

# PALLIATIVE CARE FOR NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES

## A global snapshot

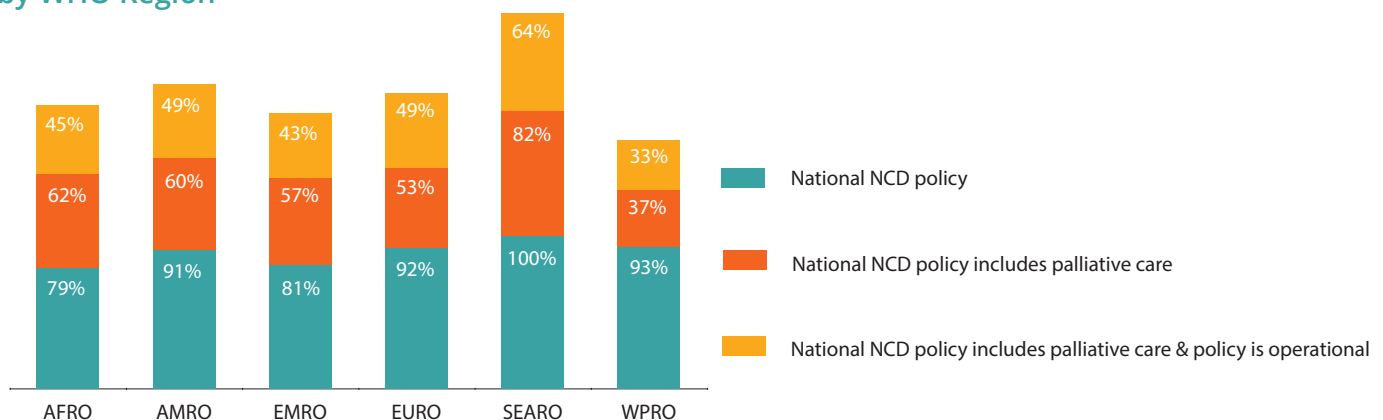
Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families who are facing problems associated with life-threatening illness. The World Health Assembly Resolution 67.19 (2014) requests that countries integrate palliative care into national health policies – by revising laws and processes to improve access to opioids, and provide palliative care services through primary health care as well as through community settings with adequate resources.

Progress has been monitored through an online survey which was sent out to all WHO Member States. The overall response rate for the survey was 100%: this snapshot presents the key elements for palliative care based on the response from 194 countries in 2017. Palliative care is not generally available globally, with barely a third of countries reporting this form of care reaching most of the population in need in either primary health-care facilities or in community- or home-based care.

### Integrating palliative care into responses to NCDs:

Palliative care is an essential component of a comprehensive response to noncommunicable diseases. All countries should have palliative care within their NCD action plans. In 2017, only 56% of countries report that their national NCD policy includes palliative care, with this figure ranging from 37% of countries in the Western Pacific region to 82% of countries in the South-East Asia region.

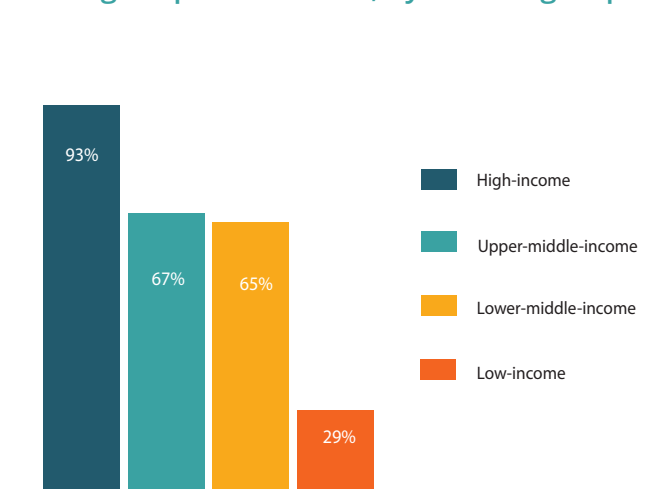
Percentage of Member States with a national NCD policy that includes palliative care, by WHO Region



### Allocating funding for palliative care:

Government funding for palliative care is not ubiquitous: just over two thirds (68%) of countries have funding for palliative care, with this proportion much higher in high-income countries (93%) than low-income countries (29%). There is also considerable variation by region with European, South-East Asian and Western Pacific countries far more likely to provide funding for palliative care than African, Americas or Eastern Mediterranean countries.

