential to save the healthcare system **\$119 billion** plus an additional **\$1.9 trillion** in welfare costs globally.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>4</sup> WHO Self-Care Interventions for Health

<sup>5</sup> The Global Social and Economic Value of Self-Care

# What is the United for Self-Care Coalition



**United for Self-Care Coalition** is a coalition of like-minded organisations unified by one common goal – to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) through codifying self-care as a critical component of the healthcare continuum, particularly in the context of managing the burden of NCDs.



Self-care is an indispensable solution to realise Universal Health Coverage by 2030, and should be integrated into future health and economic policy, focusing on affordability and access. This whole-society approach is not only politically possible but economically viable as research proves that a person-centric healthcare approach would help manage NCDs globally, especially in LMICs.

## Main asks of the coalition

As a coalition, we call for the adoption of a WHO Resolution on Self-Care which would:



Enhance public health literacy and education, and implement public awareness campaigns on **self-care interventions for health and well-being**.



**Adopt, integrate and scale digital health tools for self-care** into national health and social care systems.



**Build health and social care professionals' capacity on self-care,** by including self-care practices in training modules for health workers and implementing national guidelines that incorporate self-care into healthcare prevention and treatment plans, with a particular focus on community-based primary care.



**Recognize self-care as a critical, cross-cutting component of the care continuum,** a core component of people-centered care, and an enabler of universal health coverage.



**Invest in policies that promote self-care practices** as a means of reducing health care expenditures and addressing gaps in the health and social care workforce.

## Q&A



### Why a self-care resolution?

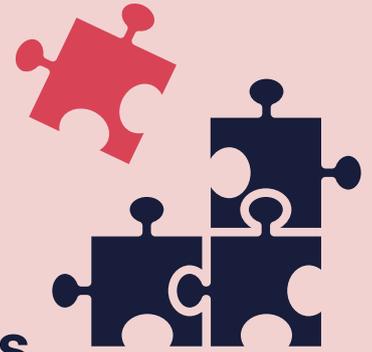
- +** Self-care can improve health outcomes, increase access to healthcare services, and reduce healthcare costs but is often overlooked in national health policies and strategies.
- +** A WHO resolution on self-care would provide a framework for its integration into national health systems, promote awareness and political commitment, and mobilize resources for evidence-based interventions.
- +** The resolution would address issues such as training, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation, and patient and community participation.
- +** A WHO resolution on self-care would support the achievement of global health goals and would facilitate collaboration among stakeholders, including healthcare providers, policymakers, researchers, and civil society organizations, to promote self-care.
- +** More proven self-care products and practices available to populations today than ever before.
- +** It is within our collective power to unleash the benefits of truly self-care enabled health systems around the world.
- +** Need for adequate policy frameworks that embed self-care into the care continuum to tap into that potential for the benefit of the people and systems.



## What potential can the incorporation of self-care bring into the political agenda?

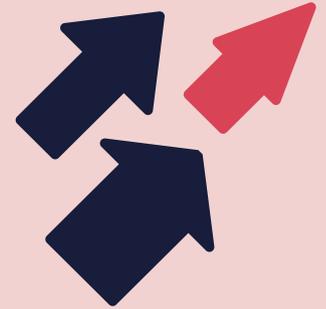
-  Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are one of the most important issues for healthcare around the world today.
-  Despite the significant amount of discourse, overall progress has been slow on reducing the number of premature deaths caused by NCDs – and this needs to change, especially in LMICs.
-  Tackling NCDs requires a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach to address the complex interaction between individuals, communities, populations, and their environment.
-  The full self-care continuum is critical for not just holistic treatment, but also prevention of NCDs, enabling individuals to make smart health-related decisions.
-  If we consider a whole-society approach it is not only politically possible but economically viable that person-centric healthcare approaches change the reality of an increase in NCDs worldwide, especially in LMICs.

## What challenges do you see health professionals facing while we optimise our healthcare systems to further integrate self-care and get closer to achieving the UHC?



- Self-care literacy levels, especially in LMICs would need to be raised in order for self-care to be utilized to its full potential.
- Build health and social care professionals' capacity on self-care, by including self-care practices in training modules for health workers and implementing national guidelines that incorporate self-care into healthcare prevention and treatment plans.
- A particular focus on community-based primary care is needed.

