

2023 Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage

On 21 September 2023, world leaders adopted the [political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage](#), and recommitted to achieving UHC by 2030.

● Noncommunicable Diseases

55. Strengthen efforts to address the specific physical and mental health needs of all people [...], by advancing comprehensive approaches and integrated service delivery and striving to ensure that challenges are addressed and the achievements are sustained and expanded, including for (b) Non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, mental health conditions and psychosocial disabilities, and neurological conditions, including dementia.

Call to action

Psoriatic disease is a systemic disease. One of its characteristics is an increased risk of developing related noncommunicable diseases, including those named in the political declaration (cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, mental health conditions). Having psoriatic disease and one or more comorbidities takes a physical, psychological, and financial toll on individuals. Making screening of common psoriatic disease comorbidities part of care would ensure that comorbidities are detected and treated early, to avoid further complications and increased resource spending

● Mental Health

59. Scale up measures to promote and improve mental health and well-being as an essential component of universal health coverage, including by addressing the determinants that influence mental health, brain health, neurological conditions, substance abuse and suicide, and by developing comprehensive and integrated services to promote mental health and well-being, while fully respecting human rights, noting that these conditions are an important cause of morbidity and have comorbidities with communicable and other non-communicable diseases and contribute to the global burden of disease.

Call to action

Psoriatic disease has a major impact on mental health and quality of life. People living with psoriatic disease are at higher risk of developing anxiety and depression because of their condition and because of the effect of inflammation to the brain. Having psoriatic disease diagnosed early and then well-controlled makes a great difference for mental health and well-being. Biologically, suppressing those inflammatory mediators causing both psoriatic disease and depression or anxiety improves symptoms. Furthermore, seeing psoriatic disease improve quickly and extensively positively impacts mental health. Having the disease well-managed means reducing its whole burden.

● **Disabilities**

64. Ensure availability of and access to health services for all persons with disabilities, to enable their full participation in society and achievement of their life goals, including by removing physical, attitudinal, social, structural and financial barriers, and providing quality standards of care as well as scaling up efforts for their empowerment, participation and inclusion, noting that persons with disabilities, who represent 16 percent of the global population, continue to experience unmet health needs.

Call to action

Painful, itchy and uncomfortable, psoriatic disease negatively affects most daily activities when using the hands, walking, sitting, and standing for long periods of time, and even disrupts resting and sleeping. Both skin and joint symptoms of the disease can make it difficult, even impossible, to work. Governments need to integrate psoriatic disease in their national health and disability plans, as well as protect people with psoriatic disease from discrimination and stigmatization.

● **Access to Medicines**

69. Promote equitable distribution of and increased access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines, including generics, as well as vaccines, diagnostics and other health technologies, to ensure affordable quality health services and their timely delivery.

Call to action

Psoriatic disease is incurable, but the skin and joint symptoms of psoriatic disease can be effectively managed with medications. Access to affordable, safe, effective, and quality medicines and technologies will achieve the optimal management of psoriatic disease and prevent the insurgence of comorbidities. All people with psoriatic disease should have equal access to the best care and treatments, wherever they live.

● **Health Promotion and Prevention**

90. Promote and implement policy, legislative, regulatory and fiscal measures, as appropriate, to prioritize health promotion, health literacy and disease prevention at all levels, aiming at minimizing the exposure to main risk factors of non-communicable diseases [...]

Call to action

Psoriatic disease cannot be prevented, but there are things that can be done to improve symptoms or prevent the insurgence of certain comorbidities, such as cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. Preventing the insurgence of such comorbidities by acting on modifiable risk-factors (weight, diet, smoking) alleviates the burden on individuals and benefit long-term health system spending.

● Health Workforce

91. Accelerate action to address the global shortfall of health workers and encourage the development of nationally costed health workforce plans [...]

Call to action

A high quality and appropriately resourced health workforce is essential to manage complex conditions like psoriatic disease. Shortage of workers, and irregular distribution of specialists at the disadvantage of rural areas both build disparities in care between and within countries. Encouraging physician training in dermatology, enhancing medical education on psoriatic disease in medical school and in continuing medical education is necessary to improve care for psoriatic disease. Moreover, training other health care professionals than medical doctors would provide great support to specialists and primary care physicians in addressing comorbidities, adherence issues, and behavior changes.

OUR CALL TO ACTION

1.

Change perception. Psoriatic disease affects the whole body – inside and out

2.

Ensure equal access to medicines. Affordable, safe, effective, and quality treatment options

3.

Stop stigma. Speak up for people living with psoriatic disease

4.

Advance holistic care. Care for psoriatic disease that embraces the whole person

5.

Prepare the health workforce. More prepared, well prepared

MORE RESOURCES ON PSORIATIC DISEASE AND UHC

