

# NCD Alliance Candidate Profile Booklet

April 2021

## Candidates for 2021-2023 NCD Alliance President, President-Elect and Board of Directors

The next General Assembly meeting of the NCD Alliance will be held virtually on 19th May. At the General Assembly, Founding and Full members will elect the President, the President-Elect and 8 members of the Board for the term 2021-2023. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document can be found [here](#), which outlines the nominations and shortlisting process, as well as background information on the size of the Board, and the roles and responsibilities of the Board, President and President-Elect.

A few important points to note:

- The President-Elect is being introduced for the first time for this term, following an amendment to the Constitution in August 2020. Therefore exceptionally in 2021, members will vote for both the President and President-Elect positions. From 2023 onwards, members will only elect the President-Elect and the Board of Directors.
- The NCD Alliance Board is composed of 14 seats, including the President and President-Elect. At the 2021 General Assembly meeting, there are 8 Board seats up for election. This does not include the four permanent seats of the Founding members (WHF, UICC, IDF and The Union), which are not up for election and are appointed by the Founding members themselves.
- The Nominations Committee reviewed all nominations from members for President, President-Elect and Board of Directors, and have shortlisted a slate of candidates taking into consideration the criteria set in the Nominations Policy, while also ensuring a balance of geographies, gender, and skills and expertise. In addition, the Committee also considered the need to balance continuity and renewal of Board of Directors. We received exceptional nominations and it was a difficult task for the Committee as the quality and profile of nominees was outstanding.

This document presents the profile of all candidates for President, President-Elect and Board to inform NCD Alliance members for the election process. The information contained in each of the candidates' profile has been provided by the candidates themselves, and it is intended exclusively for NCD Alliance members.



# List of candidates for 2021-2023 NCD President, President-Elect and Board

Candidates for NCD President <i>(alphabetical order by surname)</i>	Page
<b>Johanna Ralston</b> , CEO, World Obesity Federation, USA	4
<b>Anne Lise Ryel</b> , Lawyer/ Board member, Norway	5
<b>Candidate for NCD President-Elect</b>	
<b>Monika Arora</b> , Executive Director, HRIDAY (Secretariat of Healthy India Alliance - HIA), India	6
<b>Candidates for NCD Board of Directors</b> <i>(alphabetical order by surname)</i>	
<b>Nooshin Bazargani</b> , Consultant Cardiologist, Deputy Head of Dubai Heart Centre, Dubai, UAE	7
<b>Oscar A. Cabrera</b> , Director and Visiting Professor of Law, O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University, Venezuela	8
<b>Todd Harper</b> , CEO, Cancer Council Victoria, Australia	9
<b>Trevor Austin Hassell</b> , President, Healthy Caribbean Coalition, Barbados	10
<b>Marie Hauerslev</b> , Chair, NCD Child, Denmark	11
<b>Ch'uyasongo Hornberger Lane</b> , Independent Consultant in Public Health, USA	12
<b>Eva Njenga</b> , Chair, NCD Alliance Kenya, Kenya	13
<b>Bo Norrving</b> , Senior professor and Past President, World Stroke Organization (WSO), Sweden	14
<b>Jan Pelozo</b> , Co-founder, Slovenian NCD Alliance, Slovenia	15
<b>Leslie Rae Ferat</b> , Executive Director, Framework Convention Alliance, Canada	16
<b>Kaushik Ramaiya</b> , Honorary General Secretary, Tanzania NCD Alliance, Tanzania	17
<b>Saunthari Somasundaram</b> , Chairperson, NCD Malaysia; President, The National Cancer Society of Malaysia, Malaysia	18
<b>Pubudu Sumanasekara</b> , Executive Director, Alcohol and Drug Information Centre, Sri Lanka	19

## Candidate for NCDA President



**Johanna Ralston**  
CEO, World Obesity Federation  
USA

### Why would you like to be NCDA President?

At a time when an external pandemic has amplified attention to global health and NCDs, NCDA can catalyse enormous change in how NCDs are prioritised. The role of the President and Board would be to support the implementation of the new NCDA strategy, which reflects a comprehensive response to external opportunities and is well aligned with the plans of many NCD groups including the one I lead, so it would be an honor to provide volunteer leadership to an organisation with which I have played several key roles since its inception. At the same time, the Board must ensure that the CEO and Alliance can quickly respond to unexpected opportunities and challenges as they have ably done over the past year. These could include:

1. Pandemic preparedness. NCDs have emerged as a major factor in COVID-19 morbidity and mortality, which presents an opportunity to call for greater coherence across policies and surveillance systems and integration into “building back better” plans and budgets.
2. Development assistance. Resource mobilisation can build on the leadership of Norway and the declared interest of other governments in supporting NCDs as a development issue.
3. The value of “real world” experience, including risks faced by youth, lived experience and multiple conditions. Greater integration of youth and people with lived experience at the center of the NCD agenda will catalyse resources and effect change, including how systems outside of health can be influenced to address NCD prevention and treatment and the importance of youth engagement.

