

Prioritizing Health Workers in the Global Fight Against NCDs

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On the occasion of the 2025 Multi-stakeholder Hearing for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases and the Promotion of Mental Health and Well-being, the Frontline Health Workers Coalition calls for greater investment in human resources for health to address the growing burden of NCDs, including mental health.

Non-communicable, or chronic diseases, including cancers, cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, and mental health conditions, account for approximately 75% of annual global mortality rates, with more than 85% of the burden of premature death falling on low- and middle-income countries. The annual death toll from NCDs is projected to reach 52 million by 2030, coinciding with an estimated global shortage of 11 million health workers. The care demands of NCDs on the health workforce are immense. Inadequate investment in a resilient, well-resourced, and comprehensively supported health workforce exacerbates the devastating effects of NCDs, leaving already weak health systems more vulnerable to pandemics and other threats to global health security.

An estimated 80% of NCDs can be prevented or delayed through accessible primary care, preventative resources, and timely treatment. However, recent global commitments to strengthen the health workforce and catalyze the global response to NCDs have lacked specificity and meaningful implementation. **Increased, data-driven investment in the health workforce is the most efficient and cost-effective way to combat NCDs.** Furthermore, greater protections and resources must be put in place to monitor and protect the mental health of health workers themselves, to reduce burnout and facilitate retention. Health workers are the direct links to care for each and every patient affected by NCDs, and they must be at the forefront of our global response to the NCD crisis.