

Chronic Disease Prevention & Control in the Americas



Monthly Newsletter of the PAHO/WHO Chronic Disease Program
Pan American Health Organization
Regional Office of the World Health Organization



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Regional Developments

Don Francisco's Obesity Program Tops Ratings

This month PAHO Director Dr. Mirta Roses received a letter from Mario Kreutzberger, better known as the popular television personality “Don Francisco,” spokesperson of the PAHO media campaign against obesity, ‘Let's eat healthy, live well and get moving America!’



In his own words, “a few weeks ago on *Don Francisco Presenta* we aired a program dedicated to the topic of obesity, and to our surprise this program attained the greatest ratings in the last 20 years, reaching more viewers than ever. This demonstrates that people are aware of the serious health risks arising from obesity.”

Don Francisco sent PAHO a copy of the program “to send to the large companies with whom you are meeting and to those interested in motivating them ... to reinforce the work being done by the ‘Task Force for a Trans Fat Free Americas’.” For more on the campaign, visit the campaign website at www.dpaslac.org.

For his commitment to improving health in the Americas, PAHO has bestowed upon Don Francisco the honorary title of “Champion of Health.”

Progress in the Countries

Central American Ministers of Health Resolve to Prevent and Control Cancer

Ministers of health from Central America and the Dominican Republic, during the XXIII RESSCAD meeting in September 2007, expressed deep concern that cancer is the third leading cause of death in the subregion



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Let's eat healthy, live well and get moving America!

Pan American Health Organization
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Add color to your life ...
eat more fruits and
vegetables ...
and walk at least
30 mins each day.

and is having a significant public health impact. They resolved to create a subregional plan for cancer control, which includes interventions for cancer prevention and risk factor reduction, screening and early detection, treatment and palliative care.

The ministers agreed that each country would designate a technical lead person to participate in the subregional network that would develop the cancer plan. They called for technical assistance to be provided by PAHO/WHO and signaled the need to develop strategic alliances with other public health organizations. El Salvador was designated as the lead country to develop the Central American Cancer Control Plan and they agreed that a proposal would be presented at the 2008 RESSCAD meeting to be held in Honduras.

Argentina: New Cancer Treatment Center

The long-awaited hope of the community of Venado Tuerto, located in the southern part of Santa Fe province, Argentina, has been realized with the recent opening of a new Center for Treatment in Oncology (CTO).



The new Venado Tuerto health facility has undergone extensive reorganization over the last few months to provide more and better care for cancer in this region comprised of over 130 communities. Before, oncological patients could only find specialized care in radiation therapy by traveling no less than 200 kilometers from their homes—and many of them traveled daily over a period of months to distant places, as far as Buenos Aires, to receive treatment in radiation therapy at public and private centers.

Thus it happened that the teletherapy equipment was replaced by state-of-the-art cobalt treatment with a dual linear accelerator. All this was possible through the dedicated and selfless efforts of Professors Jorge Pereyra and Ricardo Miechi, both of them local

radiation oncologists from Rosario, and the collective support of the community of Venado Tuerto.

Professors Pereyra and Miechi pointed out that the dual linear accelerator would make it possible for them to offer treatments optimizing the dosage on tumors with limited side effects for the organism, a fundamental fact when evaluating the real benefits in terms of patient health and/or well-being.

The new Venado Tuerto Center for Oncological Treatment also offers clinical oncology services in multiple areas of medical specialties providing support for cancer patients.

The praiseworthy endeavor also involved our long-standing collaborator in the region, Dr. Leandro Rozada, oncologist. This new health facility represents a major step forward to better meet the health needs of the population in providing more comprehensive treatment and more immediate access to health services for local people.

Source: [Dr. Leandro Rozada](#), Oncologist, Venado Tuerto, Santa Fe, Argentina.

Capacity-Building Workshop with Focal Points

With the goal of building capacities for the implementation of the [Regional Strategy and Plan of Action on an Integrated Approach to the Prevention and Control of Chronic Diseases, including Diet, Physical Activity and Health](#), and recognizing that this is a shared

responsibility among *all* staff working in chronic disease prevention and control, a [meeting](#) was held in Panama City on 10–12 October. This workshop provided an

opportunity for professional update and agreement on chronic disease prevention and control for all relevant staff from the [Noncommunicable Disease Unit](#), as well as other Units at Headquarters and



Focal Points in PAHO Country Offices and Regional Pan American Centers.

Meeting Objectives

1. **In-depth information** about:
 - a. Chronic disease epidemiology and health determinants and the current situation in the Americas;
 - b. The Regional NCD Strategy and its four lines of action and other relevant strategies (Nutrition in Health and Development);
 - c. WHO platform: mandates, strategies, and resolutions related to chronic diseases.
2. **Increased knowledge of available strategies and tools** that can be adapted and tailored to each country's situation to support the implementation of the NCD Strategy, including:
 - d. Effective evidence-based interventions for prevention and control of chronic diseases and risk factors;
 - e. Monitoring and evaluation tools;
 - f. Existing publications about chronic disease and its burden.
3. **Discussion and understanding** on:
 - g. How to promote an interprogrammatic team approach for chronic disease prevention and control at the subregional and national levels;
 - h. How to assess needs and challenges and country capacity for chronic disease prevention and control.
4. **Agreement on the measurement of progress towards the implementation of the NCD Strategy and Plan of Action** using indicators for monitoring and evaluation, developed within the Mid-Term Strategic plan (SO3 and SO6) to be used at the national, subregional, and regional levels.



