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## **The simple solution to improving access to care**

NCD Alliance/Still from Facing Forward video series

Language English

In Brazil, all citizens are entitled to free health care, but many of them live too far away from the nearest medical center.

The Phillips Foundation is transforming shipping containers into simple medical centers that can be installed wherever they are most needed.

At least half of the world's population cannot access essential health services, marking a long road ahead before achieving Universal Health Coverage. But improving access to NCD prevention, diagnosis and treatment is within our reach with simple, affordable and replicable solutions.

In Brazil, all citizens are entitled to free health care, but many of them live too far away to access it due to the high cost of transportation and the time it takes to get to the nearest medical center. If specialist care is needed, it makes getting and adhering to treatment even more complicated. But more and more, we are seeing solutions that bring care to where people are.

The Phillips Foundation is working with local healthcare providers to connect those living with chronic diseases, like hypertension and diabetes, to specialists, transforming shipping containers into simple medical centers that can be installed wherever they are most needed. The containers hold basic equipment - the essentials for diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of NCDs. This means that the people living with chronic diseases have a much better chance of detecting and treating them early, before complications arise.

## Simple solutions for diverse contexts

Inaccessible healthcare is a story that is common in Brazil and around the world - but that is changing as more and more innovative solutions are being implemented. These solutions often involve diverse partners, including private sector, local health professions and care providers, civil society organisations, community health workers, and more.

For instance, [Changing Diabetes in Children](#) [1] is a public-private partnership where private sector partners contribute

insulin and supplies, collaborating with global civil society organisations and local care partners, to diagnose and treat children living with type 1 diabetes in low- and middle- income countries who otherwise might not be able to access the care they need to survive. [In India](#) [2], local civil society organisations train community health workers to identify people living with mental health disorders in rural areas, who otherwise would be unlikely to get help and face instead stigmatization from their communities.

## The road to Universal Health Coverage

These initiatives, along with the mobile medical centers being used throughout Brazil, are just a small sample of the many solutions being implemented around the world - especially in low- and middle-income countries where accessing adequate health care tends to be most challenging. Many people living in these countries face barriers to care such as having to pay out-of-pocket for services, the need to travel long distances to the nearest health facility, a lack of medical equipment needed for diagnosis and treatment, and unreliable supply chains for essential medicines such as insulin. In all countries, the poorest communities tend to have the most difficulty accessing care.

This inequity in health presents one of the biggest challenges to achieving Universal Health Coverage by 2030, and one that needs to be high on the agenda at the UN High-Level Meeting (UN HLM) on UHC in 2023. UHC can never be achieved until the most marginalized people and communities are guaranteed access quality care.

What does this mean for people living with NCDs? Find out more about the unique challenges they face in accessing life-saving care in the [NCD Diaries](#) [3]. As we approach the UN HLM on UHC, people living with NCDs need to be guaranteed a seat at the table where their voices are heard and help shape the decisions that affect their health.

There is no more time to lose in fulfilling UHC commitments - let's move now from commitments to the implementation of national solutions to achieve health for all by 2030!

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**Teaser Image:**

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