Our Commitment to Deliver our Science to Patients
Our focus is delivering our science into the hands of our patients. The lives we’ve helped to save and the quality of life improvements inspire our more than 61,000 employees every day. We all know someone who has been diagnosed with a non-communicable disease (NCD). It may be our children, our parents, our neighbours, our friends, or even ourselves. The diseases we treat cause over 40 million deaths each year, and we know that we must stand together with our patients, governments, the industry, and health systems to have the greatest influence.

Science is our main lever, but we’re also focused on disease prevention, health system development, accessibility, and affordability.

To our patients, we are committed to making our medicines accessible and affordable, and when necessary, addressing barriers beyond price. Delivering science can’t be done overnight. It takes drive, energy, dedication, resilience, and time. And that can only happen by building a trusted, respected, and sustainable business – one that will be around for the long term. To do this we must continue to look beyond our own four walls to recognise the role AstraZeneca can play in delivering sustainable healthcare and the responsibility we share in improving our society.

In an uncertain world, science is a force for good. It is easy to overlook its transformative power and benefits to society.”

Pascal Soriot, CEO AstraZeneca
Developing a drug is a lengthy process. On average, bringing one new drug to market typically costs more than $2 billion and takes an average of 10 to 15 years. This number incorporates the cost of failures—thousands and sometimes millions of compounds that are screened and assessed early in the research and development (R&D) process, only a few of which will ultimately receive approval.

AstraZeneca is committed to taking risks and discovering new innovations that could one day eradicate disease altogether. Our dedication to our patients is displayed in our approach to R&D to deliver new treatment options. At AstraZeneca, we follow a rigorous process to ensure that only the highest potential drug candidates reach the clinical trial phase. And we work in all areas of our business, not just R&D, to reduce costs and improve value for our patients—from creating a robust supply chain to developing effective partnerships. This commitment to fiscal responsibility ultimately allows us to invest in continued innovation and expand the availability and affordability of our medicines.
We are here to take on and conquer the most complex and challenging diseases, to improve the lives of patients today, and to anticipate the needs of patients tomorrow. Innovation is critical to addressing these future unmet medical needs. Now more than ever, the delivery of new medicines relies on a more advanced understanding of disease and the use of new technology and approaches.

One of the most effective ways to reduce the burden of NCDs, beyond disease prevention, is through targeted medicines that improve patient outcomes. Over 90% of the medicines we are developing follow a precision medicine approach, which will enable clinicians to identify the patients most likely to benefit from treatment. We continue to maintain a scientific leadership position in precision medicines, as measured by our regulatory approvals and industry publications.

Genomics, an approach to understanding genetic information, is another way to improve health outcomes. We have analysed more than 200,000 genomes to inform investment decisions in drug discovery. These advanced approaches have the potential to transform the way complex diseases are treated—increasing the value to the patient, the healthcare system, and society.
Our Commitment to Deliver Value Within the Overall Healthcare System

NCDs account for 70% of deaths worldwide. The World Health Organization terms this statistic the “invisible epidemic,” estimated to cost the global economy $47 trillion by 2030 from lost productivity. At AstraZeneca, our medicines help to provide sustainable healthcare, creating value by improving health outcomes for our patients.

We are confident that our science can deliver positive societal impact, and we recognise that the way healthcare systems assess the value of a medicine can be improved. As such, AstraZeneca is committed to expanding access to healthcare through providing patient assistance programmes, working with governments on innovative pricing approaches, and investing in programmes to improve health outcomes.

To our patients, our policies and programmes can have a significant impact to lessen financial burden and provide you with the medicines you need. Prescription medications are one piece of the puzzle to addressing the greater challenge of overall healthcare affordability. We are committed to working with all parties in the healthcare system to address barriers—financial or otherwise—that you may face as patients.

