



NEWS ITEMS

Global prevention news update

Global Prevention News Update is produced by ProCor, a global communication network promoting cardiovascular health in developing countries and other low-resource settings. We invite you to join ProCor's email network (procor-join@healthnet.org) or visit ProCor online (www.procor.org).
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Call for applications: Louise Lown Heart Hero Award

The deadline for the 2008 Louise Lown Heart Hero Award is 30 April 2008. The award, which is administered by ProCor, celebrates and recognizes innovative, preventive approaches to cardiovascular health promotion in developing countries and other low-resource settings. Applications for the \$1000 award are encouraged from community-based programs (non-profit, governmental, or private sector) working to promote heart health in developing countries or other low-resource settings (i.e., disadvantaged communities in developed countries) through innovative, preventive approaches. In 2007, the inaugural award recipient was the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa Children's Programme, which teaches heart healthy practices, such as growing vegetables for daily meals, to over a million children in rural and urban impoverished settings throughout South Africa. For more informa-

tion on award criteria and the application process, visit www.procor.org or email Juan Ramos, ProCor Program Coordinator, at jramos3@partners.org.

Africa: New data on African health professionals abroad

The first standardized, systematic, occupation-specific measure of skilled health professionals working in developed countries and born in Africa, developed by Center for Global Development, indicates that approximately 65,000 African-born physicians and 70,000 African-born professional nurses were working overseas in a developed country in the year 2000. The report details the number of health professionals working abroad, which varies enormously across African countries, from 1% to over 70% according to the occupation and country. "New data on African health professionals abroad" (Working Paper Number 95, February 2007) Center for Global Development (free download at www.cgdev.org).

Cambodia: Integrating infectious and chronic disease care

Chronic disease clinics have demonstrated the feasibility of integrating care for HIV/AIDS with diabetes and hypertension in Cambodia. At 24 months of care, 88% of HIV/AIDS patients and 71% of diabetes patients were alive and in active follow-up. About 9% of HIV/AIDS patients and 0.1% of diabetes patients had died; while 3% of HIV/AIDS patients and 29% of diabetes patients were lost to follow-up. Of all diabetes patients who stayed more than 3 months in the cohort, 90% were still in follow-up at 24 months. This experience shows how care for HIV/AIDS patients can act as an impetus to tackle other common chronic diseases,

researchers concluded. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 2007;85(11):880–885 (open access at www.who.int/bulletin).

Canada: Air pollution and CVD

Almost 70% of 6000 deaths in Canada caused by short-term exposure to air pollution are from heart disease or stroke, according to The 2008 Heart and Stroke Foundation Report Card on Canadian's Health. A national poll showed that only 13% of Canadians are aware of the connection between air pollution and heart disease and stroke. The report recommends that the Canadian government extend the national Air Quality Health Index to all parts of the country, strengthen emissions control legislation, encourage consumer and industry action to reduce pollution, invest in public transit, and create walk- and cycle-friendly environments. Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

China: Type 2 diabetes and obesity

A large cross-sectional study conducted in Beijing in 2000–2001 suggests strong associations between the presence of type 2 diabetes and measures of obesity, particularly central obesity and high rates of impaired glucose tolerance in a middle-aged population. Among a sample of 15,236 men and women (equally represented) age 50 and older, 986 individuals were considered to be diabetic, 1121 were considered to have impaired fasting glucose levels, while the majority had normal fasting glucose levels. Prevalence rates of central and overall obesity were 34% and 10%, respectively. Overall obesity was twice as prevalent among participants with diabetes than in those with normal fasting glucose levels (18.7% vs. 8.7%). *Obesity* 2007;15:2809.

China: Hypertension high in northeast villages

A study of 30,000 men and women age 50 and older from 64 countryside villages in Northeast China revealed that 36% adults were hypertensive; rates were slightly higher among women than among men. According to the Joint National Committee classification system of normal and elevated BP, 36% of men and 43% of women had optimal or normal levels of BP whereas 29% of men and 20% of women were considered to have high normal BP.

Only 27% of hypertensives were aware of their diagnosis and, of these, only one in six reported taking antihypertensive medication regularly. Primary reasons reported for non-adherence included lack of knowledge about the seriousness of hypertension and financial concerns. *Hypertension Research* 2007;30:951–958, (open access at www.jstage.st.go.jp/browse/hypres).

