THE IMPACT OF CHRONIC DISEASE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Chronic diseases are the major cause of death and disability worldwide

**Facts:**
- In the United Kingdom, chronic diseases are projected to account for 85% of all deaths (see below).
  - Total projected deaths in the United Kingdom, 2005 = 578,000.
  - Total projected deaths due to chronic disease in the United Kingdom, 2005 = 488,000.

**WHO projects that over the next 10 years in the United Kingdom:**
- Almost 5 million people will die from a chronic disease.
- Deaths from infectious diseases, maternal and perinatal conditions, and nutritional deficiencies combined will decrease by 7%.
- Deaths from chronic diseases will decrease by 0.8%, however some chronic diseases will increase - most markedly, deaths from diabetes will increase by 25%.

**Note:**
The data presented in this information sheet were estimated by WHO using standard methods to maximize cross-country comparability. They are not necessarily the official statistics of WHO Member States.

![Projected deaths by cause, all ages, United Kingdom, 2005](image-url)
**Facts:**
- Raised body mass index (overweight and obesity) is an important cause of chronic disease.
- Prevalence of overweight in the United Kingdom is expected to increase in both men and women over the next 10 years (see below).

*Projected prevalence of overweight, United Kingdom, males and females aged 30 years or more, 2005 and 2015*

**Economic impact:**
- Chronic diseases create large adverse - and underappreciated - economic effects on families, communities and countries.
- In 2005 alone, it is estimated that the United Kingdom will lose 2 billion dollars in national income from premature deaths due to heart disease, stroke and diabetes.
- These losses are projected to continue to increase: cumulatively, the United Kingdom stands to lose 33 billion dollars over the next 10 years from premature deaths due to heart disease, stroke and diabetes.¹

**Solutions:**
- At least 80% of premature heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes, and 40% of cancer could be prevented through healthy diet, regular physical activity and avoidance of tobacco products.
- Cost-effective interventions exist: the most successful strategies have employed a range of population-wide approaches combined with interventions for individuals.
- Using these approaches, the United Kingdom has already made important gains in reducing chronic disease death rates: WHO estimates that from 1970 to 2000, the United Kingdom averted 3 million cardiovascular disease deaths.
- WHO estimates that an additional 2% annual reduction in national-level chronic disease death rates in the United Kingdom over the next 10 years would result in an economic gain of 2 billion dollars for the country.

¹The estimates are reported in international dollars to account for differences in purchasing power between countries. An international dollar is a hypothetical currency that is used as a means of translating and comparing costs from one country to the other using a common reference point, the US dollar. An international dollar has the same purchasing power as the US dollar has in the United States.