

10 Nov 2023 | News

LATAM Congress: 'Sao Paulo Declaration' Affirms Self-Care Essential For Universal Health Coverage

by [David Ridley](#)

“We believe that access to quality healthcare is a fundamental human right, and by joining the global effort to achieve Universal Health Coverage, we aim to create a more equitable and healthier world for everyone,” says Global Self-Care Federation director general, Judy Stenmark, endorsing the Self-Care for Universal Health Coverage Declaration alongside LATAM policy makers and regulators at the 1st Latin American Self-Care Regional Congress in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Representatives from the global and Latin American consumer health industries have endorsed a “landmark declaration” in favor of self-care as an essential component of universal health coverage (UHC).

Endorsed this week by LATAM regional policymakers and regulators and members of the United for Self-Care Coalition at the 1st Latin American Self-Care Regional Congress in Sao Paulo, Brazil, the [Self-Care for Universal Health Coverage Declaration](#) includes commitments to:

- Promote self-care for primary health care and UHC
- Support self-care education and awareness
- Leverage technology and digital solutions
- Strengthen collaboration and partnerships

- Ensure equity and inclusivity
- Advocate for better self-governance
- Monitor progress and accountability

“Stakeholders’ decision to endorse the Self-Care for Universal Health Coverage Declaration is proof of our unwavering commitment to the well-being of individuals and communities worldwide,” commented Judy Stenmark, director general of the Global Self-Care Federation, which is a member of the United for Self-Care Coalition. “We believe that access to quality healthcare is a fundamental human right, and by joining the global effort to achieve Universal Health Coverage, we aim to create a more equitable and healthier world for everyone.”

Juan Thompson, director general of the Latin-American Association of Responsible Self-Care (ILAR) said that he was “very happy” that the declaration was endorsed at regional congress in Sao Paulo.

“For 84% of people in Latin America, self-care plays a very relevant role,” Thompson explained. “However, according to the GSCF Social and Economic Value of Self-Care research published in 2022, 52% of respondents in LATAM indicate that they do not have the appropriate level of knowledge to take self-care actions with confidence.” (Also see "[Self-Care Saving Taxpayers \\$120bn Per Year, Could Increase To \\$180bn By 2030](#)" - HBW Insight, 14 Jul, 2022.)

“In this regard, empowering people through increased health literacy and education to practice self-care and actively participate in making decisions about their own health is essential. The declaration guarantees exactly that.”

WHO Resolution

The so called “Sao Paulo Declaration” also calls for a World Health Organization Resolution on Self-Care, a “unifying goal” of the United for Self-Care Coalition, which includes alongside GSCF also the International Self-Care Federation, and the UK’s Self-Care Forum and Imperial College London based Self-Care Academic Research Unit (SCARU).

“We call for the adoption and implementation of a WHO Resolution on Self-Care for Health, to provide a comprehensive framework for governments, stakeholders, and the international community to strengthen self-care policies and interventions,” the declaration states.

Speaking exclusively to HBW Insight in 2021, SCARU’s director, Austen El-Osta, said that such a resolution would be “very likely” to be achieved in the next few years. The work that the GSCF is doing, alongside that of the ISF, SCARU and other stakeholders is laying the groundwork for such

a resolution, he argued. “In a sense, I feel it's difficult to imagine not having one in the future.”
(Also see "[WHO Support A Game-Changer For Emerging Global Self-Care Movement, Resolution 'Likely'](#)" - HBW Insight, 29 Nov, 2021.)