



The Honourable Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi  
Minister of Health  
Department of Health  
Private Bag X399, PRETORIA 0001

26 October 2018

Dear Minister Motsoaledi,

### **NCDs civil society exclusion from Health Summit**

The exclusion of NCDs civil society organisations (CSOs) from participation in the recent Presidential Health Summit is noted with great concern. NCDs are the leading cause of death in South Africa and are overwhelmingly neglected in terms of prevention and care with diabetes ranked as the number one killer of women in South Africa.

Our exclusion from the Health Summit is a proxy indicator for the neglect of NCDs (including mental health) by the National Department of Health. The *WHO South Africa NCDs Country Profile 2018* lays this bare. Other indicators are:

- National Development Plan 2030 Chapter 10 is very light on the prevention and control of NCDs and this reflects at every level in the health system.
- Failure of the NCDs Strategic Plan 2013-2017 with a lack of transparent review and coproduction of a new costed evidence based person-centred plan.
- Failure to establish the NHI SA National Health Commission focusing on NCDs prevention and control.
- Failure to consult on NCDs policy development with NCDs CSOs and a lack of coherence.
- Late, or no, inclusion NCDs CSOs in the conceptualisation and planning projects leaving civil society no option but to refrain from participation. E.g. Wellness Campaign, mass NCDs screening campaign
- Failure to finalise a standard operating procedure for the screening, counselling and referral of diabetes, hypertension and obesity. The NCDs CSOs have invested much time in this with the NDoH NCDs cluster.
- Inequitable and pitiful funding (less than R2 million) for NCDs CSOs from the health budget.

NCDs CSOs support UHC as the most important way to provide for equitable access to integrated health care. The *WHO Framework on Integrated Person-Centered Health Services* enhances the health systems strengthening model that excluded patients/people. It stresses that integration is complex and cannot be achieved by simply combining services. We reiterate that our wish to collaborate as partners and stakeholders to ensure integrated NCDs person-centred care within the NHI. The exclusion of NCDs CSOs make it possible for the NHI to continue proving care in MDGs inspired inequitable silos. For us, this is a social justice issue. We want to see a considered return to the Alma Ata concept of primary health care.

The SANCDAs requests a meeting to discuss the exclusion of NCDs CSO and to start a process to rectify this oversight and ensure our full participation. We wish to make inputs into the report to be published 10 December and to note the exclusion of NCDs CSOs.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Vicki Pinkney-Atkinson PhD, RN**  
**Director**