

Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health: Quarterly Newsletter

Chronic diseases
and Health Promotion
<http://www.who.int/chp/en/index.html>

Nutrition for Health
and Development:
<http://www.who.int/nutrition/en/index.html>

Mental health
and substance abuse
http://www.who.int/mental_health/en/index.html

Tobacco Free
Initiative
<http://www.who.int/tobacco/en/index.html>

Violence and injury prevention
and Disability
http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/en/index.html

Highlight

The 61st World Health Assembly, 19-24 May 2008, Geneva, Switzerland

This World Health Assembly discussed a number of public health issues and adopted several resolutions, among which were two resolutions related to the Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health Cluster:

- The Health Assembly endorsed a six-year action plan to tackle noncommunicable diseases, now the leading threats to human health;
- The Health Assembly called upon WHO to present at the World Health Assembly in 2010 a draft global strategy to reduce harmful use of alcohol.

➔ [WHA61.4 Strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol](#) | [WHA61.14 Prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases: implementation of the global strategy](#) | [More information on the 61st World health Assembly](#)
[WHO Press Release](#) | [World Health Assembly sets bold new action for WHO](#)



News: Global

Pacific Health Summit on the Global Nutrition Challenge

The Summit took place on 16-18 June 2008 in Seattle, United States of America. The theme this year was "The Global Nutrition Challenge: Getting a Healthy Start". The complex challenge of too little of the right nutrition for vulnerable populations was tackled, as well as the rapidly emerging health threat of too much of the wrong nutrition in both developed and developing societies, and the continuum between them. The Director-General of the World Health Organization addressed the Summit on 18 June 2008 (link to her address below).

For further information, please contact Dr Chizuru Nishida (nishidac@who.int) or Dr Tim Armstrong (armstrongt@who.int)

➔ [WHO Director-General's key-note speech to the Summit](#)



5th World Congress on Prevention of Diabetes and its Complications

The 5th World Congress on Prevention of Diabetes and its Complications was held 1-4 June in Helsinki, Finland. The latest scientific data were presented and there were sessions on practical models and tools for prevention of type 2 diabetes, as well as strategies for reducing the burden of diabetes. Dr Alwan, Assistant Director-General for Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health (NMH) addressed the congress at the opening ceremony (link to his opening address below).

For further information, please contact Dr Gojka Roglic (roglicg@who.int)

➔ [Read more on diabetes](#) | [NMH Assistant Director-General Opening Address](#)



World No Tobacco Day

On World No Tobacco Day on 31 May 2008, WHO urged governments to protect the world's 1.8 billion young people by imposing a ban on all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. This year's "TOBACCO-FREE YOUTH" campaign focuses on the multi-billion dollar efforts of tobacco companies to attract young people to its addictive products through sophisticated marketing. A ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship is a powerful tool to protect youth, and is one of WHO's six MPOWER strategies that are designed to combat tobacco use, the leading preventable cause of death in the world today.

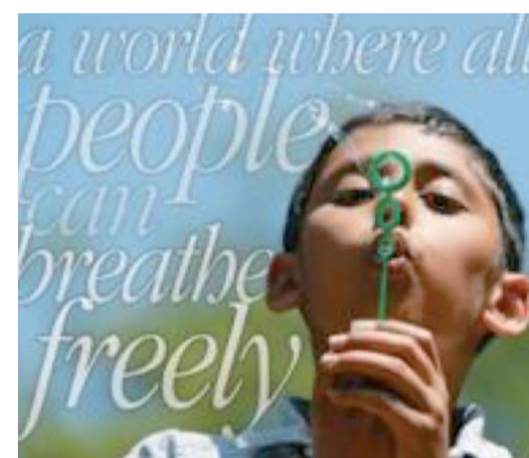
➔ For further information, please contact Dr Douglas Bettcher (bettcherd@who.int)
[Read more about World No Tobacco Day 2008 | Press Statement](#)



General Meeting of the Global Alliance Against Chronic Respiratory Diseases

The third General Meeting of the Global Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Diseases (GARD) took place on 30 and 31 May in Istanbul, Turkey. Eighty partners attended the meeting and agreed on a GARD action plan for the upcoming five years. Progress reports were presented by working groups on risk factors, surveillance and burden of chronic respiratory diseases; disease prevention and health promotion; diagnosis of chronic respiratory disease and disease management. Further presentations were made on current collaborative projects and proposals for future projects, successes, challenges and resources for national level work on chronic respiratory diseases, and the big picture of noncommunicable diseases (presentations available on the GARD website). The GARD action plan is built in line with the Global Strategy for Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (see above newly adopted World Health Assembly Resolution: Prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases: implementation of the Global Strategy), it aims to raise the recognition of the importance of chronic respiratory diseases and to advocate for action globally.

