Dear Colleagues

Response by World Organisation of Family Doctors to WHO’s consultation on the “Draft terms of reference for a global coordination mechanism for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases”

The World Organisation of Family Doctors (WONCA) represents over half a million family doctors in 130 countries and territories across the world. Its mission is to improve the quality of life of people through fostering high standards of care in general practice/family medicine.

WONCA welcomes the draft terms of reference for a global coordination mechanism for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and would like to specifically respond to question three outlined in the consultation: “Are there a set of initial working groups that Member States and international partners would like to see established?”

The 2008 World Health Report underlined the need to strengthen Primary Health Care, “Now more than ever” through four sets of reform: universal coverage; service delivery; public policy; and leadership reforms. Focusing on service delivery reforms, the report goes on to outline that “primary care brings promotion and prevention, cure and care together in safe, effective and socially productive way at the interface between the population and the health system”. These are fundamental concepts in addressing the growing burden of non-communicable diseases. Family Doctors, in collaboration with a range of other primary care health workers, including primary care nurses and community health workers, are essential in the delivery of good quality, cost-effective comprehensive, coordinated, continuous, person-centered primary care.

Although there are examples where primary care has made notable improvements in recent years, significant efforts are still needed in many countries to strengthen primary care service delivery, and maintain previous investment in primary care services despite economic difficulties.

With this in mind the World Organisation of Family Doctors would like to recommend a working group be established on Strengthening and Facilitating Primary Care Service Delivery to support the WHO Global NCD Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013–2020.

With best regards

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