

# A brief history of self-care (2008-2023)

**Self-Care, Health & Wellbeing Summit**  
Identifying Key Research & Development Priorities for Self-Care

14 Sep 2023

**Austen El-Osta**

Self-Care Academic Research Unit (SCARU)

[a.el-osta@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:a.el-osta@imperial.ac.uk)

[@austenelosta](#) [@ImperialSCARU](#)

**Self Care Forum**  
Helping people take care of themselves

WHO Collaborating Centre   
Public Health Education and Training

Imperial College  
London

Primary Care and Public Health



**SCARU**

**Our mission is to ‘make the absolute case for self-care’**

Thought leadership & to be recognized as the academic home of self-care  
Democratize access to self-care education & interventions  
Making self-care everybody's business

# Inverse relationship between self-care & lifestyle diseases



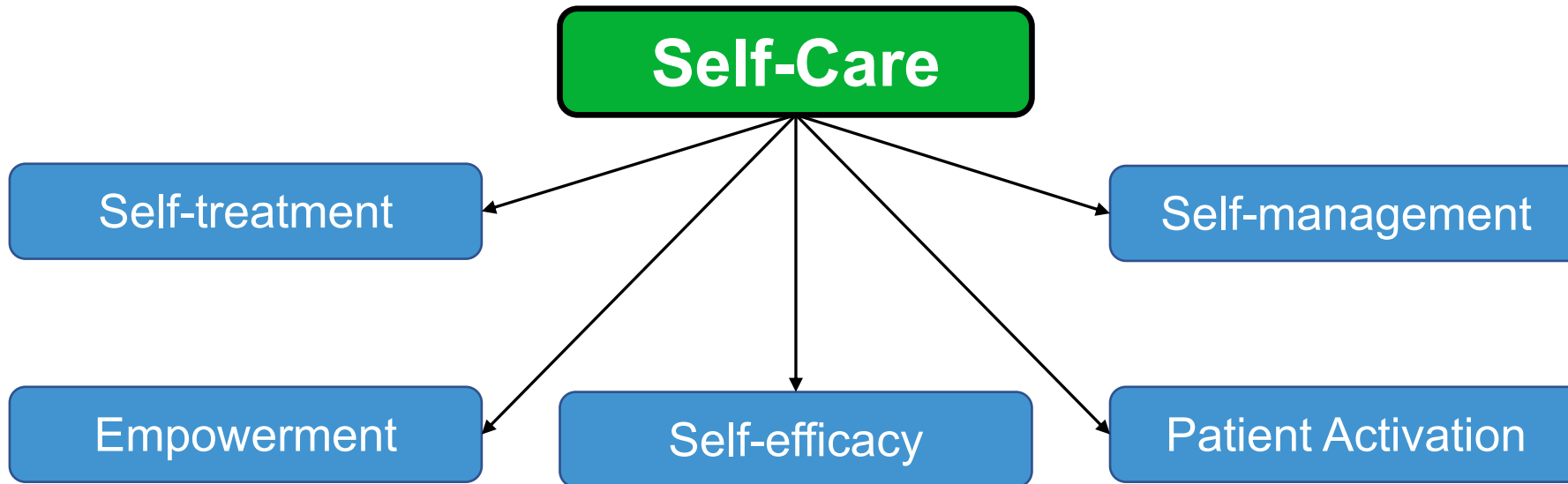
Social, cultural political factors	Personal risk factors	Intermediate risk factors	Main chronic diseases
Globalization Urbanization Ageing population	<b>Unhealthy diet</b> <b>Physical inactivity</b> <b>Tobacco use</b> <b>Excess alcohol</b>	<b>Raised blood pressure</b> <b>Raised blood glucose</b> <b>Abnormal blood lipids</b> <b>Overweight/ obesity</b>	Heart disease Stroke Cancer Lung disease Diabetes

These risk factors are modifiable!

[behaviour change]

