

European ME Alliance Statement
WHO Regional Committee Meeting for Europe
27-29 October 2026, Copenhagen, Denmark

Agenda Item 11: Toward a strategy and action plan for tackling noncommunicable diseases and advancing well-being through health promotion in the WHO European Region 2027-2037

Honourable Chair, distinguished delegates,

The European ME Alliance urges WHO and Member States to ensure that this strategy does not leave behind people living with chronic, disabling conditions that fall outside the traditional focus on the major NCDs.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, known as ME, and sometimes referred to as ME/CFS, is a clear example.

ME is a serious, chronic and severely disabling physical illness.

Patients are exhausted not only by their disease, but by the constant struggle to have their suffering recognised.

Many lack the physical capacity to defend themselves or advocate for their most basic needs.

They are further harmed by the lack of understanding, compassion and appropriate care they encounter.

Years of disbelief, neglect and inadequate care compound the suffering caused by the disease itself, leaving them in profound distress and despair.

We cannot speak of preventing premature mortality while overlooking the suffering of people with severe chronic diseases, including those whose circumstances place them at risk of suicide.

Therefore, a modern NCD strategy must look beyond mortality alone. It must address **years lived with disability, quality of life, functional ability, participation in family and social life, and access to appropriate care**, including healthcare delivered in the home when the severity of illness makes travelling impossible.

The success of the strategy should not be measured only by how many lives it saves, but also by how effectively it enables people to live with dignity, and how effectively it promotes legal and policy safeguards against exclusion and discrimination.

Thank you.

European ME Alliance website: <https://www.europeanmealliance.org/emea-news-whoe-RCP76.shtml>