For further information, please contact Dr Alvaro Cruz (cruza@who.int)
➔ [Read more about this meeting](#)



Entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

On 12 May 2008, WHO was pleased to join the UN family in celebrating the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The advent of this international treaty marks a major milestone in the effort to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Alana Officer (officera@who.int).
[Read the statement of Dr Ala Alwan, WHO Assistant Director-General for Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health | Read more on disability and rehabilitation](#)



UN General Assembly resolution and the UN Road Safety Collaboration

On 31 March 2008, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution A/RES/62/244 entitled Improving Global Road Safety. The resolution was based on the Secretary-General's Report on the road safety crisis (A/62/257) prepared by WHO and the UN Road Safety Collaboration. Immediately following the adoption of the resolution, WHO convened a meeting of the UN Road Safety Collaboration (1-2 April 2008), where discussions included the drafting of an Operating Framework for the Collaboration, and other next steps to follow up on the UN resolution. Progress was reported on the Global Road Safety Facility and the Global status report on road safety, and on the preliminary discussions regarding the offer by the Russian Federation to host and provide financial support for the first Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in 2009. Further, working groups defined detailed plans of work for the development and implementation of "how to" manuals and fleet safety.

➔ For further information, please contact Mr Matts Belin (belinm@who.int).
[Read more on road traffic injuries | Read the UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/62/244 entitled "Improving Global Road Safety"](#)



GET 2020: 12th Meeting of the WHO Alliance for the Global Elimination of Trachoma

At the 12th Meeting of the WHO Alliance for the Global Elimination of Trachoma (GET 2020) which took place in Geneva on 28-30 April 2008, WHO reported a decrease of blinding trachoma. This achievement is associated with the use of the WHO-recommended SAFE strategy with its four integrated components: surgery (S), antibiotic treatment (A), facial cleanliness (F) and environmental improvement (E), as well as poverty reduction through socioeconomic development. Some hyperendemic countries are implementing the strategy on the ground (Tanzania, Niger and Mali), and some countries have reached the elimination goal and are in the surveillance phase now (Morocco, Oman and Iran).

The meeting was an opportunity to discuss progress made by countries in eliminating trachoma.

Key partners from countries, NGOs, foundations and private sector representatives attended. Dr Ala Alwan, Assistant Director-General for Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, opened the Meeting on 28 April 2008 (link to his opening address below).

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Silvio Mariotti (mariottis@who.int).
[Read more on prevention of blindness and visual impairment | NMH Assistant Director-General Opening Address](#)



Recent Events: Region and country-focused

Global Forum for Community Mental Health, Kampala, Uganda

WHO convened the 1st Africa Meeting of the Global Forum for Community Mental Health in Entebbe, Uganda on 10-12 June 2008. The mission of the Global Forum for Community Mental Health is to provide a supportive network for all those interested in promoting community mental health services and care for people with severe mental disorders. The meeting was attended by 51 participants working in the actual delivery of community mental health services. There was a strong presence of non-governmental organizations and user and family groups. The topics discussed included supportive structures for community mental health, skills for the health care providers and the contribution of user and family groups.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Shekhar Saxena (saxenas@who.int).
[Read more on the Global Forum for Community Mental Health](#)

The First Regional Meeting on reducing alcohol-related harm in the Western Pacific Region

The development of the action plan on implementing the regional strategy on reducing the harmful use of alcohol in the Western Pacific region was on the agenda of the meeting in Manila on 3-5 June 2008. It was the first meeting organized by the WHO Regional office on implementation of the regional strategy with defining tasks, milestones and priority areas for the regional cooperation and collaboration.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Vladimir Poznyak (poznyakv@who.int)
[Read more on management of substance abuse](#)

Informal meeting of Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)

The 5th meeting of the BFHI Network, organized on 2-4 June 2008 with active collaboration between the BFHI Network, WHO and UNICEF is an important step in reiterating WHO and UNICEF's support to the joint Initiative and can be seen as a direct response to WHA Resolution on Infant and Young Child Nutrition (2006) and as one of the initiatives leading to a "WHO/UNICEF Global Consultation on Infant and Young Child Nutrition" planned for December 2008. Dr Ala Alwan, Assistant Director-General for Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, addressed the Meeting on 3 June 2008 (link to his address below).

