To whom it may concern,

FIGO thanks WHO for the opportunity to give feedback and input into the outcome document for the WHO Global Conference on NCDs in Montevideo in October 2017. As FIGO is dedicated to the improvement of women’s health and rights, and to the reduction of disparities in healthcare available to women and newborns, we feel it is important to contribute to this important document from this perspective.

We feel that the document doesn’t include enough on pre-pregnancy and pregnancy influences on future NCDs, or on women’s health more widely. We would like more emphasis placed on these aspects and also for it to be more specific about the unique opportunity which pregnancy provides for prediction, management and prevention of NCDs in the mother, offspring and future generations.

We would like to suggest that the following three paragraphs are added to the document:

We recognize that:

• Maternal and child health is inextricably linked with non-communicable diseases and their risk factors. For example, prenatal malnutrition and low birth weight create a predisposition to obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes later in life, and that pregnancy complications, such as gestational diabetes, pre-eclampsia, preterm labor and maternal obesity are associated with similar risks in both the mother and her offspring.

• Maternal malnutrition, obesity and hyperglycemia and other complications in pregnancy are significant public health challenges with adverse impact on maternal, newborn and child health with significant implications for the future burden of obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiological disorders globally.

• Pregnancy offers a unique opportunity to integrate maternal and child health services with health promotion and NCD prevention thereby providing a bridge to create more integrated services at the primary care level.

• Any efforts on NCD prevention and control must therefore begin with and substantially focus on preconception and maternal health.

We thank you for the opportunity to feedback on this document and hope you will consider our suggestions.

Best wishes

Johan Vos
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