



Health authorities approve plan to prevent and control noncommunicable diseases, the leading cause of death in the Americas

Washington, D.C., 1 October 2025 (PAHO) – Health authorities from across the Americas approved a new [Plan of Action on Noncommunicable Diseases \(NCDs\) Prevention and Control 2025–2030](#) during the 62nd Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). The plan marks a critical step toward addressing the Region’s leading cause of death and disability.

The initiative aims to accelerate the implementation of measures to reduce the burden of NCDs and improve the quality of life for millions of people affected by cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases—through the strengthening of primary health care systems.

“The adoption of this plan is a key step toward transforming how we tackle NCDs in the Americas,” said Dr. Anselm Hennis, Director of PAHO’s Department of Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health. “Its implementation will enable us to move toward more resilient health systems that are centered on people and their communities.”

The plan proposes three strategic lines of action:

- **Reducing** risk factors for noncommunicable diseases and expanding health promotion interventions.
- **Integrating** the management of NCDs into primary health care.
- **Strengthening** surveillance of NCDs and their risk factors.

These lines of action are designed to reverse a concerning trend: NCDs account for an estimated 6 million deaths annually in the Region, with nearly 40% of those deaths occurring prematurely, before the age of 70.

NCDs affect approximately 240 million people in the Americas. While the last decade has seen progress in reducing the number of tobacco users, tobacco use remains a major risk factor, alongside harmful alcohol consumption, poor diet, physical inactivity, and obesity.

For example, over 35% of adults are physically inactive, and one in three adults lives with obesity. Access to diagnosis and treatment also remains limited: only 36% of people with hypertension have their blood pressure under control, and

more than 40 million people with diabetes lack access to adequate treatment.

The action plan emphasizes the need for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, and highlights key measures such as:

- **Fiscal policies** to reduce the consumption of tobacco, alcohol, and sugar-sweetened beverages.
- **Front-of-package warning labels** on ultra-processed foods and restrictions on marketing.
- **Integration of NCD prevention and treatment into primary care** to improve diagnosis, treatment, and control rates.
- **Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination and screening** for early detection of cervical cancer.
- **Use of digital solutions** and innovative tools to strengthen data surveillance, improve monitoring, and support evidence-based policymaking.

Progress under the action plan will be monitored through biennial review mechanisms, with a midterm review in 2028 and a final report in 2031. PAHO will also support countries in mobilizing resources to implement priority actions.

Through this plan, countries of the Americas reaffirm their commitment to public health and sustainable development, at a critical time to reduce the burden of NCDs in the Region.

Links

[Plan of Action on Noncommunicable Disease Prevention and Control 2025–2030](#)

[62nd Directing Council](#)

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The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) works with the countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of its population. Founded in 1902, it is the world's oldest international public health agency. It serves as the Regional Office of WHO for the Americas and is the specialized health agency of the Inter-American system (OAS).