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Randa Saadeh (saadehr@who.int)
[More information | NMH Assistant Director-General Address](#)

WHO Consultation on Management of Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases, Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases in Emergency and Humanitarian Settings

The meeting, which took place at WHO Headquarters in Geneva on 28-29 May 2008, aimed to discuss the kit of essential medicines and protocols for managing major chronic diseases.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Shanthi Mendis (mendiss@who.int)
[Read more about Chronic Diseases and Health Promotion](#) | [Read more about Health Action in Crisis](#)

Interagency Landscape Analysis on Countries' Readiness to Accelerate Action in Reducing Maternal and Child Undernutrition

The Landscape Analysis project is a WHO-led interagency effort to accelerate the reduction of maternal and child undernutrition which should contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

A situation assessment was carried out in Madagascar from 30 March to 7 April 2008. This situation assessment was undertaken jointly by a national team and an interagency team representing WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN), and Helen Keller International. A similar country visit took place in Burkina Faso from 28 April to 2 May 2008, in Ghana from 2 to 6 June 2008 and in Guatemala from 9 to 13 June 2008.

The Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition, launched in January 2008, provided a unique advocacy opportunity to accelerate evidence-based action on nutrition. In order to follow up on the findings of the Lancet series, and to create intersectoral action for improving nutrition, the Landscape Analysis project aims to identify gaps, constraints and opportunities for implementing and scaling up effective nutrition interventions and programmes at country level. The project is focused on the 36 countries where 90% of the world's stunted children live.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Chizuru Nishida (Nishidac@who.int)
[Read more on nutrition for health and development](#) | [The Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition](#)

Advance Workshop of the Pacific Health Summit on the Global Nutrition Challenge

The Advance Workshop of the Pacific Health Summit, "Obesity, Associated Diseases and Personal Health: Addressing the Global Nutrition Challenge," was held in London on 7 April 2008, hosted by the Wellcome Trust and The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) — the secretariat for the Pacific Health Summit. Dr Ala Alwan, WHO Assistant Director-General of Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, and staff from the WHO Department of Nutrition for Health and Development participated in the workshop. Key action points and agreements generated at this workshop fed directly into the 2008 Pacific Health Summit process.

The workshop participants discussed the financial and social costs of the obesity epidemics, as well as the challenge of incentivizing healthy behavior among individuals, governments, and industry leaders. Discussions also focused on the role of the private sector, as well as how to prioritize the issue of obesity and its associated diseases on the global health agenda.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Chizuru Nishida (Nishidac@who.int)
[Read more about the Pacific Health Summit](#)

Meeting on myocardial infarction

WHO held an expert meeting to discuss the definition of myocardial infarction on 17-18 April 2008. WHO's definition of myocardial infarction was out-of-date as the diagnostic criteria of myocardial infarction have changed over the years due to advances in knowledge and technology. In low-resource settings, biomarker pattern tests cannot be a compulsory diagnostic feature for myocardial infarction as such tests may be out of reach due to high cost or logistical difficulties. Further, diagnostic criteria must include features that identify fatal and non-fatal heart attacks without electrocardiogram or autopsy, as myocardial infarction is often a sudden event that occurs outside health care settings.

The expert meeting revised the diagnostic criteria recognizing the needs of low-resource settings and high-resource settings. The report is being drafted and will be peer-reviewed before finalization in the next three months.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Shanthi Mendis (mendiss@who.int)
[Read more on cardiovascular diseases](#)

Workshop on inter-agency collaboration for crime and violence prevention in Central America

On 25 April the World Bank's Sustainable Development Department hosted a workshop in Washington, D.C., on inter-agency collaboration for crime and violence prevention in Central America. The workshop sought to take stock of what is being done globally and within the countries of Central America to prevent crime and violence, with a view to enhancing inter-agency collaboration in the development of advocacy, normative guidance and violence prevention programming at national and sub-national levels. There were approximately 25 workshop participants, including representatives from the World Bank; the Organization of American States; the Inter-American Coalition for the Prevention of Violence; the Inter-American Development Bank; the United Nations Development Programme; the US Department of State; the US Agency for International Development; UN-Habitat; PAHO and WHO Headquarters. Follow-up activities will include work to be led by PAHO on developing indicators for violence, improving regional capacity development initiatives, and preparing a crime and violence prevention advocacy document for an upcoming October 2008 ministerial meeting on public security in Central America. The ministerial meeting will take place in Mexico City, Mexico.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Alexander Butchart (butcharta@who.int).
[Read more about violence prevention](#)

Scaling up breastfeeding interventions at community level

From 28 to 30 April 2008, a joint consultation was held by WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the US Academy for Educational Development (AED) to discuss approaches for scaling up breastfeeding interventions at community level. This consultation reviewed experiences on breastfeeding protection, promotion and support at community level as an integral part of a comprehensive package of child health and nutrition. Further, summaries were given on lessons learnt by countries for accelerating coverage of sustainable community-level activities on breastfeeding (a link can be found below to download opening remarks from Dr Ala Alwan, Assistant Director-General for Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health).

