

Opinions on the initiative taken by healthy sector in the treatment of Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

Is the health sector geared to curb Non communicable diseases? by Thengo Kavinya

According to WHO Non communicable diseases (NCDs) are responsible for almost two thirds of all deaths globally. Of the 57 million global deaths in 2008, 36 million, or 63% were due to NCD's principally heart disease, strokes, chronic lung diseases, cancers and diabetes. These four groups share more or less the same risk factors (tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful use of alcohol). The site further explains that the impact of NCDs increases and as populations age and that annual NCD deaths are projected to continue to rise worldwide.

Science daily.com indicate that personal stories of individuals show the tragic reality of NCDs in poor countries and its strong impact on people and their families. These invisible epidemic is an under-appreciated cause of poverty and hinders the economic development of many countries. Chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are the leading cause of mortality worldwide, with a large burden of mortality and morbidity being borne by low- and middle-income countries. There are several issues about this global health problem that are as yet unresolved and subject to debate and discussion.

Prevalence of certain noncommunicable diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension, is increasing rapidly, particularly in the urban areas, and that significant demands are being made on the health services by patients with these diseases. To ignore the noncommunicable diseases would inevitably lead to an increase in their burden; the provision of health services for them would be largely undirected by issues of clinical and cost effectiveness, and their treatment and prevention would be left to the mercy of local and global commercial interests.

Although Africa as a region is reporting more deaths from infectious diseases than NCDs, the so-called silent killers are rising rapidly and are projected to exceed communicable diseases, maternal and childhood conditions and nutritional deficiencies combined as the most common causes of death by 2030 says a recent WHO report .In this forum, I provide a point and counterpoint debate amongst technical experts in the field and on the strides taken by the healthy system in the country to curb this trend·

Peter Banda

(Student- Malawi College of Health Sciences)

Patients these days are advised to know the history of their family's health. Many non communicable diseases are caused due to heredity. While development of these diseases is not guaranteed by their family's health history, it will just tell you to focus on what sort of the diseases.

For example, if members of four immediate families suffer from cancer, you must take precaution to prevent this non communicable disease. If you are not aware with the history of your family's health, ask your parents, your siblings or ask your other close family and know what type of non communicable diseases you are prone to.

Andrew Lungu

(Clinical Officer)

I recommend that health authorities all over the country must focus their urgent attention on issues involving the marketing of food to children; limiting salt, sugar and fat in mass-manufactured foods; restricting the availability and promotion of tobacco and alcohol, and urban design that promotes physical activity.

Samson Phiri

(Clinical Officer)

The government through the health surveillance assistants should plan to urge education, awareness, and lifestyle change to face the threat from non-communicable disease. Small and under-funded national health and education systems should be taken to the streets, airwaves and schools to create a new consciousness if we are to combat non communicable illnesses.

Elizabeth Chanza

(Student-KCN)

I believe prevention must be linked to early diagnosis and treatment, connecting community resources with organized health care systems. Our health sector is not up to date as experienced by lack of adequate equipment for diagnosing of these illnesses and sometimes lack of drugs in hospitals which will make it difficult to curb the

Jones Pagwanji

(Lab Assistant)

Non communicable diseases can also be prevented by many other medical screenings. Heart screenings, cholesterol, a high blood pressure and many other medical screenings helped in saving lives and it is an important way to avoid deaths that occur because of non-communicable diseases by the help of early detection. So I feel if there could be a provision of adequate medical equipment in our hospitals some of these illnesses could have been prevented but sadly we have these only in referral hospitals.

Emmanuel Phiri

(Science Reporter)

Since most of them are avoidable, the main activities identified should focus on raising public awareness, improving knowledge, and reinforcing preventive measures. There is need to support these actions by setting up networks and information systems across the country to generate a flow of information, analysis and exchange of best practice in the public health field.