



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

**Statement of the
International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)
70th World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization
Agenda Item 15.6 Cancer prevention and control in the context of an integrated
approach**

Honourable chair,
Distinguished delegates,

IFMSA, representing medical students from more than 124 countries worldwide, would like to address the enormous burden cancer places on our populations. We applaud the WHO for the comprehensive strategy towards cancer prevention and control that is already in place.

We are concerned by the fact that an overall decline in mortality from cancer has not been achieved despite premature mortality from NCDs being prioritized in the SDGs, as well as the existing knowledge on effective interventions.

We would like to call upon the international community to recognize and act upon the major inequity in cancer prevention and control resources. We plead for a more equitable distribution of resources and would like to underline the urgent need of strengthening healthcare systems so they can effectively cope with the burden cancer places on them. This includes assessing which investments are most impactful and therefore focussing not only on costly treatment, but also on preventive measures such as tobacco control.

Thirdly, we would like to highlight the value of a health workforce being equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively address cancer prevention and control in practise. In a survey conducted by IFMSA, most medical students from IFMSA countries indicated that preventive healthcare for NCDs is not adequately addressed during their education. IFMSA is offering to work with relevant stakeholders on improving medical curricula to sufficiently include prevention and social determinants of health as integral components worldwide.

In conclusion, and in order to effectively prevent and control NCDs, we deem it vital to include young people in the development of programmes for cancer prevention, as adolescents are susceptible to develop behaviour that leads to cancer and other NCDs.

1. *Report of the WHO secretariat: Cancer prevention and control in the context of an integrated approach*
2. *The Budva Youth Declaration*
3. *Engaging young people in the prevention of noncommunicable diseases*