

# Leveraging the World Health Assembly resolution on chronic kidney disease to drive local action

This year marks a turning point for kidney health on the global stage. For the first time, chronic kidney disease (CKD) has been formally recognised as a global health priority. In May 2025, the World Health Assembly (WHA) adopted [Resolution WHA 78.6](#) on kidney health,<sup>1</sup> and in September 2025, the draft [UN Political Declaration](#) on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) included CKD.<sup>2</sup>

Until now, CKD has been deprioritised within major initiatives, including the EU's Healthier Together Programme (2022-2027),<sup>3</sup> and was not noted by the World Health Organization (WHO) among its priority NCDs, despite its significant and growing burden.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, this year's policy developments mark historic milestones for a condition long overlooked.

This also means that for the first time, the kidney health community has a powerful global mandate to leverage recognition, political attention, and resources for CKD. **Patient advocacy groups (PAGs) have a vital role in driving this change, ensuring that kidney health is no longer overlooked and underprioritised.**

## The significance of a WHA Resolution



WHA resolutions are formal decisions adopted by the WHA – the official decision-making body of the WHO.<sup>5</sup> Whilst not legally binding, they are the central forum for setting international health policies, and hold significant influence in shaping national policies, global health priorities, and WHO programmes.<sup>6</sup>

## What does the 2025 WHA Resolution say about CKD?



The WHA 78.6 resolution recognises CKD as a growing global health crisis – affecting 674 million people worldwide and projected to become the fifth leading cause of death by 2050.<sup>1</sup> It notes that CKD **“significantly impacts economies and societies, requires complex management and contributes disproportionately to national healthcare costs.”**<sup>1</sup>

The WHA 78.6 resolution urges governments to, amongst other things:<sup>1</sup>

- **Integrate prevention, early detection, and management of CKD** into national health policies and universal health coverage benefit packages, providing *“financial risk protection and universal access to the full spectrum of good-quality and sustainable kidney care services”*, **particularly for vulnerable populations**
- Provide **high-quality, integrated, and people-centred care**, delivered by an adequately trained workforce
- Strengthen monitoring, research, and **public awareness**, emphasising *“patient education and empowerment”* to inform interventions and improve outcomes
- Encourage different **sectors and countries to work together** to share what's working well, build capacity, and make sure kidney care is reliable and available for everyone
- **Address key risk factors and determinants** through public health interventions, aligning with the targets set out in the [WHO Global action plan](#) for the prevention and control of NCDs 2013-2020 ([extended to 2030 in order to ensure alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#))<sup>7,8</sup>

The resolution also mandates the WHO to:

- Support Member States in integrating kidney health into national policies
- Acknowledge **World Kidney Day** as an official platform
- Report progress every two years, starting in 2027, which can be leveraged by the kidney community to hold the WHO and its member states to account on implementing the recommendations set out in the resolution<sup>1</sup>

# How can you drive change?



The WHA resolution provides a unique opportunity for PAGs to influence regional and national kidney health policies. By aligning your local efforts with the resolution's recommendations, you can help shift the status quo and ensure this momentum on CKD continues to grow and is taken forward as a priority at the national level:

## Raise awareness

- Highlight the resolution in your communications and campaigns to reinforce that kidney health is a WHA endorsed global priority
- Connect the resolution's language to real-life impact, showing how prevention, early detection, and equitable care improve outcomes



For example, see the *Make the Change infographic*

## Engage policymakers

- Map key stakeholders – from health ministers to Members of Parliament – to identify where and how to engage effectively and bring the resolution into key conversations
- Use the resolution commitments to call for our shared advocacy goals – such as integration of CKD into universal health coverage or expanding primary care screening – to be considered within regional and national strategies



## Spotlight the evidence

- Use global (such as ISN's atlas),<sup>9</sup> regional and national data to demonstrate how the resolution's priorities can help governments ease the healthcare and societal burden of CKD
- Pair statistics with lived experience to strengthen the case for action among policymakers



The *Make the Change Evidence Compendium* provides a useful reference point on key statistics

## Build partnerships

- Collaborate with health organisations, medical societies and community actors to amplify calls for local implementation of the resolution
- Leverage the focus on shared risk factors to build alliances and coordinate joint advocacy, such as co-signed policy briefs or open letters, to strengthen your collective voice and influence decision-makers. Draw lessons from successful coalitions that have turned shared priorities into national action (e.g. the *UK CVD-risk coalition*)<sup>10</sup>



# Let's make it happen

The WHA resolution presents a strategic opportunity to prioritise kidney health on national agendas. Focused advocacy and coordinated action can translate global commitments into concrete regional and national initiatives that improve the lives of people with CKD. **The resolution mandate empowers PAGs to turn global recognition into meaningful, lasting impact for those living with kidney disease.**

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. Reducing the burden of noncommunicable diseases through promotion of kidney health and strengthening prevention and control of kidney disease. 2025. Available at: [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA78/A78\\_R6-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA78/A78_R6-en.pdf). Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. Rev.4 Political declaration of the fourth high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and the promotion of mental health and well-being. 2025. Available at: <https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/ncds/finalized-pd-on-ncds-and-mental-health-rev4-3-september-2025.pdf>. Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>3</sup> European Union. Healthier together : EU non-communicable diseases initiative. Publications Office of the European Union. 2022. Available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2875/195572>. Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>4</sup> Francis A, et al. Chronic kidney disease and the global public health agenda: an international consensus. *Nature Review Nephrology*. 2024. Available at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41581-024-00820-6>. Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>5</sup> World Health Assembly. Governance – World Health Assembly. (no date). Available at: <https://www.who.int/about/governance/world-health-assembly>. Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Ruger P. and Yach, D. The Global Role of the World Health Organization. 2009. Available at: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3981564/>. Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>7</sup> World Health Organization. Global Action Plan. For Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013-2020. 2013. Available at: <https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/15f51d0a-bfbd-43ad-a637-73778feb57e3/content>. Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>8</sup> World Health Organization. Political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. 15 April 2021. Available at: [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA74/A74\\_10Add1-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA74/A74_10Add1-en.pdf). Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>9</sup> ISN-Global Kidney Health Atlas. A comprehensive resource on kidney care worldwide. (no date). Available at: <https://www.theisn.org/in-action/research/global-kidney-health-atlas/>. Accessed 22 October 2025.

<sup>10</sup> AstraZeneca. Prevention: at the heart of tackling cardiovascular disease - A General Election manifesto. June 2024. Available at: [https://www.astrazeneca.co.uk/content/dam/intelligentcontent/unbranded/astrazeneca/uk/en/pdf/Prevention\\_at\\_the\\_heart\\_of\\_tackling\\_cardiovascular\\_disease.pdf](https://www.astrazeneca.co.uk/content/dam/intelligentcontent/unbranded/astrazeneca/uk/en/pdf/Prevention_at_the_heart_of_tackling_cardiovascular_disease.pdf). Accessed 22 October 2025.