



Statement of Ireland

79th World Health Assembly

Items 12.1 & 12.2

**Follow-up to the political declaration of the high-level meeting of the
General Assembly on the prevention & control of NCDs**

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Mental health

21 May 2026

Honourable Chair,

Distinguished Director-General,

Distinguished Delegates,

Chair,

NCDs remain a major global health challenge and Ireland is committed to the implementation of the measures outlined in the political declaration and to delivering on our commitments for the prevention and control of NCDs.

Ireland reiterates its support for promoting healthy lifestyles, improved oral health, effective alcohol and tobacco control policies and regular physical activity.

Ireland welcomes the reinforced recognition of oral health within the political declaration, and we hope this will support the implementation of the WHO Global Oral Health Action Plan, and the integration of oral health within the broader NCD and mental health agenda.

Chair,

Ireland is committed to a partnership approach that places people at the centre of our mental health policies and services, and fosters a ‘mental health in all policies’ approach.

Earlier this month, Ireland enacted the Mental Health Act 2026, following years of drafting, consultation and debate. This represents the largest overhaul of mental health legislation in decades, introducing a more person-centred approach to mental health legislation.

Ireland has embedded lived experience expertise in policy design and service delivery has been enhanced with the integration of peer support roles and lived experience experts into our health system.

The professionalisation of lived experience has been supported through a dedicated office for Mental Health Engagement and Recovery, which ensures that lived experience experts are embedded in both mental health policy and service delivery.

Ireland was a key partner of WHO Europe in the development of a Roadmap for Integrating Lived and Living experience practitioners into policy, services and community.

Our policy approach, aligned with WHO guidance, recognises that mental health is not just the remit of the health service: it is a whole-of-society issue.

To this end, Ireland supports the WHO's Mental Health in all Policies approach and was a signatory to the Paris Declaration in June 2025, reinforcing Ireland's commitment to placing mental health at the centre of policy development.

To conclude, Ireland welcomes the opportunity provided by this Assembly to develop, align and explore areas for further cooperation between Member States in advancing mental health in policy making.

Thank you