Current data show that only about one third of children worldwide are being exclusively breastfed from 0 to 6 months. The Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (link below) provides a framework for action, emphasizing the need to provide women the support they require in the family, community and workplace.

➔ For further information, please contact Dr Randa Saadeh (saadehr@who.in).
[Read more about the consultation](#) | [NMH Assistant Director-General Opening Address](#)
[Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding](#)

Upcoming NMH Key Events for 2008:

From	To	Event	Location
30 June	4 July	31st Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission	Geneva
8 July	8 July	UN General Assembly discussion on the Smoke Free UN Policy	New York
19 July	19 July	Presentation of the UN Secretary General's Report of the UN Interagency Task Force on Tobacco Control	New York
August	August	Publish project plan for 'Prevention and control of NCDs: implementation of the global strategy'	Geneva
25 August	26 August	WHO Meeting on A Prioritized Research Agenda for Prevention and Control of NCDs	Geneva
25 August	28 August	8th General Assembly of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness	Buenos Aires
27 August	31 August	UICC World Cancer Congress	Geneva
15 September	17 September	Placing Noncommunicable Disease Prevention on the Global Development Agenda	Geneva
October	October	Expert Group on Marketing Foods to Children	Geneva
3 October	3 October	Launch of the report "Integration of mental health into primary health care"	Melbourne
9 October	9 October	Launch of the Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP)	Geneva
November	November	Meeting on WHO package of essential NCD services for primary health care	Geneva
2 November	3 November	First meeting of Expert Advisory Panel on Health Promotion and finalization of Global Health Promotion Framework	London
6 November	7 November	Consultation with economic operators on ways they could contribute to reducing harmful use of alcohol	Geneva
10 November	14 November	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Fats and Oils in Human Nutrition	Geneva
17 November	17 November	Ministerial Euro-Med Health Summit	Cairo
17 November	22 November	3rd Conference of the Parties to the WHO FCTC	Durban
24 November	25 November	Consultation with NGOs and professional associations on ways they could contribute to reducing harmful use of alcohol	Geneva
8 December	12 December	WHO Expert Consultation on the waist circumference and waist/hip ratio	Geneva
11 December	11 December	Launch of the World Report on Child Injury Prevention	Hanoi

Publications and WHO training courses:

New WHO Report "World Health Statistics 2008"

The global burden of disease has been shifting from infectious diseases to noncommunicable diseases and conditions. The "World Health Statistics 2008" report, published on 20 May 2008, predicts that over the next 20 years, global deaths from cancer, heart disease and traffic crashes will continue to increase and says, "As populations age in middle- and low-income countries over the next 25 years, the proportion of deaths due to noncommunicable diseases will rise significantly. Globally, deaths from cancer will increase from 7.4 million in 2004 to 11.8 million in 2030, and deaths from cardiovascular diseases will rise from 17.1 million to 23.4 million in the same period. Deaths due to road traffic accidents will increase from 1.3 million in 2004 to 2.4 million in 2030, primarily owing to increased motor vehicle ownership and use associated with economic growth in low- and middle-income countries."

➔ To download a PDF copy of the report, visit http://www.who.int/whosis/whostat/EN_WHS08_Full.pdf

Training of Master Trainers for Francophone AFRO Countries on the new WHO Child Growth Standards

This training will take place on 7-18 July 2008 in Ouidah, Benin.

➔ For further information, please contact Ms Mercedes de Onis (deonism@who.int)

Country initiatives:

NMH is engaged in a wide range of country-level initiatives to support countries in implementing WHO guidelines, policies and strategies to reduce or prevent chronic noncommunicable diseases, improve mental health conditions and prevent violence, injuries and disability.

Bloomberg Initiative to reduce tobacco use

This initiative, funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies, is committed to the scaling up of tobacco control efforts in developing countries where the health burden from tobacco use is highest. Working with other partners in the initiative, WHO is playing an important leadership and coordination role in assisting countries with the implementation of effective tobacco control interventions in line with best evidence and policies.

➔ [Read more about the Bloomberg Initiative](#)

Acknowledgements:

This quarterly newsletter is compiled with the input, support and assistance of staff from across WHO's cluster for Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health (NMH). For further information and regular updates, we invite you to visit www.who.int/nmh. Please send an email to nmhinfo@who.int if you would like to be added or removed from this mailing list. This document does not represent an official position of the World Health Organization.

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