

GSK Public policy positions

Tackling Global Health Challenges

The Issue

As a science-led global healthcare company, GSK is committed to using our scientific expertise to target disease, both infectious and non-communicable, to improve the health and well-being of millions of people around the world.

Infectious diseases, including malaria, tuberculosis (TB) and HIV, remain a significant global burden, compounded by the growing incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, respiratory conditions and cancers, in both the developed and developing world. New medical innovations and better scientific understanding are needed in order to tackle such diseases and those innovations, along with appropriate healthcare infrastructure, need to be affordable and available for the people who need them.

This paper details how GSK - in the context of our commitment to helping realise Universal Health Coverage - is working to overcome these challenges through researching and producing innovative, high-quality and needed medicines. It centres on the need for a collaborative approach to tackling these challenges and it provides the rationale behind the focus underpinning our 'Global Health' commitment.

GSK's Position

- GSK is a global healthcare company dedicated to developing medicines, vaccines and consumer healthcare products to improve lives.
- We have a long heritage of tackling diseases that disproportionately affect the developing world. Most notably through our vaccines portfolio delivered through Gavi (the vaccine alliance) and UNICEF; our dedicated research into diseases of the developing world at our R&D site in Tres Cantos, Spain and Vaccines Institute for Global Health in Siena, Italy; and our innovative pricing structures.
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the specific targets under Goal 3 - to achieve good health and wellbeing - have challenged all stakeholders working in the global health arena to step up and focus on their [strengths to support realisation of the SDGs](#) by 2030.
- Our Global Health commitment is to improve global health impact through R&D for infectious diseases that affect children and adolescents in the developing world, with a particular but not exclusive focus on malaria, TB, HIV and AIDS.
- This commitment is based on three principles:
 - **Science led:** Ensuring we focus our efforts where we have scientific expertise and where the science is promising.
 - **Sustainable for our business:** Developing a new medicine or vaccine can require millions of pounds of investment, several years in advance of seeing the medical impact of the product. We aim to create an environment where global health discoveries are incentivised, developed and brought to patients using a collaborative model, one that shares the financial risks with partners throughout the product development life-cycle.
 - **Prioritised for impact:** By concentrating our efforts only in areas where we have particular expertise, notably infectious diseases, we can deliver more measurable impact to address pressing health needs.
- We also invest in the research and development of innovative treatments for NCDs.
- By seeking to innovate new medicines, vaccines and consumer healthcare products for patients around the world and helping to strengthen health systems, GSK is also committed to supporting realisation of SDG target 3.8 aimed at achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) globally by 2030.
- The private sector can play a significant role in achieving UHC; and GSK would urge governments to ensure UHC policies are equitable and inclusive; efficient; support continued investment in innovative R&D whilst using evidence-based decision making; and are focussed on availability and quality as well as sufficiently funded.
- GSK stands ready to work with all stakeholders to ensure a sustainable and equitable approach to achieving UHC.

BACKGROUND

Our Global Health commitment

Our commitment underpinned by our support for UHC is to improve health through R&D for infectious diseases that affect children and adolescents in developing countries. Our primary focus is on malaria, TB, and HIV, some of the deadliest infectious diseases the world has ever known. We also pursue the most promising scientific leads in other areas of infectious disease in line with our role as a science led company, our commitment to focusing where we have particular expertise, and where the science is promising.

Infectious diseases in children and adolescents in the developing world

Each year millions of children and adolescents die from preventable causes; nearly all in the developing world, and many from preventable infectious diseases. AIDS is the biggest killer of adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa and the second biggest killer of adolescents globally. TB has overtaken AIDS as the world's greatest infectious killer. And 435,000 people died of malaria in 2017, with 61% of these deaths among children. This burden is reflected in SDG3 (Good health and well-being) which includes targets to end preventable under-five mortality, and to end the epidemics of communicable diseases by 2030, specifically referencing malaria, TB and AIDS.

Through our core capabilities and portfolio of medicines, GSK is well placed to support the global fight against these diseases and we have an exciting portfolio of R&D focused in these areas. For example, our Tres Cantos Open Lab has over 120 scientists working on potential new medicines for malaria and TB as well as neglected tropical diseases. ViiV Healthcare, a subsidiary of GSK, is a recognised leader in prioritising the R&D of paediatric formulations across a portfolio of HIV products. Our vaccines business currently is working on a TB candidate vaccine. And the GSK Vaccines Global Health Institute in Siena is working on diseases such as typhoid and paratyphoid fever, and Group A streptococcus.

Our Global Health commitment builds on decades of GSK's work to improve health in developing countries. More information on our partnerships and global health impact is available on [gsk.com](https://www.gsk.com), and in the Trust section of our [Annual Report](#).

