

Speech: UK Statement at UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases

This is a momentous occasion and I would like to thank Uruguay and Italy in bringing forward this declaration.

As we have heard today, NCDs are increasing in all countries and account for 71% of all global deaths each year. That is why this declaration is a wakeup call for us all to make reforms.

We continue to provide UK financial support internationally to improve the provision of basic health services for the poorest by supporting health systems strengthening, health worker capacity and access to essential medicines. Having these foundations in place helps countries strengthen their capabilities in tackling NCDs.

We have also invested ODA funding in the FCTC 2030 project to support improvements in tobacco control in 15 countries. The project support is already demonstrating a positive impact. For example, Georgia recently introduced smoke-free legislation and a ban on tobacco advertising.

The Government also has a significant research portfolio (approx. £60M) focused on addressing NCDs (lung health, diabetes, cardiovascular disease) in low and middle income countries, through the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) global health research funding.

In the UK, we continue to address NCDs and make progress.

We have introduced tough tobacco legislation and we are seeing progress with smoking rates the lowest they have been (at 15.1%) in the UK.

We are committed to reducing the harms from alcohol and in 2016 we published the UK Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines to help people make informed decisions about their drinking.

We have NHS health checks available to those at 40 to monitor people's health and assess if they should change their lifestyle choices.

Earlier this year we introduced the soft drinks industry levy to reduce the amount of sugar in soft drinks (which has already resulted in a 11% reduction in sugar per 100ml in these drinks), and we have set an ambition to halve childhood obesity by 50% by 2030.

We are implementing a national dementia strategy (the Challenge on Dementia 2020) with a range of commitments to transform the experience of people with dementia and their carers.

We are part way through an ambitious programme to transform adult and

children and young people's mental health services by 2020, supported by record levels of investment.

These are just a small sample of work happening and there are plenty more. The UK is committed to tackling NCDs and we are as always willing to share our experiences and learn lessons from others to help deliver and protect people and communities in tackling NCDs.

We welcome the political declaration.