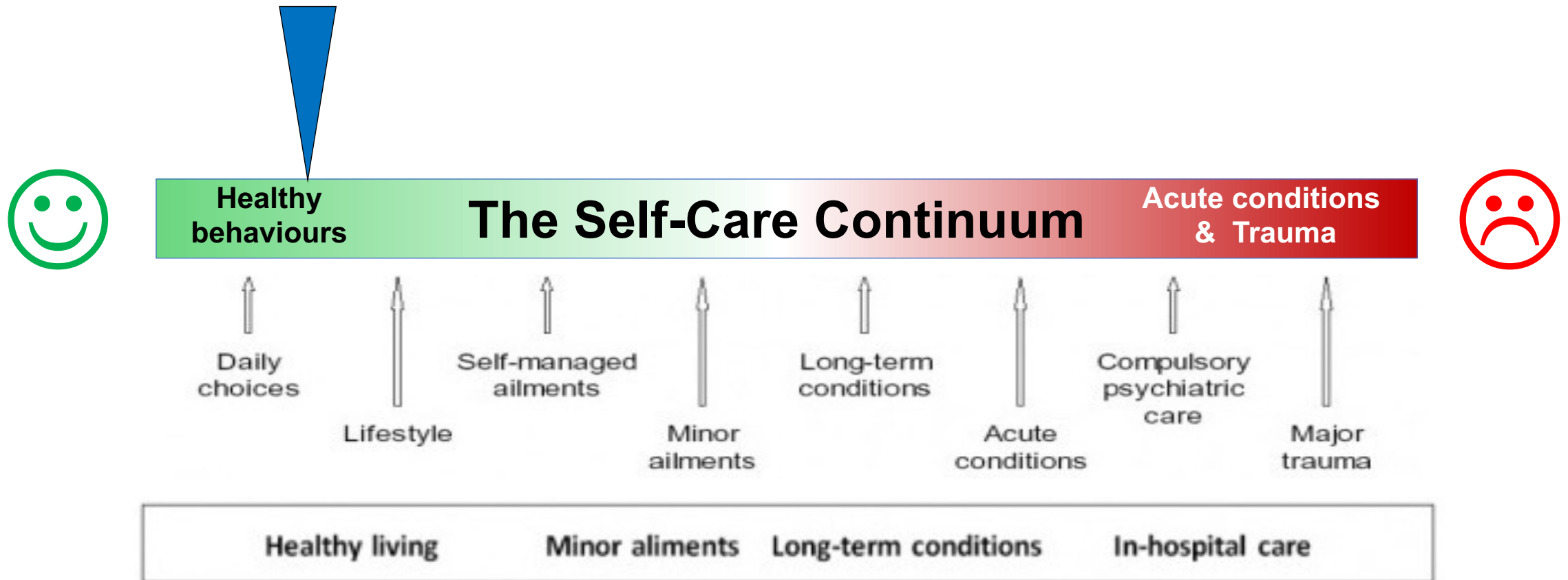
# Refocus on the oldest type of care

139+ different definitions (2011)

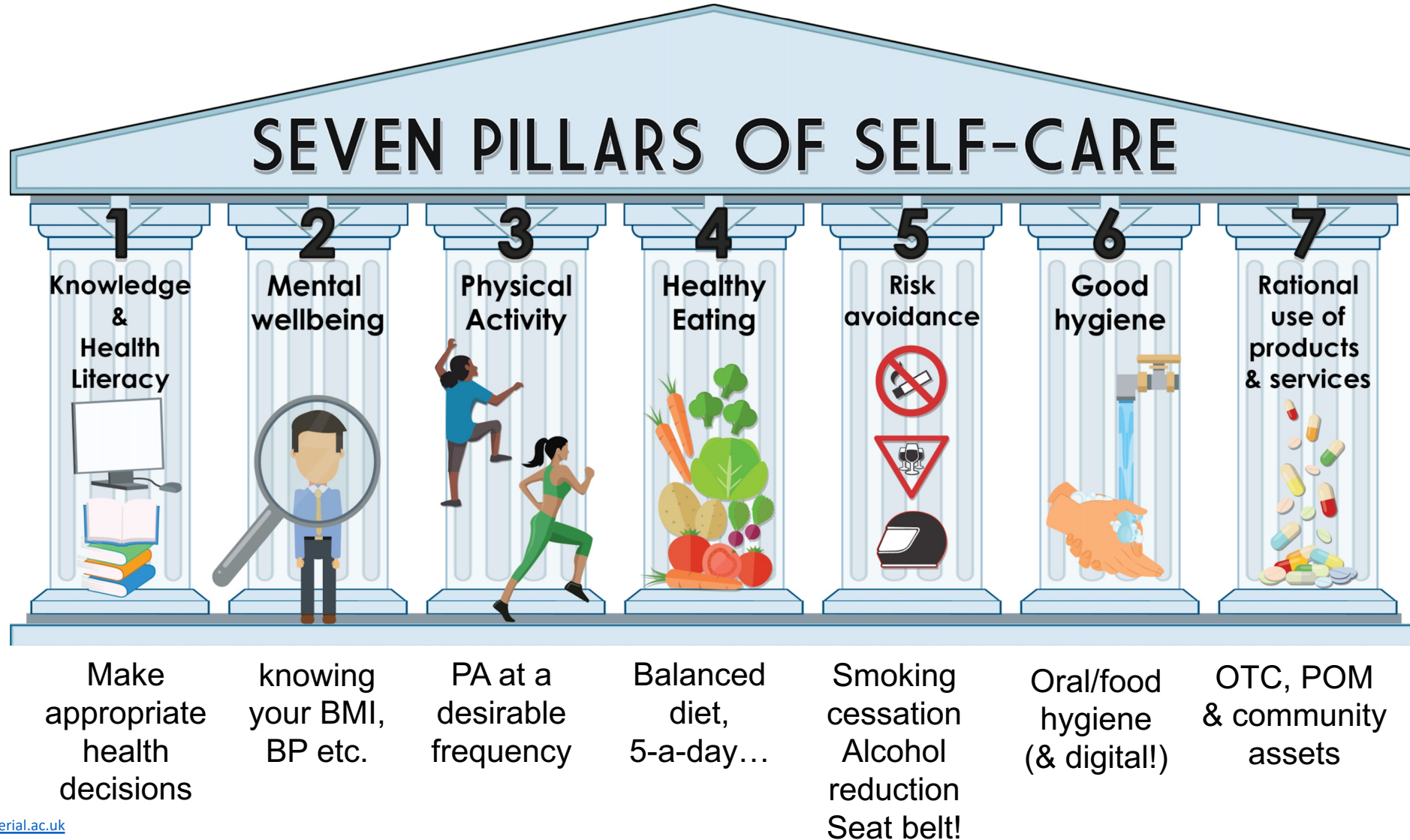


“what people do for themselves to establish & maintain health & to prevent & deal with illness” **(WHO 1998)**

