

# GNTH Strategic Plan 2021 -2025



## Introduction

The Global Network for Tobacco Free Healthcare Services (GNTH), commonly called the Global Network, is an independent, international, non-profit association of national networks and institutions that was formed to facilitate their action on tobacco control. The Global Network represents healthcare services that are committed to implementing tobacco-free policies with the aim of delivering high Standards of tobacco control with a comprehensive scope.

Since its inception in 1999, as a European initiative, the Global Network has worked to develop and provide hospitals and healthcare services with a systematic and comprehensive approach to the implementation of tobacco control management. An approach that utilises evidence-based Standards and a concept based on achieving the highest level of fulfilment of on these Standards that are reviewed thoroughly by internal and external network members and institutions aligned by using, among others, the Self-audit tool.

GNTH seeks to recruit, motivate, and guide healthcare services globally in the implementation of their tobacco control management policies, providing members with a global platform to facilitate information sharing and the exchange of experiences and good practice.

Global Network promotes a proven approach for implementing comprehensive quality tobacco control Standards in healthcare services. The agreed term used when referring to this approach is 'tobacco control management', that is defined as an agreed method of implementing a tobacco-free policy to deliver safe, quality care in relation to tobacco. In addition, is considered that creating tobacco-free environments is vital for generating a society without the hazards of tobacco in which healthcare centers stand out as promoters of this task.

In 2015, the former Strategic Plan introduced the idea of the need for going a step forward in the framework built to reach new developments and achievements, and to progress on the tobacco management among all healthcare professionals and in healthcare services globally.

The purpose of the current Strategic Plan is to establish a roadmap to steer the activity of the Global Network during the next five years (2021-2025). In particular, the activities and work of the Board and the members of the organization, and to serve as a basis for planning the work and the elaboration of the budget according to their needs, possibilities, and priorities.

## Background

Tobacco consumption is the single most preventable cause of death and disability in the world<sup>1</sup>. One in every two smokers will die from a tobacco-related disease. Tobacco use is highly addictive and harms every organ in the body<sup>2,3</sup>.

Hospitals and healthcare settings play a central role in the prevention of tobacco-related diseases, as well as in the education and treatment of those affected.

Hospitalization has been shown to be a key moment in helping smoking patients quit smoking. Besides, brief interventions within the hospital setting have been shown to be both clinically effective and cost-effective.

Avoiding smoking and quitting smoking are the most effective measures to prevent smoking. Quitting smoking favours shorter hospital stays and decreases the chances of relapses and readmissions. Smoking treatment should be included as a routine protocolized activity within the hospital setting<sup>4</sup>.

On the other hand, hospitals also have an important responsibility for the health of their workers. There is no other action that has as many potential gains in preventing mortality and disability as helping to quit smoking. In addition to counselling and treating patients with the consequences of tobacco use, prevention offerings should also be established or intensified for specific target groups, such as young tobacco users, pregnant women, the mentally ill, or people with other limitations as well as socially disadvantaged.

Recently, the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) (i.e.: e-cigarettes/vape devices) is increasing worldwide, and their use is highly controversial from different perspectives. Recent studies show<sup>5</sup> that ENDS use is associated with the use of other tobacco products that are known to cause further health issues, including cancer and heart disease. These devices are still very new so many of the long-term health consequences of their use are still not known. Even still, growing evidence<sup>2</sup> shows that these devices are not harmless.

Facing this new challenge needs rigorous research that provide solid conclusions to draw about the dangers, or usefulness of e-cigarettes. Health care professionals must remain current with the literature concerning e-cigarettes and vaping, that allows them to make informed decisions aimed at maximizing human safety and minimizing the potential ill effects e-cigarettes may have on their patients and the public.

Moreover, the experience of the healthcare services that make up the GNTH shows that support from management is key in implementing tobacco control policies.

Through a systematic approach based on a framework of eight Standards, the Global Network supports individual member healthcare services and networks to integrate comprehensive action on tobacco and provide evidence-based care to all tobacco users.

## Related to other strategies

The tobacco prevention strategy in the hospital setting, that the Global Network aims to incorporate, is related to other global health strategies such as the objectives set by the FCTC, the Target 5 of the WHO Noncommunicable Disease Strategy, and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

### ***Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC)***

In response to this burden on population health, the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2005 developed the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The WHO FCTC was developed in response to the globalization of the tobacco epidemic and is an evidence-based treaty that reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standard of health. The Convention represents a milestone for the promotion of public health and provides new legal dimensions for international health cooperation.

