



IFPA Secretariat  
Gustavslundsvägen 143  
167 51 Bromma  
SWEDEN

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus  
Director General  
World Health Organization

*Stockholm, 27.06.2017*

Dear Dr. Tedros,

On behalf of the Board of IFPA - the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as the new Director General of the WHO. Your appointment comes at a critical time, not only for the WHO, but also for global public health, and we believe that your strong leadership and vision will make all the difference in the years to come.

*Firstly*, we would like to briefly introduce you to our organization – IFPA is a non-profit umbrella organization gathering 55 national and regional psoriasis associations, from 54 countries. For the past 45 years, IFPA has been the voice of the 125 million people with psoriasis worldwide, and continuously sought to resolve the challenges facing the global psoriasis community.

In the last couple of years, IFPA has seen **great progress in the way the WHO has addressed psoriasis**. In 2014, the WHO Resolution on Psoriasis was adopted, followed by the release of the Global Psoriasis Report in 2016. Both policy tools have been instrumental in the national awareness raising and advocacy activities of psoriasis patients in many countries in the world.

In our view, the WHO is at its best when listening to the voices of affected people, and acting up on them, cooperating on the way with civil society on all levels. We look forward to developing such cooperation with you and your team.

*Secondly*, **we are inspired by and share your vision to improve health for everyone**. Working with people with psoriasis, we witness daily the challenges of not having access to care, treatment or counselling or having it, but accompanied with high out-of-pocket expenses. Like you, we see the value of continuing the discussions on universal health coverage and access to medicines, until we start living in a world where they are not a privilege, but a right.

*Thirdly*, **we look to your leadership in preventing and reducing the burden of NCDs**. It is a paradox that these largely preventable diseases are the biggest



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cause of mortality and disability worldwide, slowly emerging into one of the key economic problems of health systems and governments. We see an increased need to urgently look for 'red threads' in the NCD arena, and to strengthen health systems with measures which can yield results.

One example in this area is psoriasis, which is one of the most prevalent non-communicable diseases worldwide. *Psoriasis is in the intersection of the global NCD discussions* – one hand, it is affected by the four main risk factors, and on the other, it is a pre-condition related to the four main NCDs<sup>1</sup>. Recent social return on investments study (SROI) in Spain reveals, that for every 1 EUR (budget, governmental) invested in the ideal management of psoriasis, the social return is 5.04 EUR (in wellbeing, quality of life, access to care). Putting such models into practice is therefore both an improvement in the patient experience and a cost-effective solution for the health systems. We are certain that many similar examples and approaches can be identified, and we strongly believe that they offer a solution for the global NCD challenges.

Ultimately, **we seek your continuous support in involving non-governmental organizations and other patient associations in the work of the WHO.** Leading up to 2020, we are looking at an ambitious task, to fulfil the targets in the WHO NCD Global Action Plan, and to reflect and revise our commitments. The end result of achieving any global goal has to be improving the everyday life of people, the millions of patients worldwide, whose destinies are often dependent on the political will and initiative. We therefore look forward to continuous patient involvement, in creating a better world for all.

We wish you the very best in your new position and we look forward to exploring new ways in which we can work together, for the vision that we share.

Yours sincerely,

Lars Ettarp  
IFPA President

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<sup>1</sup> People with severe psoriasis face 46% higher chances of developing diabetes, and are 58% more likely to have a serious cardiac event, respectively. Recent research identifies positive relation between psoriasis and certain types of cancers, as well as COPD.