



The Consumer Healthcare Association

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PAGB welcomes call for global action to support self care

A NEW report examining the 'self care landscape' in ten countries calls for a 'coherent approach' from policymakers, governments and stakeholders to integrate self care into global health systems.

The [Self Care Readiness Index](#), published by the Global Self Care Federation and supported by the World Health Organization, identifies the key 'enabling factors' which it says can help to harness the power of self care.

They include consumer and patient empowerment, stakeholder support and the regulatory environment.

The UK is among the countries reviewed, along with Brazil, China, Egypt, France, Nigeria, Poland, South Africa, Thailand and the US.

The report praises the NHS for its approach to self-management of chronic and long-term conditions, and says healthcare providers in the UK 'generally trust and support self care practices'.

In its assessment of the UK's regulatory environment in relation to self care, it says the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency sets out 'clear procedures' for applications to reclassify medicines from prescription-only to over-the-counter status.

However, the report's authors, who conducted a consumer survey as well as interviews with healthcare professionals and policymakers in each of the ten countries, also say that:

- People in the UK reportedly have conversations with healthcare providers about self care 'far less often' than respondents from other countries;
- The NHS 'falls short' in its support for self care to treat minor ailments – self-treatable conditions for which people don't need to see a doctor but can manage on their own or with advice from a pharmacy
- Health policy in the UK is built on a 'paternalistic' approach which is centred around access to GP and hospital services and 'runs counter to the essence of self care'.

The report includes findings from some of PAGB's own research into attitudes to self care and accessing health services in the UK, as well as referencing PAGB's work towards a more streamlined process for switching medicines to over-the-counter status.

Overall, the report concludes that self care is 'not a universally well understood concept' around the world.

The authors call for a new 'global compact' on self care, with the ultimate goal of bringing forward a new World Health Organization resolution on self care.

"Creating a common global understanding of self care benefits will help to realise its potential for healthcare systems," the report says.

Michelle Riddalls, CEO of PAGB, the consumer healthcare association, said: “The Self Care Readiness Index offers a detailed and insightful analysis of current attitudes to self care in different regions globally.

“It also highlights the potential of self care to benefit both individuals and society as a whole and the value of a more cohesive approach to its integration into healthcare systems – a vision we share wholeheartedly at PAGB.

“Its conclusions about the self care landscape in the UK – particularly those which contrast the NHS’s commitment to supporting self care for long-term conditions with its comparative lack of focus on self care for minor ailments - chime with our own assessment.

“That’s why we believe the next step must be the development of a national self care strategy and the implementation of policies which fully embed self care into the primary care pathway.

“We hope the Self Care Readiness Index will inspire further discussion and encourage wider adoption of positive self care policies in the UK and around the world.”

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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 or call 07706 001500.