Tobacco Control is one of the priorities in public health to bring governments and the WHO together with the sole aim of providing global direction on how best to manage the problem to protect future generations and reverse the tobacco epidemic. Most countries to date have signed and are Parties to the Convention. FCTC has been translated into many languages, copies of which are available for downloading on the WHO website. <http://www.who.int/fctc/cop/en/>

FCTC identifies that concerted efforts are needed from a wide range of sectors and highlights national health systems as being well-placed to take the leading role in implementing measures to prevent and treat tobacco addiction/dependence as outlined in Article 14. Specific guidelines have been developed to direct and support implementation of Article 14. [WHO | Guidelines for implementation of Article 14](#). Also provided guidelines to make available international, regional and national resources for tobacco control education, communication, training and public awareness in relation to the guidelines for implementation of Article 12 [WHO | Guidelines for implementation of Article 12](#) and also regarding Article 8 about protection from exposure to tobacco smoke [WHO | Guidelines for implementation of Article 8](#)

Furthermore, the mission of the Global Network englobes some other articles that need to be approached, but no guidelines have yet been developed:

Article 20 - Research, surveillance, and exchange of information

Article 22 - Cooperation in the scientific, technical, and legal fields and provision of related expertise

The Global Network promotes a concept that integrates all the relevant and key aspects of tobacco management within healthcare services, in a practical and systematic approach that is in accordance with the FCTC guidelines. In this way, Global Network believes that healthcare services will contribute significantly to the realisation of national obligations under FCTC.

## **WHO Noncommunicable Disease (NCD) Strategy**

*Target 5: Reduce tobacco use - A 30% relative reduction in prevalence of current tobacco use in persons aged 15+ years.*

The WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013– 2020 includes a target for reducing the global prevalence of tobacco use (smoked and smokeless tobacco) by 30% by the year 2025 relative to 2010.

The global monitoring framework for NCDs will track the implementation of the NCD action plan through monitoring and reporting on the attainment of the global targets in 2015-2020. The 25 indicators and the 9 voluntary global targets of the framework provide overall direction and the action plan provides a road map for reaching the targets.

<https://www.who.int/beat-ncds/take-action/ncd-tobacco-target.pdf>



## ***The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - United Nations - SDG***

During the Eighth Conference of the Parties to the WHO FCTC, the Global Strategy to Accelerate Tobacco Control was adopted: Advancing Sustainable Development through the Implementation of the WHO FCTC 2019–2025. Global tobacco control became even more salient through this integration of the WHO FCTC in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs].

The SDGs are a United Nations initiative, formally adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015 in a resolution entitled Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They include 17 goals and 169 targets to be achieved over the next 15 years, with the aim to “end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda”. Reducing tobacco use plays a major role in global efforts to achieve the SDG target to reduce premature deaths from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) by one third by 2030. Many of the 17 Goals have a direct or indirect relation to tobacco control. The most immediately relevant are the following:

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns.

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

You can find additional information in this link: [Tobacco Control & The Sustainable Development Goals](#)

## **Main objective of this Strategic Plan**

This strategic plan has been designed to cover the period between 2021 and 2025, which focuses on implementing measures to promote tobacco cessation and the denormalization of tobacco use in the health care with successful tobacco-free policies in healthcare services. It also shows the actors with whom to generate alliances and the methods by which these policies should be addressed.

GNTH Objectives:

- Promote and support tobacco prevention at international, European, and national level through the development and implementation of the WHO-FCTC, its protocols and guidelines.
- Improve the introduction of comprehensive tobacco control policies and the denormalization of tobacco use within healthcare services through the implementation of the GN concept: Self-Audit tool, and Quality Standards.
- Help to achieve excellence in tobacco control across healthcare systems globally.
- Facilitate healthcare services to effectively deliver on their obligations as defined in the WHO/FCTC.

## **Mission**

Empowering our members to deliver safe quality care in relation to high Standards of tobacco control with a comprehensive scope across the continuum of care.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to implement tobacco control policies in healthcare organizations that are aligned with the WHO-FCTC objectives. Our aim is to improve the health of worldwide population by introducing GNTH Standards at healthcare facilities and prevent and treat tobacco addiction as part of routine healthcare. We will implement this objective by proposing activities such as: training professionals, denormalizing tobacco use, banning the sale of all tobacco products and associated devices, and eliminating Secondhand Smoke (SHS) and Secondhand Aerosol (SHA) exposure.