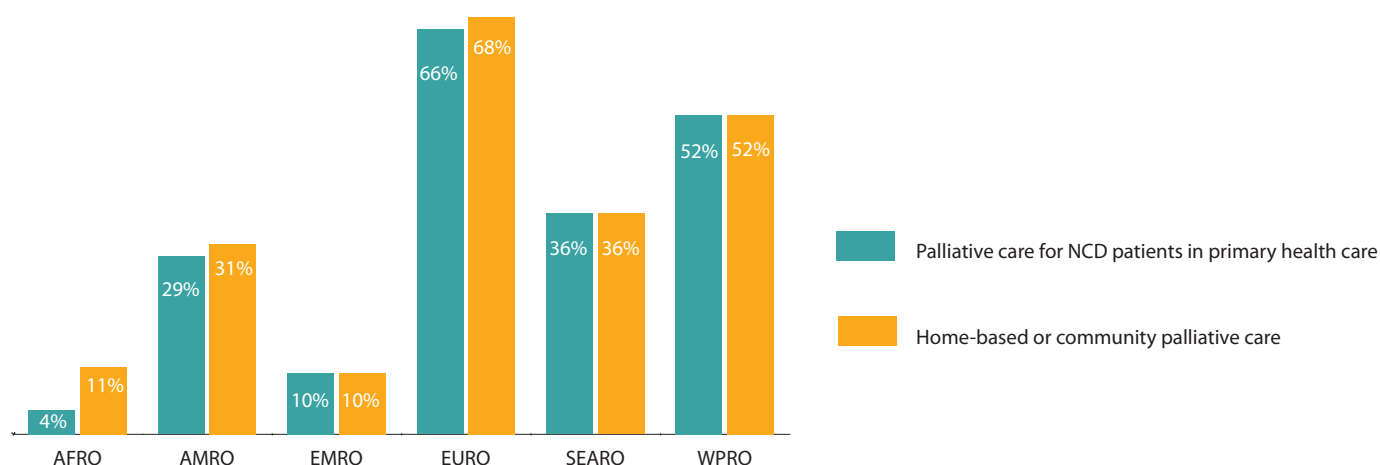
Percentage of Member States with government funding for palliative care, by income group



### Availability of palliative care services:

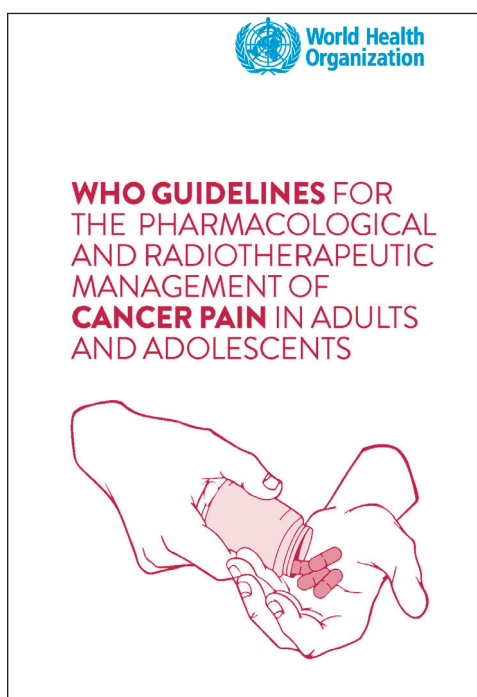
Palliative care for patients with NCDs is not widely available globally, with only 35% of countries reporting general availability (in 50% or more of health-care facilities) of palliative care in primary health care and 37% in community- or home-based care. The availability of palliative care in both settings is far more common in high-income countries (75%) than low-(10%) income countries. Similarly, the regions where countries fund palliative care have a corresponding higher likelihood of providing these services than those where funding is less likely to be available.

### Percentage of Member States providing palliative care for NCD patients through primary care, home-based care or community care, by WHO Region



### Access to opioid pain relief:

Despite its inclusion in the 2014 World Health Assembly resolution, the availability of opioid pain relief for palliative care remains scarce. Oral morphine is reported as generally available only in 32% of countries, with some regions having no Member States reporting that oral morphine is generally available in pharmacies.



### Percentage of Member States reporting that oral morphine is available in >50% of pharmacies, by income group

