The World Health Organization Independent High-level Commission on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) released a new report calling for urgent action on NCDs and mental health disorders. High-level political commitment and the immediate scaling up of actions is needed to address these conditions.

Noncommunicable diseases are killers

NCDs are the world's biggest killers and a leading cause of death in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region, causing 67% of all deaths. The majority of deaths from NCDs are premature, occurring before age 70 years, and are in low- and middle-income countries, affecting the poorest communities. These deaths are caused by preventable factors, namely unhealthy diet, tobacco use and physical inactivity.

Mental health disorders are neglected

Mental health disorders are growing but often neglected. Depressive illnesses and anxiety disorders are highly prevalent in countries of the Region, and are almost wholly accounted for by the prevailing emergency situations. Treatment rates for people with mental health disorders are low. Like NCDs, mental health requires urgent action.

Report of the Independent High-level Commission on NCDs

Accelerating progress on NCDs and mental health

Accelerating progress on NCDs and mental health is crucial to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals target to reduce premature death from NCDs by one-third by 2030 and to promote mental health and wellbeing. Financing is a critical component for accelerating progress and must be increased. Also, all stakeholders must be held responsible for delivering on their promises. Everyone needs to move quickly and invest in NCDs and mental health to save lives. The Commission's report will help guide countries as they make progress toward health for all and tackle both NCDs and mental health, and infectious killers.

Calling on Heads of State and Governments

By calling on Heads of State and Government to take ultimate responsibility for NCDs, the report, which was also published simultaneously in the medical journal The Lancet, recognizes the need to ensure that health and non-health ministries have the influence they require to ensure the issue is backed with the political will and funding it merits. On 27 September 2018, the United Nations General Assembly will host the Third High-level Meeting on NCDs in New

York. The Commission's report will help advise WHO as it prepares for this crucial occasion.

Join us and the Commission in calling on Heads of State and Government to come to New York because it is time to deliver.

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