## **Strategic plan methodology**

A subgroup formed by Board members was responsible for the elaboration of the Strategy. As a first decision, was to incorporate Doris Sager, an external expert in coaching, to give structure to our thoughts and proposals in designing this new Strategy and guiding the group to focus on the goal proposed of having the Strategic plan finalized.

The process started in September 2020 with the kick-off meeting and a scheduled plan of the process was presented. The structured plan of the meetings alternated expert advice through Doris Sager with internal work of the subgroup (see Appendix 1).

The decision of the external counselling and the plan created was presented to the Global Network members during the GA2020 by Laura Antón, lead of the subgroup.

After submission of this document to Board members, the content will be shared with GNTH members. Next step will be the elaboration of subgroups to implement the different goals, giving responsibilities to make it real and adding a calendar of implementation.

## Strategic lines of action - Priorities

1. Support – Sharing and learning
2. Coordination – Communication
3. Quality assurance

GNTH priorities have been structured by goals, that should be covered by the measures and implementation activities listed below.

### GNTH Strategic lines of action

#### Priorities

#### Goals

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1. Support – Sharing and learning</b></p> | <p>Introduce GNTH as the international platform for best practices exchange and mutual support in the implementation of tobacco control measures in healthcare services.</p> <p>Provide to members the opportunity for using the know-how for optimization processes and increasing GNTH Standards in their own institution. Accessing best practice based on national and international standards.</p> <p>Establish a systematic improvement of measures through certification processes.</p> <p>Motivate certificates to upgrade tobacco control measures and to continuously develop, improve and consolidate them.</p>                        |
| <p><b>2. Coordination – Communication</b></p>   | <p>Establish a structured and stable GNTH Coordination Center.</p> <p>Make available financial and human resources for the Coordination Center.</p> <p>Establish a fluid communication structure that response members needs and support them into their goal to achieve the highest level of implementation of the Standards, in a progressive pace.</p>   |
| <p><b>3. Quality assurance</b></p>              | <p>Provide processes for internal and external continuous evaluation / data collection to healthcare services, according to proven scientific and evidence-based approaches.</p> <p>Give recognition to members activity through the Gold forum process. This evaluation is conducted by a panel of international experts in tobacco control policies in healthcare services and familiar with the Global Network Standards.</p> <p>Increase the number of national/regional networks and healthcare centers that apply for obtaining the Gold accreditation, thus increasing the recognition of the quality of the organization's standards.</p> |

## 1) GNTH Support – Sharing and learning

### *Activities / Implementation*

- Provide support of regular specialized training to GNTH members through webinars, trainings, and workshops. ☞
- Share and develop of materials, infographics or documentation that is considered of interest on tobacco control, and holding or participating in conferences, meetings, and other events of interest. ☞
- Generate collaboration synergies with other organizations related to tobacco control (such as HPH, Smoke Free Partnership, etc). ☞
- Continue with the accreditation of international recognition of the implementation of tobacco control policies in healthcare services (Gold Forum process). Sharing Gold Forum good practices with all members. ☞
- Provide annually a Gold Forum event with international approach to share the best tobacco control practices among hospitals candidates. ☞
- Elaborate a funding strategy to invest in the priorities for the organization. ☞
- Regularly developing the certification process and accreditation (bronze, silver, gold), according to the Global concept of quality tobacco control management at healthcare services. ☞
- Exchange of practices to the members through diverse communication channels: website, factsheets, webinars, informative letters, etc. ☞
- Revision plan of the website content to allow members being provided with updated information. Provide the GNTH newsletters available for all members. ☞

## 2) GNTH Coordination – Communication

### *Activities / Implementation*

- Establish a working group to evaluate all possible sources of financing and develop a differentiated financing strategy of the organization. ☞
- Review and use existing funding to the best advantage. Elaborate the financial report considering the existing resources and looking for new sources of funding. ☞
- Inform about the regional/national/local activities in relation to tobacco control conducted by members through the communication channel established. ☞
- Develop an internal structure in the organization that allows to capture the diversities of the members to address possible needs. Establish internal workflows between Board and Coordinating Center members. ☞
- Develop the website that addresses all the spheres of action of the organization and allows updated information to the members. ☞



- Establish the periodicity of revision of the contents of the webpage and responsibilities for each section. ☞
- Communicate GNTH activity using social media channels available to increase the visibility of the organization. ☞
- Promote collaborative projects, which will help to achieve synergies and take advantage of the strengths of the different territories. Promote strategic partnership with national / regional networks. ☞
- Explore the capacity of the members about the translation of materials, when needed and create a network of collaborators. ☞