### What makes you a good candidate for NCDA President?

My commitment to NCDA was first inspired by the recognition that the shared approach across NCDs and risk factors was a game-changer and still is. This dates back to NCDA's founding when I was VP Global Strategies at American Cancer Society and we provided some initial support for NCDA and UICC global advocacy, followed by six years as World Heart Federation CEO on the steering group, including supporting the strengthening national NCD alliances and the patient

engagement strategy. I currently serve on the OurViews Our Voices advisory committee and WHO Civil Society Working Group. I'm privileged to have worked with the other current candidates and NCDA members for many years and have a comprehensive understanding of NCDs and their risk factors. Through leadership roles in cancer, CVD and obesity I've also learned much about differences in how these are addressed across geographies and disciplines. Recent work teaching health security as a fellow of Geneva Centre for Security Policy and engaging with food systems, climate change and youth advocacy through World Obesity Federation can benefit the NCD agenda and the NCDA strategy to increase focus on health outside of health systems and to expand the NCD narrative. My experiences as a professional and a patient/caregiver have reinforced the real-world implementation of multisectoral strategies and barriers to effective prevention and treatment.

### Biography

Johanna Ralston has worked in global NCDs since 1999. Since 2017 she has been CEO of the World Obesity Federation. During that time WOF has tripled in size and increased the profile of obesity on the global stage. Prior to that Johanna was CEO of World Heart Federation, mobilising the CVD community for the NCD agenda, partnering with WHO and serving as NCDA steering group member. From 1999 until 2011 Johanna was VP of Global Strategies at American Cancer Society, hired to create a global team and LMIC cancer and tobacco control program. She is a fellow at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and a citizen of Sweden and the US. Johanna attended Harvard Business School, has published in many journals and serves on committees include WEF, WHO and Centre for Food Policy. Johanna is a proud cancer survivor and in remission from MS for 20 years.

## Candidate for NCD Alliance President



**Anne Lise Ryel**

Lawyer/ Board member

Norway

*NCD Alliance Board Member 2019-2021*

### Why would you like to be NCD Alliance President?

When I was elected onto the NCD Alliance Board in 2019, I committed to work with the Board, CEO and team to grow the organisation and drive positive change for people living with NCDs (PLWNCs). Over the last 2 years, I have worked in two Board Committees (Governance and Policy), supported NCD Alliance's fundraising to bring in new donors, and contributed to the development of the new 2021-2026 strategy. I am therefore very familiar with all aspects of the organisation, across governance, strategy, finances, membership and operations. Given there will be a large turnover on the Board in 2021, I believe as President I can offer the continuity which is so important in any organisation, particularly during these turbulent times of COVID-19.

In addition, I am excited by the challenges ahead for global NCDs and the impact our global civil society alliance can have. Having been involved with NCD Alliance since its beginning, I believe strongly in the power of working across diseases and risk factors for a common agenda. The new strategy lays out four goals which would form the basis of my Presidency – foster healthy environments to prevent NCDs; ensure universal access to care; mobilise sustainable financing; and strengthen capacity of members, alliances and PLWNCs. Along with NCD Alliance's global advocacy, I am particularly committed to scaling up NCD Alliance's work at national / regional levels, as I believe this is the key to translating commitments into action. Our members are the foundations of NCD Alliance, and I would be honoured to work with you as President.

### What makes you a good candidate for NCD Alliance President?

Along with my time on the NCD Alliance Board, I have a 20-year track record in global health and NCDs, managed large NGOs and Board experience of international organisations, worked in government and with WHO, have solid relationships with many NCD Alliance members and partners, and have first-hand experience of NCDs as a cancer survivor.

I bring 18 years' experience as CEO of the largest cancer organisation in Europe - the Norwegian Cancer Society, which is a member of NCD Alliance. I have led international and regional campaigns on tobacco control, access to medicines and palliative care, and sat on the

Board of international health organisations (including UICC). I established and chaired the Norwegian NCD Alliance with other disease groups, which successfully advocated for the first national NCD strategy. As a woman who has survived cancer, I have consistently argued for PLWNCs to be meaningfully involved in the response, and helped shape NCD Alliance's initiative Our Views, Our Voices. My career in government and politics complements my civil society experience and gives me a strong understanding of how to influence policy, which is so important for NCD Alliance's advocacy work.

