



Norwegian NCD Alliance

Providing a united civil society platform for cancer and other NCDs

In 2013, Norway became the first country to adopt a national non-communicable disease (NCD) strategy in response to commitments made in the World Health Organization Global Action Plan for NCDs (2013-2020). This achievement was due in large part to the efforts of the Norwegian NCD Alliance, founded in 2011 and consisting of the Norwegian Diabetes Association, the Norwegian Heart and Lung Patient Organization, the Norwegian Health Association and the Norwegian Cancer Society.

“Non-communicable lifestyle diseases are the greatest health challenge of our time, both in Norway and globally. These illnesses can often be prevented. We have to do better in prevention, early detection and promoting health across all sectors of society.”

Founded in 1938, The Norwegian Cancer Society (NCS) is the leading cancer organisation in Norway, with over 113,000 members, 25,000 volunteers and a diverse group of strategic partners and funders. Despite these organisational strengths, NCS saw the tremendous value of joining with other NCD groups in the lead up to the 2011 UN High-level Meeting on NCDs, and joined forces with three other organisations in establishing the Norwegian NCD Alliance. Not only did the Alliance help create a strong, united voice across the four major disease groups, it also facilitated outreach to the government and other key stakeholders, including development agencies, because it meant that rather than sending our four different letters, or organising four different meetings, communications could be streamlined through one single civil society platform for NCDs.

Key Achievements

Since its inception, the Norwegian NCD Alliance has successfully supported civil society engagement in the NCD and broader health agenda:

- In 2011, the Norwegian NCD Alliance was invited as part of the official Norwegian delegation to the UN High-level meeting on NCDs. Secretary General of the Norwegian Cancer Society, Anne Lise Ryel, was the Alliance's representative
- The Alliance, represented by Ms Ryel, was invited to participate in the delegation for the 2014 High Level Review
- The Norwegian NCD Alliance also participated in the development of the national NCD strategy, and is working with the government to ensure its implementation.

Challenges and next steps

The Norwegian NCD Alliance combines the efforts of four well-established and well known organisations in Norway. Despite the fact that each of these organisations are recognised, as are each of the diseases they represent, the term “NCD” is not well recognised among the general public. Ensuring both the visibility and uniqueness of each organisation, as well as their specific interests in NCD messaging, has therefore been a priority.

The four organisations work independently but pool their resources and efforts together when policy issues require a united front. A one-page strategic document sets out the scope of this collaboration, with priority areas well defined. CEOs of each organisation meet throughout the year, rotating who handles the Alliance at the advisory level.

As next steps, the Norwegian NCD Alliance is in the process of broadening its partnership base and introducing more organisations into its Alliance.