



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON SELF-CARE

“Declaration of Bogota City”

The participants of the 2nd International Round Table on Self-Care

AGREED THAT:

1. Health, as one of the determinants of the quality of life, is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease. As any health system or those who participate in health care cannot reach this objective by themselves, a total commitment and participation of individuals through self-care is required.
2. This is because individuals have the right and responsibility to participate individually or collectively in the planning and implementation of their health care. Those who participate in health care should inform and advise individuals appropriately in order to facilitate the proper practice of self-care and to motivate the adoption of healthy lifestyles which are part of self-care.
3. Self-care, as the first line of defense which takes place at home with the aim to adequately prevent and relieve the occurrence of diverse common health symptoms or problems, includes physical exercise, proper nutrition, maintenance of mental well-being, responsible self-medication, access to the different levels of attention of health systems and compliance to medical treatment.
4. Responsible self-medication prevents and relieves identifiable common health symptoms and problems with medicines especially authorized and labeled to be used without the initial supervision of a physician, as they have been proved to be highly safe and effective for the symptoms or problems for which they are indicated. These medicines should be used as directed and a physician consulted if the health symptom or problem persists or aggravates.
5. Self-care plays an important role in managing symptoms of chronic diseases for those patients who suffer from them.
6. Both proper prevention and relief of identifiable common health symptoms or problems as well as the management of symptoms of chronic diseases, have a positive impact on public health. In addition, they reduce the continuous pressure that private and public health systems face when taking care of those symptoms or problems that individuals can manage by themselves. In this way, it is possible to re-orient available resources to those problems that require medical attention or the use of specialized diagnostic or treatment resources.
7. In view of the benefits that self-care provides, it is necessary to place it as a fundamental component of health-care and make it part of national health care policies, in such a way that self-care can be promoted to all social sectors and not being merely viewed as a means to relieve the most basic problems being faced by marginal or less favored sectors.
8. In order to reach the aforementioned objectives, it is necessary to have the participation and support of health authorities, regulators, health care professionals, consumers, insurance companies, the pharmaceutical industry and the public in general. Each constituency should provide its particular visions, abilities, experiences and resources.
9. In view of the fact that the relationship that exists between the health of a population and its development is known to be essential and in consideration of the strategic role that self-care plays, all participants in the 2nd International Round Table on Self-Care will develop, through an *ad hoc* working group, an action plan and attempt to procure the necessary resources to reach the objectives set in item 7.
10. The above – mentioned working group will also try to obtain the resources needed to develop research that allows an assessment of the educational process in self-care as well as the efficacy, efficiency and safety of all interventions to be made on this subject.