For me, a President requires a number of core skills - they must have a strong network to draw upon; they must be a good consensus-builder; and they must keep in mind that they represent the membership of NCD Alliance and have the time to meet the demands of such an important role. I believe my skills and experience are well matched for the role of NCD Alliance President.

### Biography

Anne Lise Ryel has been a NCD Alliance Board member for 2019-2021. She was Secretary General of the Norwegian Cancer Society (NCS) for 18 years until 2020, championing the fight against cancer and NCDs nationally and internationally. She established the Norwegian NCD Alliance in 2010. She has a multisectoral background: A lawyer by training working in the private sector; as the Norwegian Gender Equality Ombudsman; a Deputy Director General at the Norwegian Directorate of Health; and in politics as Deputy Minister at the Norwegian Ministry of Justice. Anne Lise has been chair/ member of numerous boards and expert groups over the last 30 years, including Board member at Union for International Cancer Control (UICC); board member of European Cancer League; member of WHO GCM/NCD Working group on private sector involvement; Steering Group member of WHO Community of Practice on Meaningful Involvement of PLWNCs; and CEDAW Committee monitoring UN Human Rights Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women.



## Candidate for NCDA Board of Directors



### **Nooshin Bazargani**

Consultant Cardiologist, Deputy Head  
of Dubai Heart Centre  
Dubai, UAE

### **Why would you like to be on the NCDA Board of Directors?**

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have been greatly neglected during the COVID-19 pandemic. This happening is primarily due to budget deviations and patient's inability to access adequate healthcare services. While the attention shift to COVID-19 is well-intentioned, it must not be done at the expense of NCDs. NCDs remain the number one cause of mortality in the world and mortality rates are increasing with this lack of attention.

A position on the NCDA Board of directors will give me the opportunity to have an impact on overall NCD policy direction. Acting as the voice of my fellow Middle Eastern doctors, I will use my experiences in this region to propose new policy positions that will remove the obstacles for NCD management. My focus will be on promoting early recognition, early treatment, public education, and increasing the resources for NCD management.

This is a crucial time for NCDs board of directors because NCDs affecting and affected by COVID-19. Diversity in the gender and geographic distribution of the board members is necessary for successful NCDs leadership.

### **What makes you a good candidate for the NCDA Board of Directors?**

I have been treating patients with cardiac illnesses, metabolic disease, cardiac oncology, and diabetes for the past 25 years. My experience in treating my patients gives me a good understanding of the barriers to good NCD management. I have served as the Vice president of the World Heart Federation (WHF). In that position, I was a leader in setting up a policy for heart disease management. The WHF managed to convince governments to increase funding for heart disease by highlighting the high mortality and morbidity impact of the disease. The increase in budget went towards early recognition, proper treatment, and public education. Where budgets were restricted we had to think outside the box. As an example, In low-middle income countries with limited resources, we suggested that non-health professional workers could be trained to help in providing basic health service in remote areas.

As the Chair Of Preventive Cardiology of Emirates Cardiac Society, I have set up the strategic plan and implementation for early recognition and treatment of cardiovascular disease In the United Arab Emirates. I have extensive experience in organising international and regional conferences and public campaigns. Both of which are important in increasing the recognition of NCDs in the region.

As a member of the NCD task force for the high-level meeting in The United Nations, it gave me the opportunity to study and recognise the ways that can make NCDs more prioritised at the global level.

### **Biography**

Dr. Bazargani is a consultant Cardiologist stationed at Dubai Health Authority. She has focused on the recognition, management and prevention of heart disease at the primary and secondary levels. She has been the principal organiser for public campaigns and health education in UAE. She has established the first Heart Failure clinic and anticoagulation clinic in Dubai Hospital. She has received numerous awards for her extensive activities in UAE. She has been involved in several local and international research activities and has published in several regional and international journals.

### **Main positions:**

- Deputy head of Dubai cardiac center
- Vice president of the World Heart Federation (2018-2020)
- Chair, CVD prevention working group of Emirates Cardiac Society
- Member of UAE national CVD committee
- Member of UAE national NCD committee
- Appointed by the President of the General Assembly of the United Nation as a member of NCDs Task Force with WHO in UN (2012)
- Member of AHA international committee









