

# PREFACE

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**Today, non-communicable diseases (NCD) such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases represent a leading threat to human health and development. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), of 56.4 million global deaths in 2015, 39.5 million, or 70%, were due to NCD.**

While Hong Kong's health indices rank among the best in the world, like many parts of the developed world, Hong Kong is having an ageing population. With a steadily increasing life expectancy at birth for both sexes, the proportion of population aged 65 or above is projected to rise markedly, from 17% in 2016 to 37% in 2066. Driven by population ageing, changing health risk profiles, social changes and globalisation, Hong Kong is facing the unprecedented threat of NCD, with the number of people coming down with these major NCD keeps growing.

Fortunately, a growing body of evidence is available to show that leading causes and underlying risk factors for NCD can be effectively tackled through population-based interventions that encourage healthy lifestyles including healthy eating, physical activity, and reduced consumption of tobacco and alcohol.

The Department of Health is taking a proactive and coordinated approach to the prevention and control of NCD. In 2008, we launched the *“Promoting Health in Hong Kong: A Strategic Framework for Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases”* to guide and give impetus to the efforts. While a range of NCD prevention and control work has been/is being undertaken in Hong Kong, there is scope for a more effective, sustainable and forward looking approach on improving population health.

In light of WHO’s call for development of multisectoral action plan with clear targets and indicators to track national progress and achievements in NCD prevention and control, there is a need for Hong Kong to adopt a new approach and hence this strategy and action plan, to guide multi-level and cross-sectoral actions. In the coming years, I look forward to seeing more government bureaux/departments and relevant parties outside the Government working together on policies, systems, programmes and actions to address NCD through strengthening health advocacy; fostering partnership building in creating supportive environment; and enhancing NCD surveillance and progress monitoring.

Yet, successful implementation of the new strategy would not be possible without your support. By choosing healthy ways of living, you too can contribute to our fight against the rising trend of NCD. Every action counts!