Seeking a sustainable and collaborative business model for tackling diseases of the developing world

Maintaining the required level of investment needed for the research, development, manufacture and commercialisation of new treatments for diseases of the developing world is extremely challenging. The traditional pharmaceutical R&D business model is based on anticipated return via market sales of a new medicine or vaccine. This incentivises companies to take on the lengthy and costly risks associated with research and development of new treatments. However, for diseases such as malaria and TB, the burden, populations and demographics most affected are in the countries least able to afford new medicines and vaccines, and where the health systems are typically weaker.

We therefore need to ensure a policy and financing environment where such global health discoveries are incentivised, developed and brought to patients using a model that shares the risk throughout the development life-cycle, and leverages the expertise of different partners involved in delivering healthcare.

Partnerships have already been established with the aim of sharing risks and encouraging continued innovation to tackle certain challenging diseases. These include Product Development Partnerships, such as the Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV), the TB Alliance and the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi), and procurement and funding partnership organisations like Gavi and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and malaria.

These partnerships are welcome, but more needs to be done, and there is no single solution to sustain existing, and incentivise new, R&D for diseases of the developing world.

GSK is committed to collaborating with other healthcare companies and partner organisations in identifying new mechanisms for doing so. Options to be considered include:

- Tax credits for research into diseases of the developing world.
- Regulatory and patent rights incentives for new licensed products for the developing world (such as Transferable Exclusivity Vouchers).
- Increased public funding and/or collaboration for high risk phase III clinical trials for developing world products. Streamlined regulatory processes for new vaccines and medicines for the developing world.
- Increased funding for purchasing currently available products for developing world diseases and scale up of production facilities.

Our contribution to tackling NCDs

Countries' disease burdens are changing. There is a growing incidence of NCDs, in both developing and developed countries; the WHO estimates 41 million people die each year from NCDs. In addition to our Global Health commitment to tackling infectious diseases for children and adolescents in the developing world, we therefore also invest in the research and development of innovative treatments for NCDs.

We have, for example, been a leader in respiratory disease for over 40 years and remain at the forefront of scientific research in this area, offering innovative medicines aimed at treating patients' symptoms and reducing the risk of their disease worsening. We have a portfolio of mature products appropriate for, and available in, both developed and developing countries.

With an oncology pipeline focused on immuno-oncology, cell therapy, and epigenetics, we are also focussing our efforts on delivering transformational therapies for cancer patients. In 2018, we entered an agreement to acquire TESARO, an oncology-focused biopharmaceutical company, to accelerate our pipeline and commercial capability in oncology and access new scientific capabilities.

Our position on Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

UHC is the concept that all people should receive the quality health services that they need without experiencing financial hardship as a result. Whilst not new, it is gaining increased visibility and traction and achieving UHC is one of the targets under SDG 3. Good health is essential to sustained economic and social development, and poverty reduction. It underpins and reinforces the delivery of all the SDGs.

GSK supports the concept of UHC and we stand ready to play our part in helping to realise it. Progress towards UHC is intrinsically linked to reforming how health systems are financed, improving governance structures, strengthening health infrastructure and delivery, ensuring access to innovative and essential medicines, improving health literacy and reshaping the health workforce. There is also increasing recognition that UHC cannot be achieved without continued needs-based medical innovation, which must be sustained through appropriate incentives.

We recognise that, as every country has a unique health system, tailored approaches and timelines will be required to achieve UHC. While governments must set their own priorities, a focus on prevention and health system strengthening, and not just on treatment, is essential – expenditure on health should be seen as an investment rather than a cost.

In scoping out their approaches to UHC, GSK would urge governments to ensure they, at a minimum, focus on UHC policies that embrace the following key principles:

- Equity: no one should remain untreated or discriminated against, for reason of gender, age, race, geographical location, economic or social status.
- Efficiency: prioritise resources for health where the need is greatest, with an emphasis on primary care and prevention, and eliminate corruption and duplication of effort in the value chain.
- Quality: apply internationally recognised quality standards in the manufacturing and regulation of all healthcare products and seek to prevent falsified and sub-standard medicines.



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- Evidence-based decision-making: use sound evidence, data and appropriate health information technology, across all sources of value (clinical, cost, societal and system), to guide spending decisions on all health systems investments and trade-offs, to optimise delivery of patient outcomes.
 - Availability: all stakeholders should work to ensure healthcare products and services, and information about them, are available to patients who need them, keeping in mind safety, the appropriate indication, efficacy, cost-effectiveness and sustainability as well as enabling patient choice.
 - Affordability and funding: ensure adequate financing for health products and services; a focus on reducing out-of-pocket payments and recognise that market-based approaches can help ensure cost-effectiveness and drive continuous improvements in standards of care.
 - Innovation: encourage continued investment in R&D across prevention, treatment and care and reflect the value it delivers for patients, healthcare systems and society at large.
 - Inclusiveness: transparent multi-stakeholder engagement in the design, transition to and implementation of UHC.

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