

## Key outcomes from the first Global NCD Forum on Children and Youth

Language English



**NCD Child convened its first Global NCD Forum on Children and Youth on 25 and 26 March 2019, supported by Friends of Cancer Patients and Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher Bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, Wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.**

The Global NCD Forum on Children and Youth was directed at young advocates and people living with noncommunicable diseases (PLWNCDs) and their caregivers, with the goal of advancing the narrative around the critical role of family- and community-based interventions as catalysts for a sustained approach into the continuum of care for NCDs. This event is particularly relevant considering the multiple global opportunities for continued engagement, including the World Health Assembly (May 2019) and the UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (September 2019).

Over 40% of the world's population is under the age of 25 years, and most of these young people live in low- and middle-income countries, where the majority of NCDs occur. Hence, NCDs disproportionately affect young populations living in low resource settings. Under this context, the young delegates discussed ways to increase their engagement in local, national, and global NCD efforts, to work towards family-centered solutions.

The forum was divided into tracks, where 50+ advocates, more than half of whom were young champions, learned practical advocacy skills, recognised how their vision and perspective are key assets to national and global decision makers, and identified how they can leverage their experience and networks to immerse themselves into NCD advocacy processes that affect their health.

Throughout the two days, youth participants heard from and discussed with global leaders and organisations, including the NCD Alliance, the American Heart Association, national and regional NCD alliances, as well as experts from the World Health Organization who presented its Knowledge Action Portal as a platform for increased youth engagement.

Two key outcomes resulted from the global forum. First, the **Sharjah Declaration, a call for accelerated action on NCD prevention and control in children, adolescents, and young people** while recognising young leaders as

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essential partners for policy processes, coalitions and campaigns, was launched.

Second, the NCD Child launched its **Young Leaders Program which will become a network of young people ages 19-30**, with the aim of advocating for youth-centered policies, and of providing capacity building skills for young people to help them increase their voices and to ensure their sustained participation in global processes and research.

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