Patented Prescription Medicines as a Percentage of Total Healthcare Spending

Note: Total healthcare spending includes hospital care, physician and clinical services, home health and nursing home care, government administration and net cost of private health insurance, dental, home health and other professional services as well as durable medical equipment.

Source: OECD Health Statistics Database (accessed February 2016); Altarum Institute, 2015, A ten year projection of the prescription drug share of national health expenditures including non-retail.
Our Commitment to Make our Medicines Available and Affordable

We want to make our medicines affordable to more people on a commercially and socially responsible basis. We use flexible approaches, embedded throughout AstraZeneca, that reflect the wide variation in global healthcare systems—understanding the need to work closely with those responsible for paying for new medicines.

Our Flexible Approaches to Access and Affordability

Early Access Programmes

Regulatory approval occurs on a market-by-market basis. It is a time-consuming process that can lead to inconsistencies across the world. Once regulatory approval is granted, the process for public reimbursement often lags by months—in some cases, creating a financial burden and unintentional barriers to accessing medicines. At AstraZeneca, we address these challenges through early access programmes.

Addressing delays in public reimbursement

Tiered Pricing Approach

In emerging and developing markets, there is significant unmet patient need. The cost of treating chronic conditions is an increasing burden, and there is a substantial need across the industry to reach these underserved patients.

At AstraZeneca, we are committed to maximising patient reach in these markets. When making any pricing decision, we aim to price responsibly, in line with current treatment costs where treatment options exist, and this starts and ends with the patient.

AstraZeneca applies Tiered Pricing Principles globally which define price levels commensurate with affordability based on a country’s ability to pay. We believe that this ‘ability to pay’ approach to pricing is sustainable and fair; it should significantly increase access and improve patient outcomes in emerging markets. In practice, applying this kind of price tiering has resulted in faster and broader patient access to our products.

Patient Assistance Programmes

AstraZeneca also provides a number of patient assistance programmes for our patients who can’t afford their medicines. Through these programmes, we help qualified patients through discounts and donations. We provide these programmes in markets with no public reimbursement system, no coverage beyond the most basic therapies, or where it is unlikely or only after many years that public reimbursement is a possible consideration.

We take pride in our breadth of affordability programmes throughout the world, such as:

- Faz Bem (Brazil)
- Disfruto Mi Salud (Central America, Caribbean)
- AZyYo (Chile)
- Patient Access Card (Central and Eastern Europe)
- Karta Zdorovia (Russia)
- AZ&Me (United States)

We are committed to assessing each of our markets on an ongoing basis—creating new programmes or modifying existing ones—to better serve our patients.
In developing economies, barriers to healthcare are not always price related. Fundamental challenges can exist, such as a lack of healthcare workers or a limited number of hospitals within a particular region. In these scenarios, we are committed to participating in policy dialogue and addressing the underlying infrastructure issues. This is why our access to healthcare strategy is broad, focusing on elements beyond price.

Our access to healthcare strategy is made up of three elements:

- Expanding disease prevention and awareness and treatment
- Building capacity in areas with limited infrastructure
- Improving affordability and access for underserved patients

At AstraZeneca, we remain committed to our patients in underserved markets with limited infrastructure, helping to strengthen healthcare frameworks and capabilities. And through our disease prevention initiatives, we are committed to taking a life-cycle approach—providing education and awareness of risk factors so that citizens all over the world might never be afflicted by the diseases we treat. To learn more about our Access to Healthcare initiatives, please read our annual Sustainability Report.

Our efforts support the United Nations Global Goals with a core focus on impacting human health. We work with partners around the world to create a framework for sustainable access.

We are proud of the work that we have done to create a sustainable pipeline of future innovations while ensuring the medicines available today are both affordable and accessible. From our R&D excellence to capacity building programmes to our wide range of affordability programmes, our commitment to our patients remains the same – ensure that our science gets to those in need.

From all our AstraZeneca employees, we hope to be your trusted partner and to be a source of great medicines over the long term.