
EMR NCD Alliance has taken part in the 67th WHO Regional Committee for EMRO



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In an effort to amplify the voices of people living with NCDs (PLWNCDs) in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) and raise awareness about the specific needs and challenges of refugees living with NCDs in the region, the Eastern Mediterranean NCD Alliance (EM-NCDA) participated at the recent virtual Regional Committee meeting (RCM 67).

In the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic the virtual meeting agenda (RCM 67) considered only a few agenda items including the **special event on the COVID-19 response in the region**. Eastern Mediterranean NCD Alliance (and its members) supported by NCD Alliance, submitted a statement in reference to Agenda Item 4(b) which presented 'The COVID-19 Pandemic in the Eastern Mediterranean Region(EM/RC67/7)'.

The statement was well received, posted at the RCM 67 Site ([here](#)) [1] and published on the daily report of the RCM67. Considering the special virtual event this year and abridged agenda, only member states are allowed to deliver interventions.

It was a great opportunity for EM-NCDA to voice the needs of PLWNCDs amidst this challenging time calling all EMR Members States to prioritise NCDs prevention and control and integrate into COVID-19 preparedness and national response plans.

The submitted statement also stressed the impact of COVID-19 on PLWNCDs in particular refugees in the region and called to ensure availability of medicine and essential NCD care, to meaningfully involve PLWNCDs and civil society organisations as being supportive of country governments in advancing efforts towards meeting SDG/ NCD related targets and achieving universal health coverage .

In line with the mission of the EM-NCDA, the statement re-affirm the commitment of EM-NCDA readiness to provide necessary support for all EMR countries to accelerate the implementation of NCD and UHC commitments by promoting a people-centered approach that meaningfully involves PLWNCDs in NCD and UHC responses. This is essential to build back better after COVID-19.

The joint statement encourage Member States in WHO/EMR to:

- Integrate NCD prevention and control into COVID-19 preparedness and response plans.
- Meaningfully involving civil society, affected communities and PLWNCDs, including those in humanitarian settings, in decision-making and monitoring processes.
- Ensure continuity of care for PLWNCDs affected by humanitarian emergencies, including displaced populations, and particularly during health emergencies through an integrated approach.

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- Ensure availability of NCD medicines, supplies and care alongside those for communicable diseases like COVID-19, addressing mental health disorders, especially depression and post-traumatic stress.
- Strengthen health systems oriented towards achieving UHC through a people-centred, inclusive approach, and ensure coordination of care provision at all levels and for all people.
- Ensure *whole-of-government* and *whole-of-society* approaches for COVID-19 preparedness and response as well as the NCD response.

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