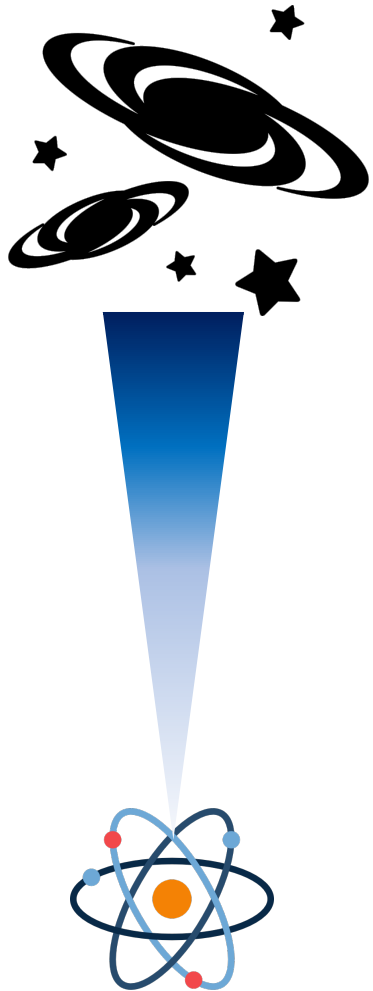
# Self-care & resource utilisation



# The Seven Pillars of Self-Care



# The Self-Care Matrix



4

3

2

1

Macro	System focused Policy & culture	<b>[4] Self-Care Environment</b> Wider determinants of health, fiscal policy, health policy, prevailing culture & the built environment						
	Patient-centred Resource utilisation	Daily choices	Lifestyle	Self-managed ailments	Minor ailments	Long-term conditions	Acute conditions	Compulsory care
Meso	Person/social network centred Motivation, activation & change	<b>[3] Self-Care Context</b>						
Micro	Person-centred Individual capacities & capabilities  7 pillars of self-care	<b>[2] Self-Care Behaviours</b>						
		<b>[1] Self-Care Activities</b> 1 Knowledge & Health Literacy 2 Mental wellbeing, self-awareness & Agency 3 Physical Activity 4 Healthy Eating 5 Risk Avoidance 6 Good Hygiene 7 Rational use of products & services						

**Critical enablers**  
Policies, Laws Regulations, Community assets, Health System

**Resource utilisation**  
Spend, reliance on services

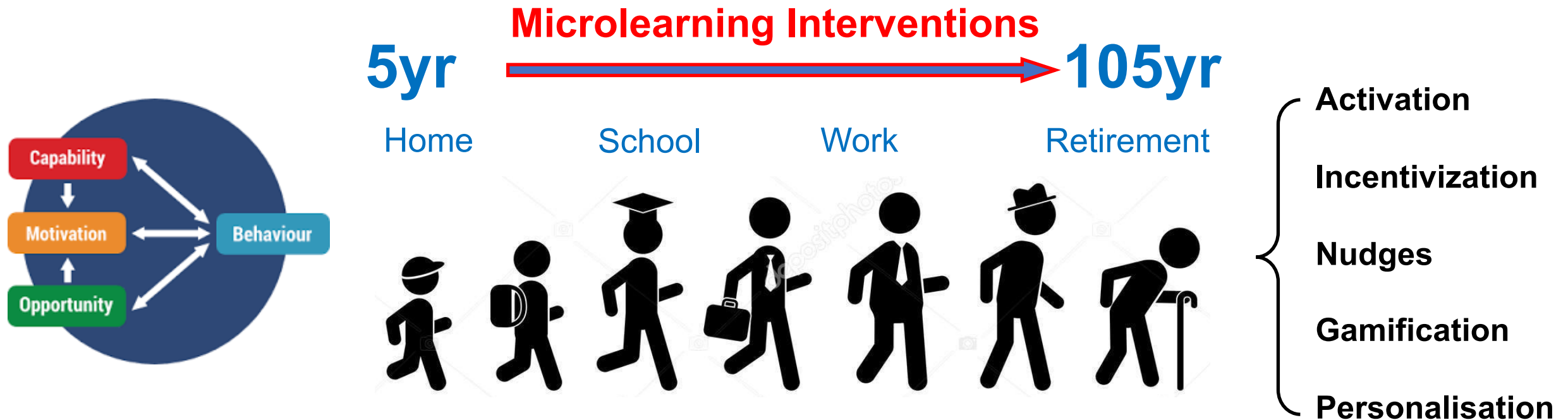
**Behaviours**  
Capability, motivation, opportunity

**Person-centred (daily) activities**  
Personal choice, empowerment

# Self-care & behaviour change

Self-care & behaviour lifestyle modification are a huge area of focus today

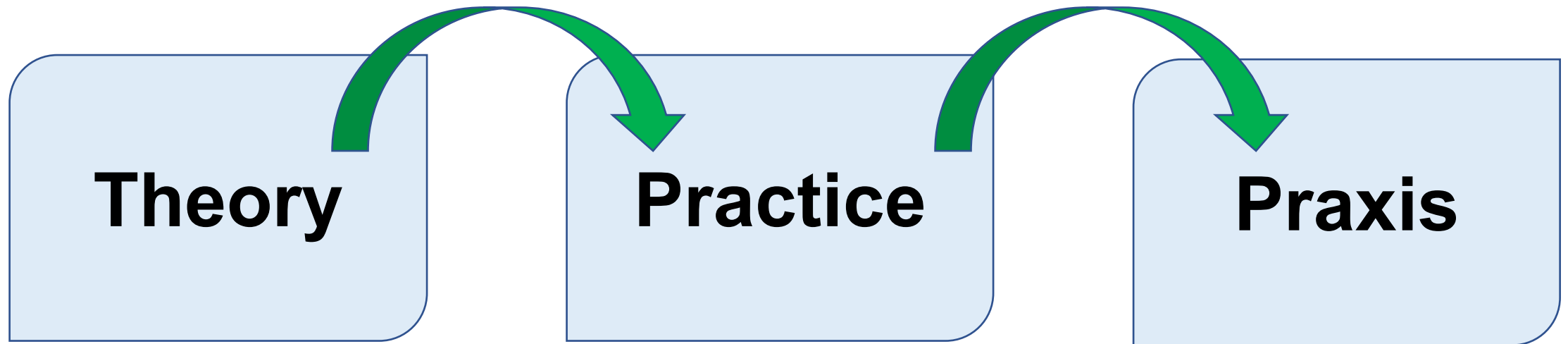
But getting people to change behaviour is not easy!