### 3) GNTH Quality assurance

#### *Measures / Implementation*

- Proven technologies and evaluation tools are considered, recommended and further developed, e.g. SelfAudit tool for the implementation of tobacco prevention measures. Establish a revision plan of the Global Network evaluation tools (SelfAudit and Standards). Provide members with a document for getting objective answers on the SelfAudit. ☞
- Incorporate new risks (emerging nicotine and tobacco products) under the tobacco control policies into the strategy of the Global Network and offer evidence-based solutions. ☞
- Create a working group of revision of literature and updates about emerging nicotine and tobacco products and also about old ways of tobacco use. Provide materials to members in different languages to address how to face new ways of smoking, such as guidelines in how to implement tobacco cessation in the clinical services in some areas (pre-surgical interventions, maternal, ect). ☞
- Stimulate the use and the implementation of the Standards for research and scientific publications. ☞
- Keep Gold Forum process as quality assurance process of healthcare services regarding tobacco control. ☞
- Participate regularly at the Gold Forum process with high level GNTH Standards implementation healthcare centers. ☞
- Create a global training offer repository that is accredited and aimed at the various professional profiles. ☞
- Share information about best practice examples among members. ☞

Responsibilities of each indicator are labelled on colours, being:

☞ – Board members

☞ – Networks / Members

☞ – Coordinating Center

## Partner Organisations

In our role as international network, we are committed to engage with international partners in advocating that tobacco addiction/dependency to be placed within all healthcare programmes. We also have the compromise to collaborate with relevant partners for the integration of tobacco management as an integral element of all quality improvement initiatives within healthcare services. The most relevant organizations to reach this purpose are:

- HPH Organisation (agreement in process)
- Smoke Free Partnership
- ENSP
- National Governments
- The WHO-Collaborating Centers for Tobacco Control

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4. Fiore MC, Bailey WC, Cohen SC, Dorfman SF, Goldstein MG, Gritz ER, et al. (2008) [Treating tobacco use and dependence. Clinical practice guideline](#). Rockville: U.S. Public Health Service.
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# Appendix 1



## GNTH Strategic Plan 2020-2025

### Strategic Plan Subgroup



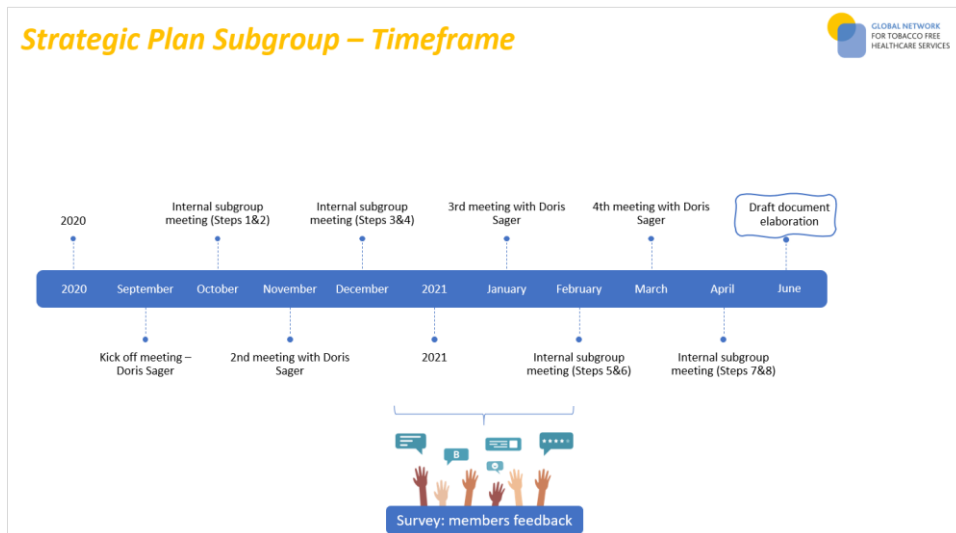
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### GNTH Strategic Plan 2020-2025 – Steps to follow




*Procedure*

8. Strategy paper
7. Concepts
6. Core strategy and options
5. Scenarios
4. Trends and uncertainties
3. Potential for success
2. Vision
1. Analysis

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**Source**

- HSLU Luzern, EMBA, Strategic Management and Leadership, 2019 / Georges T. Roos, Dr. Ruedi Schwarzenbach
- Book: „Strategic Management“ / Roman Lombriser, Peter A. Abplanalp, 2005.



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