## Candidate for NCDA Board of Directors



**Marie Hauerslev**  
Chair, NCD Child  
Denmark

### Why would you like to be on the NCDA Board of Directors?

I would like to be on the NCDA Board of Directors because of my passion for advocating for youth representation in the NCD space. This passion is underpinned by a deep understanding of what is needed to improve the status quo, and support and amplify youth voices within the NCDA and broader global health landscape. I am recognised as a leader in global health; serving as the Chair of the WHO NCD Lab “Next Generation”, a Commissioner on the Lancet Commission on Gender-based Violence and Maltreatment of Young People, and advising the WHO on the future WHO Youth Council. I also have experience in governance, through leading large organisations, including the largest student health organisation in the world - the International Federation of Medical Students’ Associations (IFMSA). As the global leader of IFMSA’s external work, I collaborated with the UN, WHO, and World Medical Association, among other organisations, and have driven change in leadership in the youth and NCDs movement since 2017. Despite my age, I have contributed to the NCD landscape over the years through my work to change the unjust and unequal nature of NCDs. I am a strong believer in NCDA’s vision: A world where everyone has the opportunity for a healthy life, free from preventable suffering, stigma and death caused by NCDs. I share the mission of NCDA to unite and strengthen the capacity of civil society networks. For these reasons, I would like to be on the NCDA Board of Directors and serve as a champion for collaborative advocacy, action and accountability.

### What makes you a good candidate for the NCDA Board of Directors?

As a Danish physician and a youth advocate in the NCD space for the past 8 years, I understand the strategies needed to advance progress for NCD prevention and control. I will come to the NCDA Board of Directors with a well-established network in the nexus of global health and youth participation. This network can be deployed to broker knowledge on NCD evidence, policy and practice. Through my pediatric clinical work, and as Chair of NCD Child - the first ever young person elected for this position - I have championed child health and rights through global advocacy, evidence-based work and partnerships. As Chair, I have launched the Young

Leaders Program and secured public meetings with the WHO Director General about NCDs, youth and COVID. I have also initiated a youth-led COVID-19 campaign, and led the strategic planning process behind NCD Child’s recent progress. I seek out every opportunity to deliver results and impact within the NCD space, and I will leverage my experience and networks as a member of the Board of Directors of NCDA.

### Biography

Marie Hauerslev is a Danish physician and the Chair of NCD Child - the first ever young person elected for this position. As Chair, Marie has initiated the Young Leaders Program, secured public meeting with the WHO Director General about NCDs, youth and COVID, initiated a youth COVID-campaign and led the strategic planning process behind NCD Child’s recent progress. Dr. Hauerslev is the Chair of the WHO GCM/ NCD Lab on Youth, and a Commissioner on the Lancet Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Maltreatment of Young People. As Vice-President for External Affairs and Liaison Officer to WHO of the International Federation of Medical Students’ Associations (IFMSA), Dr. Hauerslev was the global leader of IFMSA’s external work, collaborating with the UN, WHO, World Medical Association and more. Marie was the driving force behind IFMSA’s leadership in the youth and NCDs movement in 2017. Dr. Hauerslev has worked at WHO Global Coordination Mechanism for NCDs focusing on children and youth.



## Candidate for NCD Board of Directors



**Eva Njenga**

Chair, NCD Alliance Kenya  
Kenya

### Why would you like to be on the NCD Board of Directors?

Through NCDAs advocacy platform and influence, I hope to improve population health outcomes, make healthcare accessible and affordable to ensure that no one is left behind, and ensure accountability. We need to see the strength of CSOs harnessed and governments take up their responsibility to ensure that health as a basic right for all citizens is actualised for the highest attainable level of health for all. I am currently involved in advocacy for health system strengthening for people-centred care and have been instrumental in regulating health practice and ensuring the provision of quality health services to all in Kenya.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the gaps in healthcare systems and highlighted the importance of mitigating NCDs and other chronic conditions through strengthening health systems in Kenya and globally. The pandemic exacerbates the disparities and inequities in access to healthcare with vulnerable populations being the most affected. My participation in the COVID-19 response and assessment of health system readiness and strengthening for UHC in Kenya has given me the requisite additional experience to advocate and lobby for African governments to prioritise health care as a basic need for its citizens, thus ensuring the highest attainable level of health for all. With sub-Saharan Africa and other low- and middle-income countries on the verge of an NCD tsunami, I would like to bring my experience to halt and reverse this impending disaster by working with like-minded individuals and organisations through the NCD Alliance Board.

### What makes you a good candidate for the NCD Board of Directors?

I bring a wealth of experience to the NCD Alliance Board of Directors having worked across the healthcare spectrum from clinical practice; academia, research, pre-service and in-service training of healthcare professionals; regulation of professional practice and drug regulatory affairs; to policy development and implementation.