# Self-care & person-centredness

Self-care is not just a mindset, it is an act of will  
**The 'self' is necessarily person-centred**



# Self-care benefits

Systematic reviews show the positive health behaviours & ongoing self-care activities  
**can prevent, delay or alter the disease course of NCDs**

Self-care can prevent:

- 93% of new-onset T2D
- 81% of heart attacks
- 50% of stroke cases
- 35% of cancers

Can reduce all-cause mortality

**Can vastly improve quality of life**

**Huge social & financial return on investment potential**



British Society of  
**lifestyle medicine**

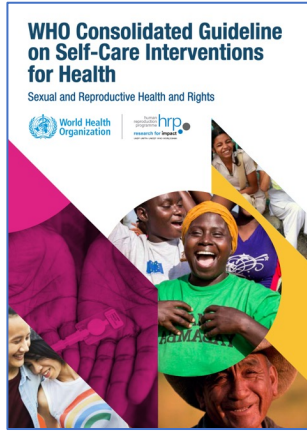


EUROPEAN LIFESTYLE  
MEDICINE ORGANIZATION



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF  
**Lifestyle Medicine**

# A brief history of self-care



SCARU

2008 2012 2017 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025

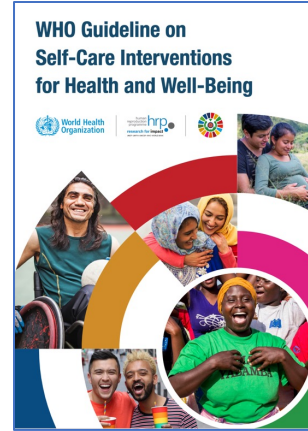
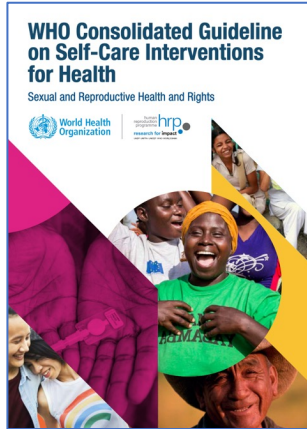


Self Care Forum

Helping people take care of themselves

© 2019 Self-Care Forum

# A brief history of self-care (2023-2025)

**SCARU**

2008 2012 2017 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025



WHO Resolution On Self-Care

**Self Care Forum**  
Helping people take care of themselves

# Self-Care Megatrends



2000

2030

# Repositioning pharmacies & primary healthcare as health & wellbeing hubs

Places for accessing self-care tech & services

IVD / POCT & OSC

Competent HCPs

Self-Gen Data



**SCARU**

+



# Democratizing access to self-care

**350,000+  
health apps**

- eHealth & mHealth
- Internet of things & AI
- Fitness trackers
- Internet pharmacies
- Social media platforms

**Symptom  
checkers**



**Healthily**



**1000+  
wearables**

- Blood pressure monitor,
- Glucometer, Heart rate,
- Pedometer
- Mood assessment
- Movement/fall sensor
- Cognitive performance