Czech Republic: Preschool physical activity

Organized daily physical activity in preschool children along with enough space for spontaneous physical activity may establish prerequisites for their further healthy development, according to a study comparing physical activity levels of preschool children (aged 5–7 years), teenagers (aged 12–17 years) and young adults (aged 18–24 years). Preschoolers were significantly more active than teenagers and young adults during weekdays, including during leisure time, and at the weekend. The activity levels of preschoolers were similar on weekdays and weekends, unlike the older youths. *European Journal of Public Health* 2007;17(6):646–651.

Global: Five clinical steps to global blood pressure control

Five clinical activities can substantially improve blood pressure goal rates through the world, according to an international working group. The core activities are: (1) detect and prevent high blood pressure; (2) assess total cardiovascular risk; (3) bring patients rapidly to BP goals and when goals are reached, maintain them; (4) create an active partnership with the patient; (5) create a supportive environment by referring patients to local organizations and advocating policies that support healthy lifestyle choices. The group urged that these activities be pursued in accordance with current clinical guidelines and adapted to the economic and cultural setting. *Journal of Human Hypertension* 2008;22:63–70 (open access at www.nature.com).

India: Domestic violence and tobacco use among women

Women who have experienced domestic violence are 20–40% more likely to smoke or chew tobacco,

according to a study of 89,000 women and 279,000 family members who participated in the National Family Health Survey of India in 1998–1999. Smoking risk also increased for any adult in households where domestic violence was prevalent, regardless of whether they were a victim, a perpetrator, or a bystander. *Tobacco Control* 2007;16:378–383.

Ireland: Tobacco ban in public spaces and drinking at home

Drinking at home is not increased by a smoking ban in public places, and a smoking ban may lead to even stronger restrictions on smoking in the home according to data from a survey conducted in Ireland, Scotland, and the rest of the UK in February–March 2006. Alcohol usage and home smoking among a random sample of adult Irish smokers were compared to random samples of smokers in Scotland and the rest of the UK, where smoking was unregulated at the time. Irish smokers did not consume more alcohol and cigarettes in the home after implementation of Ireland's smoking ban, compared with smokers in Scotland or the rest of the UK. Smokers in Ireland reported drinking a significantly lower percentage of their weekly alcoholic beverages at home (30%), compared to smokers in Scotland (40%) and the rest of the UK (35%). The percent of cigarettes smoked per day that were smoked inside the home during the evening was similar between countries (Ireland 39%, Scotland 46%, and rest of UK 43%). Most Irish smokers reported the smoking ban did not affect their smoking behavior at home. Almost a quarter (22%) reported that they had placed stronger restrictions on smoking in their home. *European Journal of Public Health* 2008;18(1):63–65.

Jordan: Chronic disease risk factors among Jordanian adults

In a study of chronic disease behavioral risk factors in Jordanian adults, approximately 9% of partici-

pants reported having diabetes, compared with 17% who were diagnosed during study testing. About 12% of the participants were glucose intolerant, and 35% were obese. Obesity was significantly associated with diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and asthma. *Preventing Chronic Disease* 2008;5(1):A17 (open access at www.cdc.gov/pcd).

Nicaragua: Clubs promote recreation, socialization, health education

Monthly meetings in health centers are providing recreation, socialization, and health education to Nicaraguans. Called "Chronic Clubs", the gatherings teach people about risk factors, disease management, and how to have a healthy lifestyle. Organized activities include exercise and education sessions and outings. Diabetes care, including consultations and laboratory investigations, is free in public facilities. *Diabetes Voice* 2007;52(4):38–40 (open access www.diabetesvoice.org).

Thailand: Increases in overweight and obesity

Overweight and obesity in Thailand are increasingly affecting people with lower socioeconomic status, according to two large national surveys. Among those 18 years old or older in 2004, 18% of men and women were overweight (BMI 23–24), 18% of men and 26% of women had Class I obesity (BMI 25–29), 5% of men and 9% of women had Class II obesity (BMI 30 and above), and 16% of men and 37% of women had abdominal obesity (waist circumference of 90 cm and above for men and 80 cm and above for women). Rural men were less likely to be overweight or obese than urban men, but the odds were similar for urban and rural women. *Obesity* 2007;15:3113–3121 (open access at www.obesityresearch.org).