I am currently involved in advocacy for health system strengthening for people-centred care as Chair of the Non-communicable Diseases Alliance Kenya and co-chair of the NCD Inter-agency Coordinating Committee

of the Ministry of Health (Kenya). As the current Chair of the Kenya Medical Practitioners' and Dentists' Council, I have been instrumental in regulating health practice and ensuring the provision of quality health services to all in Kenya.

I am a strong advocate for a people-centred approach and throughout my career I have worked to ensure that no one, especially the vulnerable, marginalised, and under-represented populations, is left behind.

I believe I will make a significant contribution to the Board making NCD prevention and control a priority everywhere especially in sub-Saharan Africa and other low- and middle-income countries.

### Biography

Dr Eva Njenga, Mmed (UoN), MBS, is a well-respected and world-renowned endocrinologist with vast experience and knowledge in Tropical Medicine, Social Medicine and Medical Anthropology, and a Fellow at Harvard University. She is the Founder Director of the DMI Centre; Chair of the NCD Alliance Kenya and is the 1st female Chair of Kenya Medical Practitioners' and Dentists' Council. She sits on the Advisory Board of Diabetes Africa, African Research Universities Alliance. Dr Njenga is the Chair of the National Coordination Centre for Isolation & Quarantine Facilities in Kenya and team leader of the MOH Technical Team for Mitigation of COVID-19 Pandemic and Strengthening of Health Systems for UHC. Dr Njenga's exemplary work through service, and commitment, to healthcare matters in Kenya, saw her being awarded State Honours by President Uhuru Kenyatta as Moran of the Order of the Burning Spear (MBS). Dr Njenga is a passionate NCDs champion and cares very much about people's health.



## Candidate for NCD Board of Directors



**Jan Peloza**

Co-founder, Slovenian NCD Alliance  
Slovenia

### Why would you like to be on the NCD Board of Directors?

Joining the NCD Alliance Board of Directors would be a dream coming true as getting on board with such an influential organisation as the NCD Alliance is not an everyday practice and an opportunity that many get. For that, I feel blessed. Joining this body would mean fulfilling the expectations of my constituency to connect the youth health work to global public health and therefore showcase the importance of this area to a broader public health community. Furthermore, as a Slovenian and a South-Eastern European (SEE), my position would mean a representation for a region that is rather underrepresented both in the membership and leadership of NCD Alliance. Being a part of a decision body of NCD Alliance would allow me to have a closer look at the mechanisms of a successful global network and therefore help me to be a multiplier in the long run for other members that are currently undergoing organisational development.

Since I see myself as a good public health communicator and advocate, I am sure that I can help the NCD Alliance in shaping messages for future campaigns and actions, while my experience in leading national and international alliances, could help the governance of the organisation. Although SEE NGOs usually operate on different fundamentals than the majority of Western European and American NGOs do, I am sure that a different view in fundraising and partnership-building can benefit the NCD Alliance a lot. I am fully committed to serve as a Board member for the full mandate and if feasible, continue my work also after the mandate is over in any other capacity.

### What makes you a good candidate for the NCD Board of Directors?

I have been active for over 15 years in the public health sector and I have over 20 years of experience in civic engagement, both in Slovenia and globally. I believe that joining such an important global player as the NCD Alliance would help both the communities I serve in with a broader overview to the case and also the NCD Alliance with a grass-root approach that is nowadays very valuable.

I am a very positive and hard-working person. From the first hand, I know what it means to live with an NCD, while at the same time continuing with the grass-root work and building alliances to advance the case of my team. Although my condition is currently in remission, I am committed to giving my 100 %, when it will not be, indeed in line with what my body will allow. Additionally, I believe that I can bring to the table a lot of connections in other sectors, where I have tied a number of strong connections and relations - youth engagement, social entrepreneurship and sustainable development sectors.

### Biography

I am a computer engineer, have a master's degree in social marketing and I am currently finishing my MBA. I was the first president of the Alcohol Policy Youth Network and the funder of one of the most successful Slovenian NGOs, the Youth Network No Excuse. As a youth leader/worker, I contributed to the development of the European health promotion and health-advocacy sector, while at the same time as a trainer helped youth to become socially engaged as organisers of many successful international events. I am a member of the World Economic Forum Global Shapers Community and I received (individually or collectively) a number of awards for my work, including the European Commission's Health Award, EC's Youth Award, and the WHO's WNTD Award. I am the Director of the Slovenian Youth Agency, the President of the European Youth Card Association and the Acting Secretary General of the International Youth Health Organization.













**MAKING NCD PREVENTION AND CONTROL A PRIORITY, EVERYWHERE**

**SHARE. DISCUSS. ENGAGE. CHANGE.**



**#NCDs @ncdalliance**