

Draft advocacy messages of the WHO Symposium on Meaningful Engagement of people living with NCDs, mental health and neurological conditions

About this document:

This document has been developed to facilitate community feedback on the proposed advocacy messages in preparation for the Fourth High-Level Meeting (HLM4) of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) and Mental Health.

The draft advocacy messages were co-developed by the Symposium Steering Committee—comprising nine lived experience experts—and guided by the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on NCDs. Inputs from the community feedback process will be incorporated in the final version of the key messages, which will be disseminated after the Second Symposium meeting in December 2024.

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A Call to Action

The WHO Symposium on Meaningful Engagement community calls on Member States to:

Support, commit to, and invest in the meaningful and sustained engagement of communities and people living with NCDs, mental health, and neurological conditions in the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of health policies, programmes, and research through formalized participatory approaches that enable contextual, equitable, integrated, people-centred, and rights-based solutions, in line with the WHO Framework on Meaningful Engagement.



Recognize the right of people with lived experience to participate as leading experts.

In practice:

Recognize the right of people with lived experience of NCDs, mental health and neurological conditions to actively participate as leading experts in decision-making and the co-design, co-implementation, and co-evaluation of the NCD and mental health response.



Invest in sustainable platforms for capacity-building, knowledge exchange, and research on meaningful engagement.

In practice:

Invest in sustainable platforms for capacity-building, knowledge exchange, and research on the implementation of meaningful engagement, including through the development of an implementation toolkit, technical resources, and the provision of training and mentorship opportunities for people with lived experience.



Promote equitable inclusion of people with lived experience and commit to reducing stigma, discrimination, and tokenism.

In practice:

Promote equitable inclusion of people with lived experience and caregivers through a collaborative and intersectional approach to the integration of meaningful engagement in policies, programmes, and research, with priority to the most underrepresented and most marginalized through addressing barriers to participation and a commitment to reducing stigma, discrimination, and tokenism.



Establish national policies, planning efforts, and platforms to operationalize and formalize meaningful engagement.

In practice:

Establish national policies, planning efforts, and platforms to operationalize and formalize meaningful engagement, including a monitoring and accountability framework and strengthened national policies to reduce the impact of stigma and discrimination.