**POCT / IVD**



**Largely consumer focused  
(not for patients/NHS) but this is quickly changing**

**Pharmacy / PHC, HCP  
focused + @Home**

# Digital Health Technologies

**350,000+**  
**health apps**

eHealth & mHealth

Internet of things

Diagnostics

Fitness trackers

Internet pharmacies

Social media platforms

Decision support tools

Artificial intelligence

**1000+**  
**wearables**

Blood pressure monitor

Glucometer

Breath-analysis

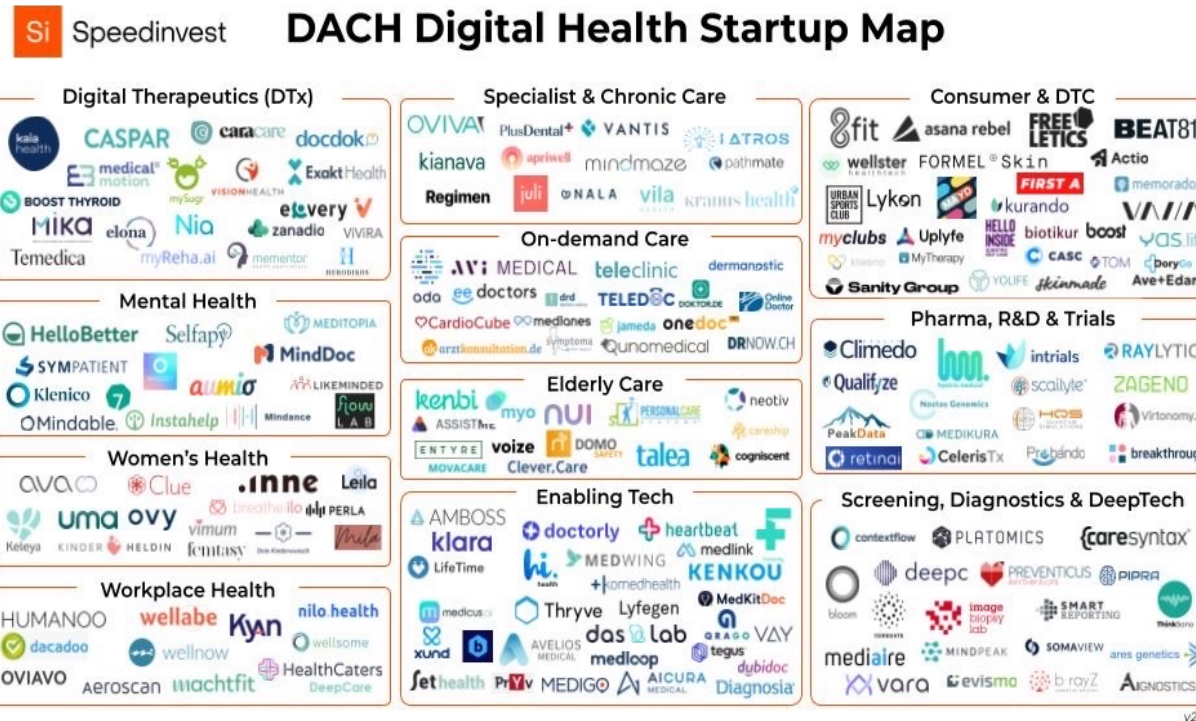
Heart rate

Pedometer

Mood assessment

Movement/fall sensor

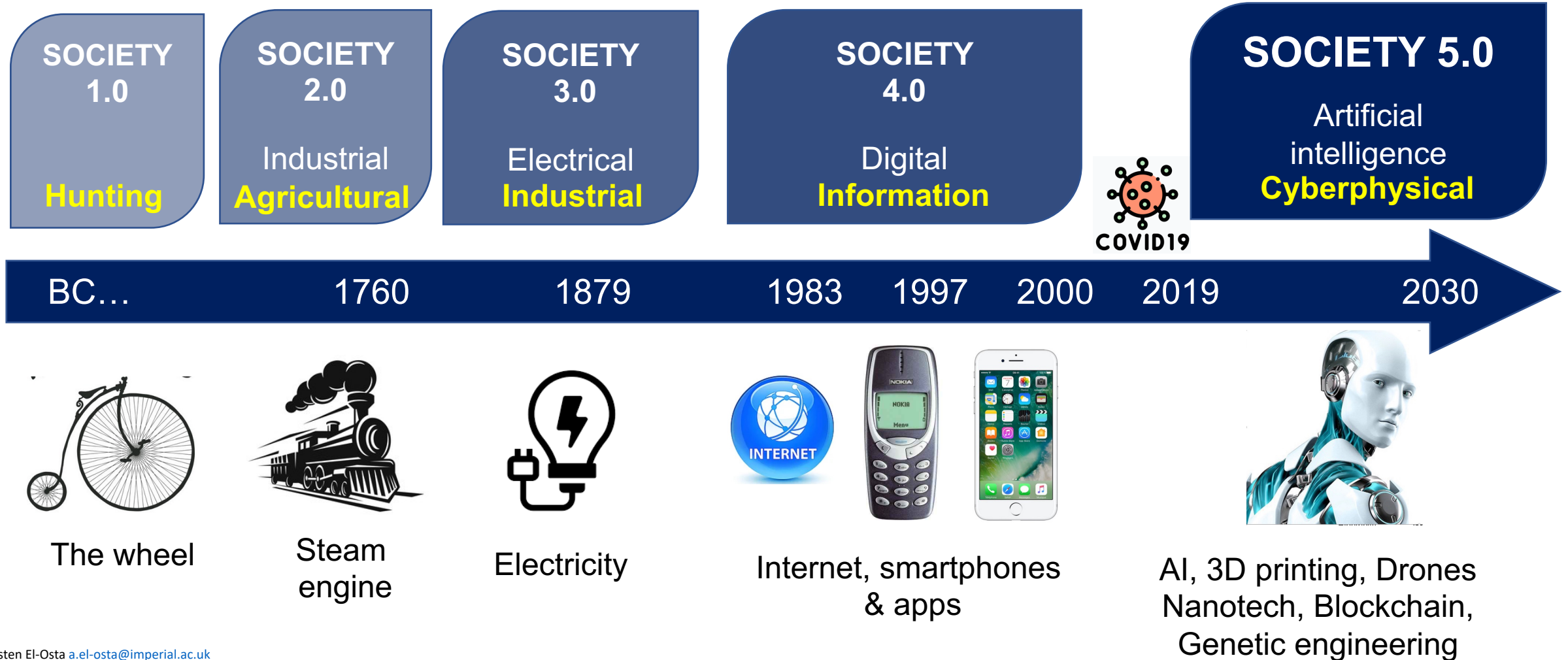
Cognitive performance



**Largely consumer focused (not for patients) but this is quickly changing**



# The emergence of Society 5.0



# Self-Driven Healthcare (SDH)

“SDH is an umbrella term introduced to conceptualise aspects of healthcare delivery that can support people in becoming more engaged in their own health & wellbeing management rather than being passive receivers of healthcare”

Podium



The ROYAL SOCIETY of MEDICINE

Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine; 0(0) 1–5  
DOI: 10.1177/01410768221136245

