



Shaping Tomorrow's Nephrology: **Insight-Driven Kidney Care**

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Kidney Disease and the Global NCD Agenda: Opportunities and Challenges

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Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are the leading cause of death worldwide and represent one of the central challenges for health systems in the coming decades. Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is an increasingly important component of this burden. Affecting more than 800 million people globally, CKD contributes substantially to premature mortality, disability, and health system costs. Its impact is particularly pronounced in low- and middle-income countries, where access to prevention, diagnosis, and treatment remains limited.

Despite its growing importance, kidney disease has historically received less attention within global NCD strategies than conditions such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory disease. Recent policy developments are beginning to change this. In 2025, the World Health Assembly adopted a resolution on kidney health calling on Member States to strengthen prevention, early detection, and management of kidney disease and to integrate kidney care into universal health coverage. In parallel, the political declaration from the United Nations High-Level Meeting on NCDs recognizes kidney disease as part of the broader NCD agenda and highlights the importance of addressing common risk factors such as hypertension and diabetes.

These developments create new opportunities to strengthen kidney health within national NCD strategies. Integrating kidney disease into existing NCD programs can leverage platforms for risk factor control, screening, and chronic disease management. In many settings, strengthening primary care and improving detection and treatment of diabetes and hypertension may represent the most effective strategy for reducing the burden of CKD.

Important challenges remain. Many countries face major shortages of trained health workers, limited financing for NCD programs, weak health information systems, and substantial inequities in access to kidney replacement therapies. Translating recent global commitments into meaningful improvements in care will require sustained national leadership, strong governance, and robust systems for monitoring progress.