4.2 Physical activity for health:

On behalf of Global Health Council, supported by its member organization, the American Academy of Pediatrics and NCD Child, we welcome WHO’s attention to physical activity, and concur with the observation in the Director-General’s report that “significant disparities” hamper equitable “access to safe, accessible, affordable and appropriate spaces and places in which to be physically active.” To this end, we recommend that schools facilitate participation by supporting gender-sensitive athletic programs and activities, and that awareness campaigns promote or tie into educational efforts that support health literacy and empower people to make healthy, informed decisions for themselves. Promotion of safe physical activity helps prevent childhood obesity and injuries, contributing to the NCD prevention agenda, too. Local governments should invest in infrastructure improvements that provide opportunities for physical activity, such as parks and recreational facilities; mitigate traffic danger, such as pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, and bicycle routes; and otherwise reduce the anxieties of parents about their children’s safety, which is associated with reduced physical activity.