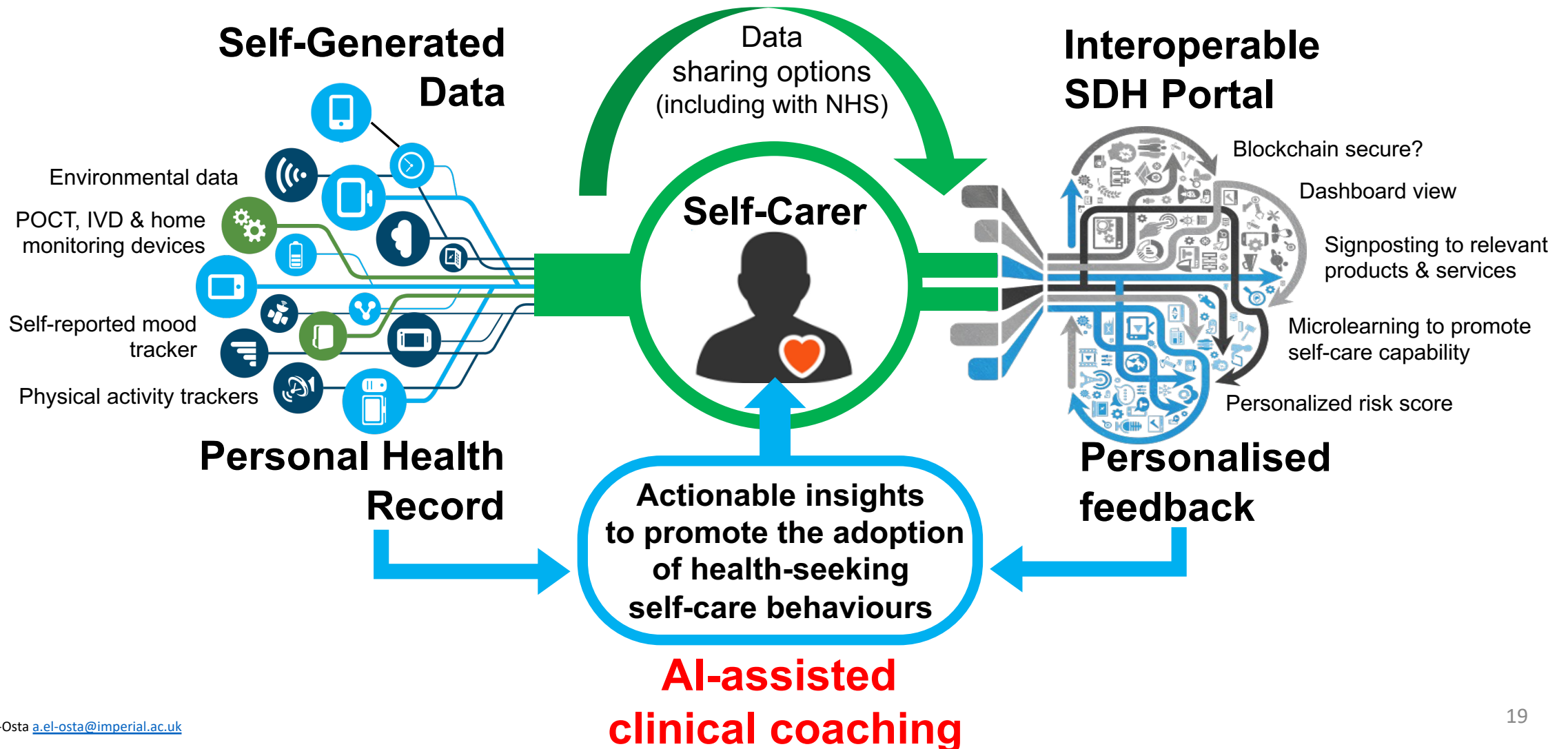
## Developing a shared definition of self-driven healthcare to enhance the current healthcare delivery paradigm

**Austen El-Osta<sup>1</sup>** , **Chris Rowe<sup>2</sup>** and **Azeem Majeed<sup>3</sup>** 

<sup>1</sup>Self-Care Academic Research Unit (SCARU), Imperial College London, London W6 8RP, UK  
<sup>2</sup>Innovate UK, Polaris House, Swindon SN2 1UE, UK  
<sup>3</sup>Department of Primary Care and Public Health, Imperial College London, London W6 8RP, UK

**Corresponding author:** Austen El-Osta. Email: [a.el-osta@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:a.el-osta@imperial.ac.uk)

# SDH Portal (Horizon 2030)



# SDH Horizon 2030



**International  
Self-Care Day (24/7)**

**24 Jul 2023**



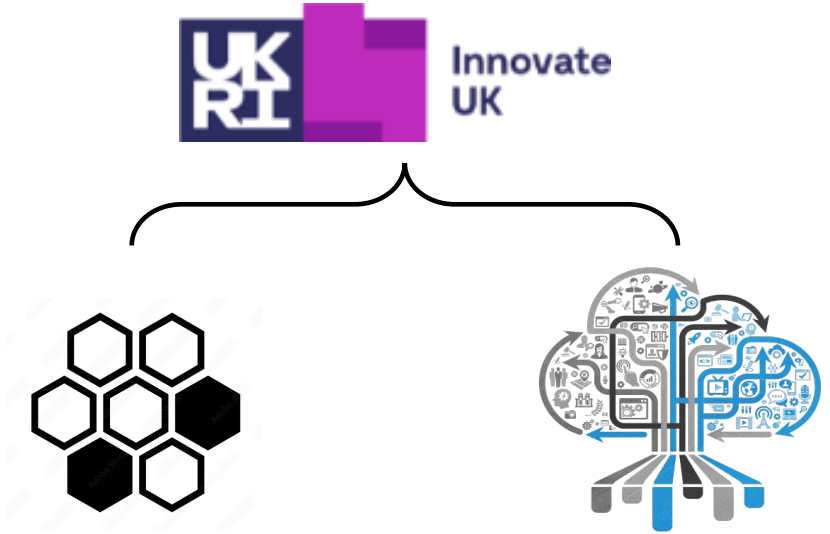
**SDH  
White Paper**

**Nov 2023**



**SDH Eco Hub  
Business case**

**2024**



**SDH portal**

**2027+**



# Self-care monitoring & evaluation

## POLICY MAPPING

**Assessing Implementation of the WHO Consolidated Guideline on Self-Care Interventions in Policy and Practice (In Kenya, Nigeria & Uganda)**

### Rapid Analysis

Dr Austen El-Osta  
Director, Imperial College London Self-Care Academic Research Unit (SCARU)  
CC. AOs Alaa, Iman Webber, Manisha Karki, Eva Riboli-Sasco & Professor Azeem Majeed  
@austenelosta @ImperialSCARU

11 May 2021

**SCARU**  
Self-Care Academic Research Unit



El-Osta et al. *BMC Public Health* (2023) 23:1312  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-16194-6>













BMC Public Health

### RESEARCH

Open Access

## Tools for measuring individual self-care capability: a scoping review



Austen El-Osta<sup>1\*</sup>, Eva Riboli Sasco<sup>1</sup>, Evelina Barbanti<sup>1</sup>, Iman Webber<sup>1</sup>, AOs Alaa<sup>1</sup>, Manisha Karki<sup>1</sup>, Marie line El Asmar<sup>1</sup>, Haitham Idriss<sup>1</sup>, Mashael Almadi<sup>1</sup>, Farah Massoud<sup>1</sup>, Ahmed Alboksmaty<sup>1</sup> and Azeem Majeed<sup>1</sup>

