Key issues for impact on health education and health literacy for NCDs

- comments from the World Organization of Family Doctors for the WHO GCM/NCD Working Group Third Meeting - 26-27 February 2018
Congratulations!

• Support the emphasis on recognition of need to support individual and communities to improve understanding, self care and prevention of NCDs
• Agree that health literacy is an important aspect, and this needs to be addressed equitably to take into account different personal backgrounds
• Appreciate that there is a role here for different parts of the social system
• Also agree that new digital technologies can help access and uptake
  • To note
• NCDs and health literacy are core business for family doctors
• WONCA’s reach is global, we have expertise in basic medical education and postgraduate speciality training in this area, as well as in-practice CPD for primary care teams
Comments

• Health literacy is a byproduct of social determinants of health – reducing poverty and improving education will assist, and this can also reduce NCDs

• Health workers generally will not impact on the ‘big picture’ causes, but we can
  1. **Take into account the communication, literacy, and health literacy skills of our patients** - and vary our information and plan of care to account for these
  2. **Ensure that patient education and engagement is part of routine care**

• Fragmented care and lack of continuity tends to undermine personalised integrated care, of which work on health literacy over time is a key component

• Therefore systems who wish to achieve high health literacy need to ensure that the public have a team of doctors, nurses and others from whom they receive frontline care for all NCDs over time, and who develop their HL in this context

• Community teams of medical generalists (GPs / family doctors) & nurses trained to prevent, diagnose and manage NCDs are the best workforce model for this need

• Key competencies needed are consultation skills, motivational interviewing, empathy, and behavioural change - as well as technical knowledge about NCDs