Expected Results

1. Update knowledge and skills in chronic disease prevention and control;
2. Increase ownership and commitment towards the implementation of the NCD Strategy and Plan of Action;
3. Agree on priorities and responsibilities with regard to the implementation, monitoring, and

evaluation of the NCD Strategy and Plan of Action.

Target Audience

- NCD focal points in all PAHO/WHO Country Offices (see [directory](#)) as well as in the Caribbean Epidemiology Center ([CAREC](#)), the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute ([CFNI](#)), the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama ([INCAP](#)), and the US-Mexico Field Border Office in El Paso, Texas ([USMB-FO](#)).
- Staff from the PAHO Units of [Health Analysis & Statistics](#), Health Policies & Systems, Risk Assessment & Management, Health Services Organization, and Health Determinants & Social Policies.

Projected Impact on Technical Cooperation: This training will help involve the focal points in the implementation of the NCD Strategy and enable them to carry out related activities within their respective countries.

Evaluation (Pre- and Post-Test): A pre-training workshop questionnaire was sent to all participants to assess their current knowledge, barriers, and opportunities with regard to NCDs. Following the workshop, a post-questionnaire was administered to assess knowledge gained and new opportunities for implementing the NCD Strategy.

Workshop in Barbados for Eastern Caribbean Policymakers

This [Workshop on Policy Analysis and Decision-Making with Emphasis on Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases](#) was



hosted by the PAHO/WHO Office for the Eastern Caribbean Countries in Bridgetown, Barbados, on 15-17 October 2007, was devoted to health policy and development. Aimed at high-level policy- and decision-makers, its purpose was to provide an introduction to public policy analysis, policy development, implementation and evaluation.

Further details on the meeting—agenda, learning objectives, approach, bibliography and list of participants staff—will be made available in due course via the above link.

Announcements

PAHO to Translate CARICOM Declaration of Port-of-Spain to Stop the CNCDE Epidemic

Last month's issue covered the Caribbean Community ([CARICOM](#)) [Summit on Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases \(CNCDEs\)](#)

held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, under the theme of "Uniting against Noncommunicable Diseases-Stop the Epidemic." The Summit website contains the conference papers and presentations, including the final [Declaration of Port-of-Spain](#).



PAHO is in the process of translating the Declaration into the other three official PAHO languages (Spanish, Portuguese, and French). The translated versions will appear on the meeting website and the links to them will be announced in next month's issue of this newsletter.

Upcoming Events

Biennial CARMEN Meeting in the Bahamas

The **CARMEN Network** for the Integrated Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Disease in the Americas will hold its biennial meeting in Nassau, Bahamas, from 4 to 8 November 2007. The theme is [Sharing, Learning, Imagining, Planning and Partnering to Implement the Chronic Disease Regional Strategy within the CARMEN Network](#). Following a closed session on 4 November for CARMEN members,



the other days will be devoted to the areas of policy & advocacy, surveillance & research, health promotion & disease prevention, and integrated management of diseases and their risk factors. For more information and documentation, see the [conference page](#).

2nd International Cancer Control Congress



On 25–28 November 2007, the Brazilian Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization will co-host the 2nd International Cancer Control Congress in Rio de Janeiro. The Congress will provide current scientific information on strategies, innovations and new technologies for cancer control. It will also mobilize a global community of practice to advance the creation and implementation of population-based cancer control programs. The Congress is expected to be attended by over 500 people from around the world. For more information, visit the [conference website](#).

Information Resources

New CNCDE Advocacy Kit from WHO

The new WHO toolkit [Stop the global epidemic of chronic disease: A practical guide to successful advocacy](#) provides a guide and practical tools for all advocates of chronic disease prevention and control.



The manual presents a simple seven-step plan for effective advocacy, including identifying target audiences, developing key messages and selecting implementation strategies. It is part of a larger WHO advocacy toolkit on preventing chronic disease offering in addition information sheets, fact files, policy briefs, a poster gallery, media features, a video, and film footage.

All this is available free of charge, either by downloading it from the link shown above or by requesting a hard copy (available only while supplies last!) from the [WHO Chronic Disease group](#). At present, the materials are available in English and French (both via the link indicated above) but will be available in Spanish early next year.



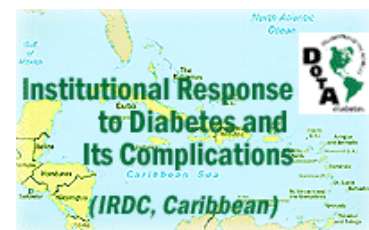
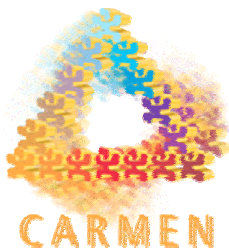
Cervical Cancer Practice Guide Now Available in Spanish and French

This practical guide, developed by WHO and its partners, provides health professionals with the knowledge and skills for cervical cancer prevention, screening, treatment and palliative care services. The guide presents guidelines and up-to-date evidence-based recommendations and was first released in 2006 in [English](#) and is now available in [Spanish](#) and [French](#).



STOP THE GLOBAL EPIDEMIC OF CHRONIC DISEASE

PROMOTE. PREVENT. TREAT. CARE



The PAHO/WHO Chronic Disease Program invites the readers of this newsletter to submit contributions of interest for the Americas. Send contributions (1-3 paragraphs) to Dr. James Hospedales (hospedaj@paho.org) with copy to Pilar Fano (fanopili@paho.org) and Suzanna Stephens (stephens@paho.org). Your feedback on this newsletter would be appreciated. Instructions and criteria can be found on the homepage for this newsletter at the web link below:

<http://www.paho.org/english/ad/dpc/nc/cronic.htm>