



The Consumer Healthcare Association

**30 September 2020**

## **Self care in Africa during Covid: barriers and opportunities**

PAGB chief executive Michelle Riddalls joined health care experts from Africa to discuss the way forward for self care across the continent in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

Hosted by the Global Self Care Federation, the event brought together speakers including Jocelyn Chaibva, vice president of the African Pharmaceutical Forum, and Dr Tumi Semete, chief executive of South African Health Products Regulatory Authority.

Michelle Riddalls, who moderated the 90-minute discussion, said it was important to address issues including bottlenecks and fragmentation in regulatory systems across Africa.

She told the webinar: "There has never been a more important time for self care...it is essential to health care at every stage of life."

Dr Cherian Varghese from the World Health Organization told the webinar that self care could 'leapfrog...into a new orbit', provided people had access to the right information and support.

"Many things we were not able to do in the pre-Covid period, we can now see happening," he said.

And Dr Margareth Sigonda, pharmaceutical co-ordinator for the African Union Development Agency, said: "The time has come to investigate how self care can be enhanced and embedded in policy in Africa."

The discussion also touched on the key role played by pharmacists in enabling people to self care safely and appropriately, levels of trust in over-the-counter medicines in different countries around the world and the use of digital technology to accelerate progress towards more effective self care.

The GSCF hopes the webinar will be the first of a series on self care in Africa.

**- ENDS -**

### **Notes to editors:**

PAGB, the consumer healthcare association, represents the manufacturers of branded OTC medicines, self care medical devices and food supplements in the UK.

For further information please contact Polly Newton, Media and Communications Manager, [polly.newton@pagb.co.uk](mailto:polly.newton@pagb.co.uk) or call 07706 001500.