



Open letter from the innovative pharmaceutical industry to G20 Ministers in support of the G20 Health Agenda

17 APRIL 2025

Dear G20 Health Ministers,

As global health challenges continue to evolve unpredictably and place mounting pressure on economies and health systems, forums like the G20 serve as a critical catalyst for health collaboration. The innovative pharmaceutical industry is committed to working in collaboration with the South African Presidency and G20 Health Working Group (HWG) to contribute to advancing the priorities of the G20 health agenda.

The innovative pharmaceutical industry significantly contributes to the following [G20 HWG priorities](#): Accelerating Universal Health Coverage (UHC) through a primary health care (PHC) approach; Strengthening human resources for health; Stemming the tide of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs); Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPPR); and Science and innovation for health and economic growth.

Achieving meaningful progress in these areas requires a strong commitment to innovation, which is a cornerstone to robust, dynamic economies and healthy societies. Countries should integrate innovation enablers¹ in domestic, regional, and global policies and programs. These include a robust, stable and predictable intellectual property (IP) framework, respect for the rule of law and policies that incentivize research and development (R&D), and health system strengthening.²

In support of the priorities, we share below our relevant experiences, expertise, and insights, along with specific calls for the HWG to consider for its health agenda.

Summary of Considerations to Advance the G20 Health Agenda

- Above all, **prioritize innovation** by ensuring a robust IP framework, respect for the rule of law, R&D incentives, and resilient health systems;
- Accelerate UHC efforts by supporting PHC, with [life-course immunization](#) as a cornerstone of disease prevention³;
- Strengthen and sustain a skilled health and care workforce including via multi-stakeholder collaboration between governments, private sector, and education institutions;
- Stem the tide of NCDs by investing in and delivering equitable access to NCD prevention, treatment, and care for all, with a focus on collective action as per the [“Call to Action”](#) on NCDs;
- Ensure PPPR by fostering a sustainable innovation ecosystem, comprehensive surveillance mechanisms, and pragmatic partnerships as per the [Partnership for Equitable Access](#) and the [Berlin Declaration](#); and

¹ These enablers are essential for providing legal certainty, which boosts the prospects for increased trade, investment, and voluntary partnerships, including the voluntary transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms within G20 countries.

² See IFPMA's [“Technology Transfer: A Collaborative Approach to Improve Global Health”](#)

³ This should be supported by socio-economic evidence-based advocacy for sustainable financing, strengthened immunization infrastructure, timely coverage monitoring, and empowering healthcare providers to foster vaccine confidence across all generations.

- Advance science and innovation by promoting policies⁴ that position health investments as a key driver of economic growth.

Innovative pharmaceutical industry support for G20 health priorities

Building on this, the following section provides a more detailed perspective for each of the HWG's five priorities, including our targeted considerations for the G20 to advance its health agenda.

Accelerating UHC through a PHC approach

We are committed to progress toward UHC through innovation to achieve health equity, with three foundational elements: improving PHC, ensuring adequate financing, and focusing on multi-stakeholder partnerships. To improve PHC, the innovative pharmaceutical industry support strengthening health infrastructure to ensure that PHC facilities are well-equipped and accessible to all communities and contributes to enhancing the skills and capabilities of healthcare workers. Moreover, industry develops and deploys new medical technologies and treatments, and works constructively with partners to help facilitate affordable access to the widest possible population. PHC frameworks should offer a wide range of services, from preventive care to treatment and rehabilitation. This holistic approach ensures seamless and coordinated health support throughout individuals' lives.

We call on G20 to:

- Prioritize life-course immunization (LCI)⁵ as a cornerstone of disease prevention. Robust national immunization services, across all ages, are foundational for integrated, people-centered PHC. With sustainable financing, comprehensive programmatic improvement, equitable access, and robust coverage monitoring, LCI enhances UHC, reinforces national security, and creates resilient health systems.
- Increase and sustain support for PHC to ensure resilient health systems capable of providing essential services without financial hardship to individuals.

Strengthening human resources (HR) for health

Strengthening HR for health is a critical component of achieving resilient health systems and UHC and requires long-term planning and investment in education and training programs. The innovative pharmaceutical industry supports capacity-building initiatives to strengthen the health workforce, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). This includes supporting training institutions and providing resources for professional development. We provide ongoing education and training for healthcare workers to ensure they remain updated with the latest medical knowledge and technologies. This helps maintain high standards of care and adaptability to new health challenges.

We call on G20 to:

- Foster collaboration between governments, private sector, and educational institutions to create comprehensive skilled workforce development plans. This approach aims to address the diverse needs of health systems and ensure the availability of skilled healthcare workers.

