

# Preface

Health is not merely the absence of disease, but a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. It is a resource for everyday life.

In Hong Kong, the life expectancy at birth is much longer than most other countries and our children are amongst the least likely to succumb during childhood. However, with an ageing population, we just cannot underestimate the health challenges ahead. With longevity, the number of people coming down with NCD such as diabetes mellitus, heart diseases, cancer, accidents and injuries keeps growing, bringing increasing burden to individuals, their families and friends, and also society at large.

Of the 58 million deaths worldwide in 2005, the WHO reckoned that approximately 35 million were caused by NCD. There is more and more evidence that many NCD are the results of how we lived our lives, such as consumption of unhealthy foods, heavy alcohol drinking, lack of exercise, and smoking. All these habits are avoidable and thus most NCD are preventable!

Although much has been done for the prevention and control of NCD, there is scope for a more coordinated approach for better health returns. This will require the Government, public and private sectors and the community to work hand in hand to build up an environment that makes healthier choices easier ones.



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The purpose of this document is to provide an account of overarching principles for the prevention and control of NCD. It also sets the scope, vision, goals and strategic directions for NCD prevention and control in Hong Kong.

Already, there is consensus amongst international health authorities that the present NCD situation is like that of an epidemic and must be dealt with like any public health emergency. Therefore, I am urging every sector in the community to consider, understand and support this framework document. Working in partnership, we can make Hong Kong - Asia's World City - a healthier place to live.

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