



PARALLEL SESSION 3.5

MAKING GLOBAL TRADE POLICIES WORK FOR UHC

| BACKGROUND

Global trends in trade policies is currently a hot political issue across the world and becoming an ever more important 'megatrend' of relevance to the achievement of Universal Health Coverage. The changing landscape of global, regional, and bilateral trade agreements and practices has important implications for achieving SDG3 in enabling, or limiting, governments' strategies to pursue policy coherence, financing and good governance of the health services, and ensuring access to affordable medicines.

Current global politics of looming trade wars and sanctions against some countries can have a profound impact on the supply of life saving health commodities. This is a sensitive topic indeed. But it must be openly and candidly discussed as a challenge to the achievement of UHC in countries around the world.

This session will provide an overview of key trade policy issues and experiences that are relevant for all countries in their efforts to achieve or maintain UHC. It will focus on case studies on risks and opportunities for health promotion - including regulating health-harming industries and practices - and trade in health commodities of direct relevance to UHC. It will then focus on strategies for promoting innovation and access to affordable and quality medicines and other health products and technologies for all countries and people, in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda of Leaving No One Behind.

| OBJECTIVES

The objective of this session is to spotlight the opportunities and challenges of recent trends in trade policies and practices on countries' efforts to achieve or maintain UHC; to increase visibility about the risk and benefits involved, share lessons learnt, and to discuss concrete actions that must be taken in the interest of the lives of people.



Panelist

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Dr Ruth Lopert is a public health physician and consultant in global health, pharmaceutical regulation and policy, and health technology assessment (HTA). She is a chercheur associé principal at the University of Strasbourg, France, and an adjunct professor in the Department of Health Policy & Management at George Washington University in Washington DC, where she held a Visiting Professorship in 2011-12 and a Harkness Fellowship in Health Policy in 2006-07. From 2008-11 Ruth was the chief medical officer in the Australian drug and therapeutics regulatory agency, the Therapeutic Goods Administration. Previously she established and directed the Pharmaceutical Policy unit in the Australian Department of Health, and in 2003-04 was principal negotiator of the pharmaceutical provisions of the Australia US Free Trade Agreement. Ruth's research interests include medicine and therapeutics regulation; pharmaceutical policy, pricing and access; HTA; and issues at the intersections of trade, intellectual property, and access to medicines.