Stemming the tide of NCDs

Since 2000, global deaths due to NCDs have increased rapidly, even as deaths due to communicable diseases have declined. However, research demonstrates that investing an additional 1% of GDP in public healthcare spending, where at least 40% is aimed at preventing

⁴ These policies should safeguard IP rights, create strong incentives for medical innovation, and ensure [technology transfer](#) are based on voluntary and mutually agreed terms (VMAT).

⁵ Life-course immunization not only prevents disease and reduces healthcare costs, but also contributes to longer, healthier lives, greater workforce productivity, and reduced health disparities across populations.

and treating NCDs, could save close to 5 million lives each year in LMICs⁶.

The innovative pharmaceutical industry is committed to playing its part, including through collaborations with other stakeholders. We constantly innovate new and improved products for NCDs treatment and care, developing lifesaving and life-prolonging vaccines and medicines to people worldwide. We also strive to expand access to our innovations by working with others to tackle systemic barriers. For example, in support of medical donation programs, delivery environments, and initiatives to bridge financing gaps in UHC schemes.

Importantly, driving the prevention of NCDs represents one of the most effective and sustainable ways to reduce long-term healthcare costs, helping ensure more efficient use of limited health resources while improving population health. Well-known contributing factors to NCDs originate from non-health sectors, so the response to prevent and control them requires action from government ministries⁷. For example, as the evidence grows on the impact of climate change on health, coherence between effective environmental policies and approaches to tackle respiratory diseases like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) should be established.

The 4th HLM on NCDs and Mental Health in September 2025 is a timely opportunity to remind the world of its commitment to addressing this global challenge collectively. Ahead of this major milestone, we have issued a [“Call to Action”](#) urging collective action across the globe to tackle the rise of NCDs.

We call on G20 to:

- Foster a healthy innovation ecosystem and improve awareness and uptake of medical innovation to address the global NCD and mental health burden⁸.
- Commit to invest more efficiently and effectively in strengthening health systems and to have concrete and actionable financing plans for NCDs and mental health so that we can more equitably reach individuals with integrated prevention, treatment, and care.
- Deliver effective programs and policies to ensure equitable access to NCD prevention, treatment, and care for all. Strengthen national health systems by integrating screening, diagnosis, vaccination, comprehensive treatment options, and rehabilitation programs.
- Implement measures to ensure accountability and high standards across all relevant sectors of government and key health stakeholders to accurately improve and report on the delivery of NCDs and mental health prevention, treatment, and care⁹.

Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPPR)

For sustainable PPPR, the innovative pharmaceutical industry is committed to delivering equitable access to medicines and vaccines globally. In response to the threat of future global pandemics, we developed a set of proposed [commitments for equitable access](#) to essential medical countermeasures before and after a pandemic is declared. These commitments build on the [Berlin Declaration](#) which proposes a framework to enhance the delivery of vaccines and treatments to priority populations during future pandemics. Necessary enablers include preventing export restrictions, financing for pandemic response, strong regulatory systems, respect for IP rights, and strengthened health systems.

To further ensure equitable access, companies use tailored strategies such as innovative contracting, tiered pricing, access solutions/ mechanisms, and capacity-building programmes. For effective technology transfer, which is one of several access models, respect for IP and for

⁶ See IFPMA's [“From innovation to access: Pharmaceutical industry priorities ahead of the 4th UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health.”](#)

⁷ This includes from agriculture, education, labor, industry, finance, transport, energy, and environmental/climate departments.

⁸ This should include essential and innovative NCD medicines, vaccines, diagnostics, and medical devices, supported by appropriate health service delivery models.

⁹ This includes a focus on monitoring the impact of vaccination, early screening, diagnosis, and treatment programs.

the terms to be on voluntary and mutually agreed basis is critical.¹⁰ The ability to select the right manufacturer with the right level of expertise and experience and the ability to scale up are factors that allow effective technology transfer.¹¹ Noting that each jurisdiction is unique, measures and policies that are predicated on flexible, voluntary and mutually agreed approaches allow the industry to adapt and provide solutions that are suited to the needs of the jurisdiction.¹² Initiatives that support diversification of manufacturing should be based on such factors, alongside structural enablers such as sustainable demand, strengthen supply chains, reduction of trade barriers, open trade, and an effective regulatory environment.

The current avian influenza outbreaks highlight the importance of effective, sustainable and comprehensive surveillance systems as the cornerstone of pandemic preparedness, which is underpinned by the rapid and unencumbered access to pathogen samples and associated sequence information. Our ability to globally respond to the threat of influenza and other respiratory viruses must be preserved; surveillance systems, such as the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS), should be safeguarded today and further strengthened in the future.

