

EDITORIAL

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In this, the first issue in Volume 6 of *SelfCare*, Webber and colleagues¹ review the challenges posed by lifestyle or non-communicable diseases and conclude that there should be a new emphasis on the responsibilities of the healthy. Their manifesto for self-care suggests a framework for considering what those responsibilities should be and how healthcare professionals and governments can facilitate their fulfilment.

This ambitious charter is put forward as a basis for discussion and evidence gathering. It is difficult to see how the future challenge of lifestyle diseases can be met unless individuals accept the need to practice life-long self-care for themselves and their family. Health care systems will struggle to meet the needs of the ill, unless the responsibilities of the healthy are made clear and form the basis of future policy decisions.

Non-prescription medicines are intended to allow individuals to self-treat when this is appropriate. This, in turn, can reduce the reliance of people on their primary care doctors and the pressure on this limited resource. In recent years there have been a number of P to POM or 'reverse switches' when a medicine is returned to prescription-only supply. In his opinion paper, Stephen Mann² points out that the safety concerns that lead to such regulatory actions are sometimes based on observational studies, rather than definitive evidence of harm in the OTC setting. He discusses the types of evidence, particularly relating to consumer behaviour, that companies should consider assembling when such safety challenges arise.

REFERENCES

1. Webber DE, Guo Z, Mann S. The Responsibilities of the Healthy: A 'Manifesto' for Self-Care. *SelfCare* 2015;6(1):2-9.
2. Mann S. Safety Concerns With Over The Counter Drugs: Mind the Evidence Gap? *SelfCare* 2015;6(1):10-14.