Press release

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The European Response to Chronic Diseases - the Role of Civil Society

In the past decade, international leaders and health advocates have consistently fought to put Non-communicable chronic diseases (NCDs) on the global agenda, not only the health agenda, but on top of the priorities that must be tackled with a Whole-of-Society, “health in all policies” approach. It resulted in a UN resolution, a WHO action plan and various other initiatives at regional (Europe) and international level. Member States and the European Union (EU) have committed to a 25% reduction of preventable NCDs by 2025.

However, the latest monitoring data show that most countries are lagging behind in the majority of the dedicated actions to address NCDs and that the targets will not be met, if we don’t take action now.

What shall be the role of civil society and non-governmental organisations, including patient and health professional organisations, in helping countries’ leaders and the UN deliver and fulfil their commitments?

With the aim to answer this question, the European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA) and the NCD Alliance (NCDA), with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe, hold a two-day meeting on 12 and 13 December 2016 in Brussels, to reflect on how to form a more unified and stronger NCD civil society movement in the European region, to define common regional advocacy priorities and lay plans for strengthening civil society in-country NCD networks in the long term. The NGOs working within a network or alliances of NCDs associations will better contribute to the implementation of the newly adopted 2016-2025 WHO European Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs, once they have identified strategies for greater alignment and collaboration. The meeting will also allow for the different civil-society organisations’ platforms working on NCDs across both the EU and the broader WHO European Region to share experiences and strengthen their capacity to drive advocacy and policy actions.

Together participants from all over Europe, representing health advocates, NGOs leaders, and decisions makers will reiterate their commitment to work together to tackle NCDs for enhanced prevention, better care and ultimately a healthier Europe.

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