# Direct & proxy-measures of self-care

**Table 3** Appraisal of the self-care tools using the Seven Pillars of Self-Care framework

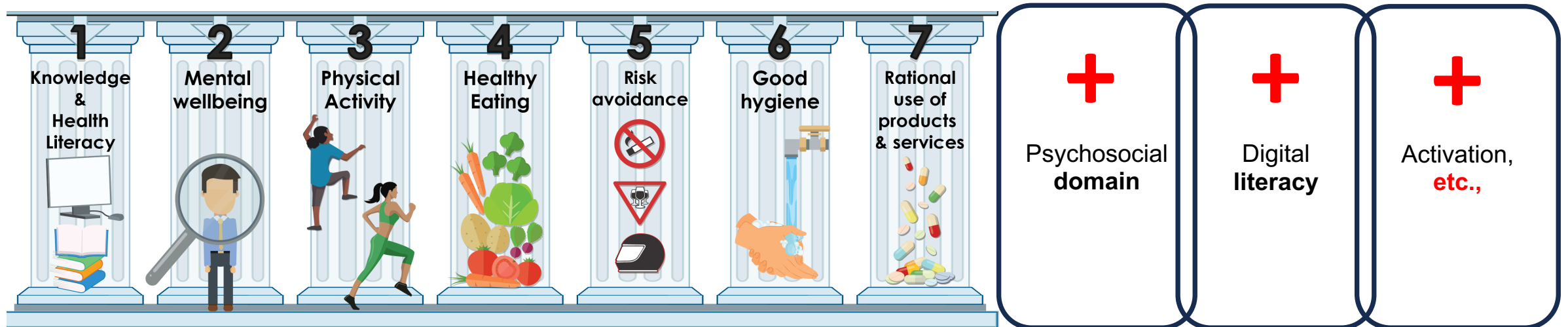
Tool	Year	PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3	PILLAR 4	PILLAR 5	PILLAR 6	PILLAR 7
		Knowledge & literacy	Mental wellbeing	Physical activity	Healthy eating	Risk avoidance	Good hygiene	Rational use of products
<b>PULSES</b>	1957			L1-3			U1-4	
Barthel Index (BI)	1958			M10-3, T0-3, S0-2, TU0-2		B0-2*, F0-2*	Ba0-1, G0-1, D0-2*	
+++ Rapid Disability Rating Scale	1967	3	14-16	7, 13*	1, 2	12	8, 9, 10, 11	3
Physical & Mental Impairment of Function Evaluation (PAMIE)	1972		6*, 10, 11, 14, 16*, 23, 32, 50	1, 3, 18, 51, 52	4, 31	45	7, 73	53
Kenny Self-Care Evaluation (KSCE)	1973			MIB, RAS, SIT, SIT			TT*, Lo, UTA, LTL, LE	
McMaster Health Index Questionnaire (MHIQ)	1976		29, 30, 33	1, 2a-c, 3, 4, 5, 31			2f	8, 9
Social Functioning Schedule (SFS) Semi structured interview	1979		2, 4, 9		8a	8b	8d	8b
Exercise of Self-Care Agency scale (ESCA)	1979	1, 4, 17, 20, 22, 25, 28, 34, 36, 37, 38	2, 24, 29	27	15, 35	3*, 13, 33		8, 11
Denyes Self-Care Practice Instrument (DSCPI-90)	1980	3*	12, 13, 14, 17, 18	9	6, 7, 8	1, 10, 11, 15, 16		
Denyes Self-Care Agency Instrument (DSCAI-90)	1980	1-7, 20, 29, 34	8-11, 16-17, 21, 23-25, 31-33	30		12-15, 18-19, 26-28		
Modified Barthel Index (MBI)	1981			Tr0-3, Mo0-3, Dr0-2			Ba0-1	
+++ Functional Status Rating System (FSRS)	1981	5, 6, 10, 13*, 14-20, 22-24, 25*, 28, 29	21-28	7, 9-12, 19*	1	6, 7, 23, 27, 29	2-6, 8	1*, 4, 8, 10, 13*
Perceived Self-Care Agency Questionnaire (PSCAQ)	1981							
Rapid Disability Rating Scale (RDRS-2)	1982	8, 15	8, 9, 16-18	2-7	1, 12		4-7, 14	8*, 10, 11, 15
Performance Assessment of Self-Care Skills (PASS)	1984			FM1-5			BADL1-2, IADLP2-4	IADLC6
Functional Independence Measure (FIM)	1987	14*, 15*	14-18	2-5*, 9-13	1	17	2-8	
Self-as-Carer Inventory (SCI)	1988	2, 4, 7, 8, 13, 15, 18, 23, 35, 37-40	1, 3-8, 10-40	1, 9, 11, 25, 36		2*, 6*, 12, 16*, 20*, 35*		23*, 37*
+++ Appraisal of Self-Care Agency Scale-version A (ASA-A)	1991	2, 7, 14, 19, 21	10*	11, 24	9	10*, 18	4*, 8, 13*	2*, 3*, 12*, 17, 22
Short-Form Health Survey (SF-36)	1992		1, 217-19, 20-36	3-16			12	
EuroQol EQ-5D Quality of Life Scale	1993		5	1-3				
Health Promoting Lifestyle Profile II (HPLP II)	1966	3*, 9, 15, 21, 27, 33, 39, 40, 44-47, 51	1, 3-7, 9, 11-13, 17-19, 22-25, 29-31, 35-37, 41-43, 48, 49, 52	10, 16, 22, 28, 3, 4, 46	2, 8, 14, 20, 26, 32, 38, 44, 50	3, 15, 21, 27, 33, 39, 40, 44, 45, 51		15, 21, 27, 45, 51
Strategies Used by People to Promote Health (SUPPH)	1996	11*, 12, 13, 28	1-29	25, 26		11, 28		
Self-Care Ability Scale for the Elderly (SASE)	1996	9*, 14*	10	1*		6*, 9	2, 3	
Quality of Well-Being Scale (QWB)	1996		3a-n	7a-8c				1 (section 2) a-g
+++ Lorensen's Self-care Capability Scale (LSCS)	1998	17, 24, 28*, 37, 46, 47, 49, 50-56	13, 14, 18*, 20-24, 38-40, 44, 48, 49	1-4, 16, 25-28, 33-36, 41-43, 45, 47	5-8	24*, 49*, 50-52*	9-12, 29-32	15, 24
Patient Activation Measure (PAM)	2004	3-18	19, 21	10, 16, 19	10, 16, 19	8		
Patient Activation Measure (PAM)-13	2005	1-5, 7-9, 11, 12		10, 13	10, 13	11		
Self-Care of Home-Dwelling Elderly (SCHDE)	2007							
Therapeutic Self-Care (TSC)	2014	1-7, 9, 19	11*	8*		12*		
Self-Management Screening (SeMaS)	2015	5-7	11-26	8, 9	8, 9			
Appraisal of Self-Care Agency Scale - Revised (ASA-R)	2017	1*, 3*, 5*, 7, 12	4*, 14*, 15*	2*, 4*		2*, 3, 6*, 8*, 9		3*, 7, 10, 12, 13
Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS)	2018	G1, G2	9-29	4-8	1-3			
Self-Care of Chronic Illness Inventory (SCCI)	2018	9, 10, 13, 14, 21-30	7	3, 16	4, 15	2		2*, 6, 8, 17-19
Consumer Health Activation Index (CHAI)	2018	1-3				9*		4, 5, 8, 9
Making it CLEAR (MIC) questionnaire	2021	25*	3*, 4-7, 11	16, 17		29*	2*	24*
Self-Care Activities Screening Scale (SASS-14)	2021	HC 1-5	IICS 1-3	NPA 1	NPA 2-4		SLP 1-2*	
Self-Care Self-Efficacy (SCSE) Scale	2021	6, 7, 10				1, 4, 5		2, 3, 10
+++ Self-Care Inventory - Patient Version	2022	9-16	7	3, 16	4, 15	2	1*, 2, 7*, 8	5, 6, 17-19