We call on G20 to:

- Foster a sustainable innovation ecosystem that provides incentives for R&D, including through stable, predictable, and robust IP frameworks and the voluntary transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms within G20 countries.
- Support the operationalization of the [Partnership for Equitable Access](#) and the [Berlin Declaration](#) and shape a future where everyone is better protected from the threat of pandemics.
- Help ensure robust surveillance mechanisms worldwide are sustained as a cornerstone of PPPR.

Science and Innovation for health and economic growth

The spillover effects of the pharmaceutical industry have considerable positive impacts on the global economy. The industry facilitated the creation of approximately 74.9 million jobs, both directly and through spillover effects in 2022.¹³ For every USD 1 of GDP directly generated by the industry, an additional USD 2.04 in value is created along the global supply chain¹⁴. R&D activities within the global pharmaceutical industry alone contributed USD 227 billion to the GDP in 2022 directly, constituting approximately 30% of the industry's total direct GDP contribution¹⁴.

Improvements in health have extended life and enhanced quality of life, contributing to expanding the labor force and productivity and contributing to strong economic growth. For instance, preventable diseases cause G20 economies to lose more than USD 1 trillion annually in productivity among people aged 50 to 64¹⁵. A 2024 Office of Health Economics (OHE) report on the benefit-cost analysis of four adult immunization¹⁶ programs in 10 countries showed how these programs can produce returns of up to 19 times their initial investment to society when benefits beyond the healthcare system are quantified¹⁷.

¹⁰ See IFPMA's ["WIPO Standing Committee on Patents: Statement on Technology Transfer"](#) and ["First-of-its-kind event brings together 10 companies that partnered to deliver vaccines and treatments in response to COVID-19"](#)

¹¹ See IFPMA's ["How different partnership models supported the response against COVID-19"](#)

¹² See IFPMA's ["Technology transfer: A collaborative approach to improve global health"](#) and ["Trade and Health Agenda: A Meaningful World Trade Organization Roadmap to Strengthen Global Health"](#); ["Applying Lessons Learned from COVID-19 to Create a Healthier, Safer, More Equitable World"](#); and Committee On Market Access, Lessons Learned from the Experience—Sharing Sessions on Trade in Covid-19 Related Goods, GA/MA/409, April 2023.

¹³ See IFPMA's ["The economic impact of the global pharmaceutical industry"](#)

¹⁴ See IFPMA's ["Always Innovating: Pharmaceutical Industry Facts and Figures"](#)

¹⁵ See [ILC Report](#)

¹⁶ Global immunization has already saved an estimated 154 million lives over the past 50 years ([WHO](#)). By protecting people's health, immunization contributes to a healthy workforce, decreasing sick days, boosting productivity, and supporting economic growth.

¹⁷ See IFPMA's ["Unlocking the full value of life-course immunization: A key to sustainable healthcare"](#)

A healthier population boosts economic performance, and increased wealth supports further innovation, leading to improved health outcomes. To maintain this virtuous cycle and ensure long-term growth, it's crucial to measure the impact of these investments and enable targeted reinvestment.

We call on G20 to:

- Prioritize health investments as a central driver of economic growth, productivity, and societal well-being, with a focus on prevention, early intervention, and equitable access to care.
- Ensure that key domestic, regional and global policies incentivize medical innovation¹⁸ and promote essential R&D of medicines, vaccines, and diagnostics.
- Safeguard IP rights which play a crucial role in protecting inventions and incentivizing the high-risk R&D investments that drive pharmaceutical innovations¹⁹.
- Acknowledge that technology transfer is one of the many access models that are used by the private sector to make vaccines, treatments and diagnostics (VTDs) available. Technology transfer should always be on voluntary and mutually agreed terms.²⁰

Conclusion

The innovative pharmaceutical industry welcomes the G20 Health priorities and stands ready support the HWG. Collective action and working in partnership with the private sector are essential. It is more critical than ever to recognize health not as a cost, but as a fundamental investment in our collective future. Strengthening health systems, ensuring equitable access to care, prioritizing prevention, protecting, and promoting research and innovation will not only safeguard lives but also drive economic resilience and stability. As you convene to discuss G20 HWG priorities, we urge you to adopt a forward-looking approach that places health at the core of sustainable development and global prosperity.

¹⁸ Such policies include those that promote adherence to the rule of law, development of skilled workforces, health-related data flows, and implementation of robust IP and other pro-innovation regulatory frameworks

¹⁹ IP protections sustain an innovation ecosystem based on stability, certainty, and predictability of rules, in which innovators are incentivized to embark on the complex journey of pharmaceutical R&D and voluntary partnerships.

²⁰ See IFPMA's "[WIPO Standing Committee on Patents: Statement on Technology Transfer](#)" and "[First-of-its-kind event brings together 10 companies that partnered to deliver vaccines and treatments in response to COVID-19](#)"