



Reply to:

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9 April 2026

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General
World Health Organization
Avenue Appia 20
1211 Geneva 27
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Dear Director-General

**OPEN LETTER: We call on WHO to implement the UN Political Declaration
Commitment to HPV Vaccination for Boys and Girls**

Global Action on Men's Health (GAMH) and NOMAN is an Island: Race to End HPV welcome the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) [Political Declaration](#) on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) and the promotion of Mental Health and Wellbeing on 15 December 2025.

Now that the international community has overwhelmingly endorsed the UN Political Declaration, we call on the World Health Organization (WHO) to update its approach and implementation guidance on HPV vaccination for boys to reflect fully the UN's resolution, by committing to support strengthened efforts to prevent HPV-related cancers and diseases in all populations, including males.

The agreement of 175 countries to this declaration marks an historic step forward in advancing equitable and comprehensive protection against HPV-related diseases. Commonly known for causing cervical cancer, HPV also causes vulval and vaginal cancer in women, penile cancer in men and anal, oropharyngeal and other cancers in both sexes, as well as anogenital warts and recurrent respiratory papillomatosis (RRP).

While girls-only vaccination has successfully reduced cervical cancer, the evidence on how best to eliminate cervical cancer and the widening global gap in cancer outcomes between men and women and between high and low-income countries, no longer supports a single-sex approach. Evidence from lower-income countries, including Cameroon, Tanzania and Bhutan, has also shown that a universal approach can strengthen public trust in and acceptance of HPV vaccination.

Routine universal (gender-neutral) HPV vaccination – vaccinating all children and young people against HPV before they become sexually active – is more effective, durable, equitable and now feasible worldwide. Vaccinating boys not only prevents HPV-related cancers in men and boys, it also reduces overall HPV transmission, advances gender equity in cancer prevention, accelerates progress toward the elimination of all HPV-related diseases, and reduces the long-term cost of NCDs to countries by reducing the future disease burden.

Many low-income countries receive financial and technical assistance from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, to vaccinate girls only, limiting their ability to extend protection to boys – even where national governments wish to do so. Regional and international bodies and inter-governmental agencies such as the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the European Commission are now calling for the inclusion of boys in HPV vaccination programmes. The new European Code Against Cancer (published by the WHO International Agency for Research on Cancer) also calls for the vaccination of both boys and girls.

Prevention through vaccination is one of the most effective and cost-efficient cancer control interventions available. Integrating all HPV-related cancers and diseases into international and national cancer, sexual health, NCD and UHC frameworks will strengthen awareness, prevention, screening and early detection, and treatment pathways (where available) and ensure policy coherence across health sectors. This will support global and national government efforts to eliminate all HPV disease, not only cervical cancer.

We respectfully request clarification from WHO on:

1. What steps WHO plans to take to extend HPV vaccination to boys globally?
2. Whether a timeline has been established for policy review of the cervical cancer strategy and programme expansion to recognise boys as equal beneficiaries of HPV vaccination?
3. Whether WHO will work with Gavi to recognise boys as equal beneficiaries of HPV vaccination support?
4. Whether WHO will work with member states to expand immunisation-related financial and technical assistance to enable routine universal (gender-neutral) HPV vaccination programmes?
5. Whether WHO will encourage and support member states to ensure that all HPV-related cancers among men and women are comprehensively addressed within national cancer control plans, sexual health strategies, immunisation and adolescent health policies and Universal Health Coverage frameworks?

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you, or relevant WHO colleagues, to discuss how our organisations, and our broader coalition of partners (see below), can support WHO in the implementation of this

commitment and to better understand your planned next steps. We stand ready to support WHO to help ensure successful expansion of your HPV approach and recommendations.

Thank you for your leadership in advancing public health and cancer prevention.

Yours sincerely



Peter Baker
Chief Executive
Global Action on Men's Health



David Winterflood
Director
NOMAN is an Island: Race to End HPV

Further information on HPV vaccination for boys

Should you and your WHO colleagues wish to review further information in relation to this request, please find a comprehensive overview on the benefits of also vaccinating males for HPV: <https://gamh.org/boys-men-hpv/>

A short overview of the new UN Political Declaration and its relevance to boys' HPV vaccination can also be found at: <https://gamh.org/un-declaration/>

Over 70 organisations around the world now support a Call to Action for vaccinating boys, as well as girls, for HPV. Further details can be found at <https://www.endhpvglobal.org>

Our organisations, Global Action on Men's Health (GAMH) and NOMAN is an Island: Race to End HPV are two leading global voices working to support the expansion of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programmes to include young men and boys, particularly in low- and middle-income settings.

Further information about our organisations can be found here:

Global Action on Men's Health: www.gamh.org

NOMAN is an Island: Race to End HPV: <https://www.nomancampaign.org/>