

Brussels, June 2025

Subject: Open letter calling UN Member States to support the inclusion of kidney disease in the Political Declaration of the 4th UN High Level Meeting on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) and Mental Health

We, the undersigned, represent the global kidney health community.

Collectively, we represent:

- Tens of millions of people living with kidney disease
- More than 400,000 health professionals
- Millions of people at risk of developing kidney disease due to diabetes, hypertension and other key risk factors

We write ahead of the 4th UN High Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health (HLM4) on September 25, 2025—where governments will recommit to reducing premature mortality from NCDs. The key negotiated outcome from this meeting is the Political Declaration, a document that will shape global NCD priorities, funding and programs for the next decade.

Kidney disease is a growing global health crisis. It is projected to become the **fifth leading cause of death by 2050**, with **850 million people worldwide currently affected**. Kidney disease is often preventable, yet millions of people, especially in low- and middle-income countries, lack access to essential early detection and treatment. The consequences include increased morbidity and mortality, overwhelming financial burdens on patients and healthcare systems, and more use of expensive, carbon-intensive dialysis treatments

For every **\$1 spent on early detection and timely management of kidney disease, up to \$45 can be saved through direct and indirect healthcare benefits**—improving health outcomes, reducing long-term healthcare costs, and ensuring the resilience of health systems worldwide.

Recognizing the burden associated with kidney disease, the availability of cheap and effective treatments to prevent and manage kidney disease, and the tremendous gains that will result from timely action, the 78th World Health Assembly has just approved the first ever WHO kidney-focused resolution. Led by Guatemala, the resolution paves the way for earlier detection, better prevention, improved access to treatment, and stronger health systems in alignment with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.4. and 3.8.

Despite broad global support for prioritizing the prevention and control of kidney disease, the initial draft of the Political Declaration omits kidney disease entirely. This omission risks overlooking one of the fastest-growing and most costly NCDs worldwide.

We urge all UN Member States to support the inclusion of kidney disease in the Political Declaration of the HLM-4. Doing so will reflect global consensus, uphold the commitments made at WHA78, and ensure a more inclusive, effective, and equitable NCD response.

Sincerely,

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