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GSCF Calls For WHO-Backed Global Self-Care Agreement

by David Ridley

To coincide with the launch of its wide-ranging report on the state of self-care, the Global Self-Care Federation is calling on governments, policymakers and other stakeholders to work towards a World Health Organization resolution on self-care.

The Global Self-Care Federation is calling for a "global compact" that would pave the way for a future World Health Organization resolution on self-care.

"Through a shared understanding of the value of self-care across countries, we believe that we will build the necessary momentum to fully integrate it into health systems for the benefit of individuals and society," the association stated in a position paper.

"As a global health community, we recognize the need to take collective action on self-care to design resilient health systems," the association continued. "Together, we call on governments, policymakers and actors in the health system to take necessary measures to improve the overall integration of self-care into the healthcare continuum."

"We share the view that a holistic approach to healthcare with self-care at its core is crucial to achieving universal health coverage and ensuring better health outcomes for all," GSCF added. "Ultimately, encouraging individuals to take increased ownership for their health promotes the efficient use of limited healthcare resources."

GSCF also welcomed the "encouraging regulatory flexibilities" introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic that have "translated into efficiencies for health systems" and hoped that these would form the basis for "improved policy and regulations going forward."

Index Launched

The call comes as the association launches its Self-Care Readiness Index, which GSCF describes

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as a “pioneering report” into the state of self-care in 10 countries around the world, and which the association hopes will contribute to its goal of establishing a global self-care compact.

Covering each of the WHO’s six regions: Africa, the Americas, South-East Asia, Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Western Pacific, the countries were analyzed in terms of four key enablers of self-care: stakeholder support and adoption, consumer and patient empowerment, health policy and regulatory environment.

These enablers, GSCF said, offer health systems “action-oriented ways to empower individuals, create better health outcomes, and improve health system sustainability in a time when resources are under lasting pressure.”

“The pandemic has exposed just how fragile our health systems are,” commented GSCF chair and Bayer Consumer Health head Heiko Schipper. “Now is the time to sustainably invest in their future.”

“I believe the Self-Care Readiness Index can help close the gap between the value of self-care and how it is practiced worldwide,” he said. “We need to put the health and well-being of individuals at the center of our health policies to build more sustainable, resilient ways of practicing healthcare.”

Over The Counter, 24 July 2021: Are We Ready To Self-Care? With GSCF's Judy Stenmark

By David Ridley

23 Jul 2021
To mark International Self-Care Day, HBW Insight talks to the Global Self Care Federation's director general, Judy Stenmark, about the impact of pandemic on the global self-care industry, as well as what GSCF is doing to promote self-care in the wake of the pandemic.

Read the full article here

“The effectiveness of self-care in combination with formal approaches to healthcare is often neglected in health policies,” added GSCF director general Judy Stenmark.

“The Index is an extremely practical tool in that it provides stakeholders with ample data and a starting point to recognize how they can strengthen national health policies and take a coherent approach to self-care,” she maintained.

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