## What role does self-care play in LMICs, particularly when it comes to progressing towards UHC?



-  LMICs are increasingly struggling to contain the emergence of NCD risk factors such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet and alcohol abuse. In these countries, poverty is highly interlinked with lack of education on the outcomes of unhealthy habits and precarious policies.
-  Self-care is not only important because of its intrinsic connection to better informed healthcare decisions, but also for the many non-prescription medicines, digital apps and further technologies that help people living healthier lives.
-  In some countries, self-care is the only available treatment method and therefore health literacy should be paid attention to.

# Social media

**“**There are too many missed opportunities for better health outcomes. **It is important we work collaboratively** as an industry and with partners to make these self-care interventions more accessible & build more efficient health systems.

**Manoj Raghunandan, GSCF**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



**“**Involving pharmacies is a win-win: it encourages people to take an active role in their health journey and positions pharmacists to provide patients' with the equipment and knowledge they need.

**Dr Mariet Eksteen, FIP**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



**“**We can help support healthcare professionals by welcoming a policy framework that puts patient self-care first.

**Kawaldip Sehmi, IAPO**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



“**Health literacy is the key in the ignition for driving self-care, this pillar is then supported by mental wellbeing and physical activity.**

**Dr Austen El-Osta, SCARU**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



“**A WHO resolution would send a strong signal on the benefits of self-care to the global health community.** From there we'd see a trickle-down effect that would make a truly enabling environment for self-care.

**Sandy Garçon, SCTG**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



“**We can use self-care and health literacy to increase the competency profile of patient groups and generate better health outcomes worldwide.**

**Dr Slim Slama, WHO**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



“Globally, households have greater access to smartphones than healthcare. **Let's not lose sight of our responsibility to explore safe & equitable digital health solutions.**

**Manoj Raghunandan, GSCF**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



“**Self-care must be a sustainable vision**; the drive to achieve a WHO resolution on self-care must act as one wing, moving in tandem with the momentum for UHC.

**Dr Mariet Eksteen, FIP**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



“There is always a basic need for information in health systems, telemedicine is helping us learn from each other; but **we must avoid a digital divide.**

**Kawaldip Sehmi, IAPO**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



“Any recommendations on **self-care** as part of health policy, **should** come into the fold and **complement health systems**.”

**Dr Austen El-Osta, SCARU**

Speaking at the WHA76 side event 'Self-Care: A Foundational Component for Health System Sustainability'



“We’re not going to realize the full benefits of self-care without a **framework to build the right policies, funding and programming** around it.”

**Sandy Garçon, SCTG**

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“A patient competency framework would make sure we are imparting them with the **knowledge, skills & confidence to reliably manage their health**.”

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## WHAT CAN WE GAIN FROM SELF-CARE ?

**\$23 billion** in potential productivity gains  
+  
**40.8 billion** days freed from unnecessary consultations and work absences for medical appointments

Report: The Global Social and Economic Value of Self-Care



## WHAT BENEFITS WOULD SELF-CARE ENABLED POLICY ACHIEVE?

The largest areas of influence are:

<b>25%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>17%</b>
Productivity and quality of life	Patient time savings	Physician time savings	Welfare savings

Report: The Global Social and Economic Value of Self-Care



Being more physically active or reducing tobacco can prevent **81%** of cardiovascular disease.



Report: WHO Self-Care Interventions for Health



By 2030 **10 million** more health workers will be needed in low & middle income countries.



Report: Global Health Workforce statistics database



**\$119 billion** are saved by healthcare systems and national economies worldwide through self-care practices.



Report: The Global Social and Economic Value of Self-Care



Over

**40%**

of respondents from China, Nigeria and Poland have healthy diets as key part of their self-care routine.



Report: Self-Care Readiness Index 1.0



**54%**

of Indonesians felt more empowered to seek self-care treatments after witnessing campaigns in their community.



Report: Self-Care Readiness Index 2.0



## HOW IMPORTANT IS SELF-CARE?

**88%**

of healthcare professionals in South Africa, the US, Egypt and the UK see it as crucial to patient's health outcomes.

Report: Self-Care Readiness Index 1.0



# 75%

of consumers feel they're health literate enough to confidently carry out their own home care regimens.



Report: Self-Care Readiness Index



## HOW DOES SELF-CARE SUPPORT UHC?

# \$146 billion

annually were saved when consumers switched to OTCs.



Report: The Global Social and Economic Value of Self-Care



**There can be no UHC, without high quality and wide-spread self-care.**

The United for Self-Care coalition is calling for a WHO resolution on self-care, find our 5 pillars for rethinking health systems.



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GLOBAL  
**SELF-CARE**  
FEDERATION



[www.unitedforselfcare.org](http://www.unitedforselfcare.org)