38 instruments (1957-2022)

5-121 items

Only 5/37 tools asked questions about all 7 pillars

# Self-Care CAPability Assessment (CAPITAN)



CAPITAN will provide insights to the self-carer & health & social care practitioners

Objective measurement / awareness could improve delivery of targeted interventions to help people become expert self-carers

# Self-Care R&D priorities (2017)

## IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON PRIMARY CARE

Updates from the Department of Primary Care and Public Health at Imperial College

### Self Care R&D Priorities



By austen el-osta · August 10, 2017

With the increasing pressure on the Welfare State in the UK and other European countries, policy makers are increasingly looking to Self-Care as a means to empower individuals to live longer and healthier lives, whilst helping curb unnecessary spending and over-reliance on health systems. Yet self-care remains a broad and somewhat nebulous concept to most as it covers a wide spectrum of ideas and activities ranging from cognition and health literacy, to empowerment and evidence-based decision making and rationing of resources. This makes self-care an exciting but also a challenging area to study.

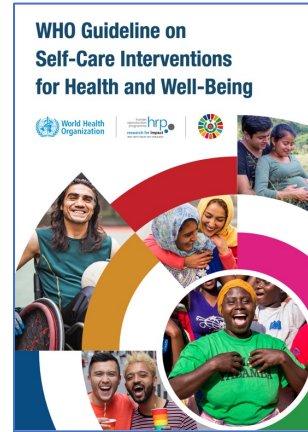
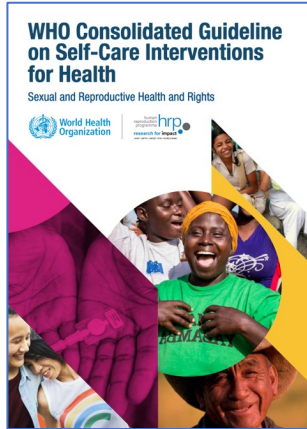


1. Applied research that makes the absolute case for self-care
2. Development of a pragmatic framework to support the evaluation of self-care interventions
3. Identification of extant barriers and drivers to the widespread adoption of evidence-based self-care praxis
4. Policy research & realignment of incentives to support self-care initiatives



# A brief history of self-care (2023-2025)

SCARU



2008 2012 2017 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025



WHO Resolution On Self-Care

Self Care Forum  
Helping people take care of themselves

# Self-Care R&D priorities (2023+)

- Health literacy // Self-Care Literacy (SCL)
- Self-care education (cradle to grave / lifecourse approach & different settings)
- Self-care measurement, monitoring & evaluation
- Policy development (e.g. from HiAP to SCinAP approach?)
- ID barriers & drivers to widespread adoption of self-care interventions
- New reimbursement models (payment by results) & how to realign incentives to support self-care initiatives
- Etc., etc.,

# Summary

- The benefits of self-care are huge - governments & people are taking notice
- Technology is a key enabler of self-care & the emergence of Society 5.0 means we will have a growing obsession with self-quantification..
- Lifestyle behaviour modification is a huge area of focus today & could be supported by novel Self-Driven Healthcare approaches
- It is crucial to clarify (the vast!) R&D research priorities for self-care
- **This Summit will offer a new point of departure for self-care thinking & will help guide thought leadership for the next decade**
- **My special thanks to Jon Adams & The Worldwide Universities Network for sponsoring this event & for inviting SCARU to host the Summit**