

# 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



Vol. 1, No. 9, September 2007

Editor-in-Chief: James Hospedales Copy Editor: Donna Eberwine Editorial Staff: Pilar Fano, Enrique Pérez-Flores, Maria Pico, Suzanna Stephens

## Progress in the Countries

### CARICOM Summit on CNCDs

The 15<sup>th</sup> of September marked the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Summit on Chronic Noncommunicable



Diseases (CNCDs) 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. The following chronology provides background information on the Summit, followed by the declaration:

### Landmarks of Caribbean Cooperation in Health

**2007 (February):** Objectives of proposed Summit on Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) articulated by Hon. Dr. Denzil Douglas, Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Chairman of CARICOM Heads of Government Committee on Health.

**2005:** Caribbean Commission on Health and Development (CCHD) reports to Heads of Government, identifying CNCDs as a major problem.

**2003:** Task Force arising from the 2001 Nassau Summit established as the CCHD.

**2002:** CARICOM Ministers of Health meeting in the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) to finalize the *Regional Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases*, subsequently approved by the Heads of Government.

**2001:** CARICOM Heads of Government sign the *Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas*, which includes under its Article 17 the establishment of the COHSOD to “promote the improvement of health, including the development and organization of efficient and affordable health services in the Community.”

**2001:** CARICOM Heads of Government, at Summit in Nassau, The Bahamas, assert in the [Nassau Declaration](#) that “the health of the region is the wealth of the region.” The Heads of Government mandate the establishment of a Task Force to formulate a blueprint of strategies to give effect to the Nassau Declaration. They also instruct that a Regional Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases be submitted for approval by March 2002.

Source: Material submitted to PAHO by Dorrett R. Campbell, MSc (Dist.); MA; BA, (Hons.) Dip. (Hons.), Communications Officer, Public Information Unit, OSG, CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana.

## Contents

- Progress in the Countries ..... 1
  - o CARICOM Summit on CNCDs ..... 1
    - Landmarks of Caribbean Cooperation in Health. 1
    - CARICOM Leaders Declare War on Chronic Diseases ..... 2
    - Mr. Golding a Hit at CARICOM Summit ..... 3
  - o Nicaragua Plans a National Cancer Program ..... 4
- Upcoming Events ..... 4
  - o El Paso, Texas: Two Diabetes Meetings ..... 4
- Information Resources ..... 5
  - o Guatemala Survey on CNCD Risk Factors ..... 5
  - o Cuba: New Publication on Diabetes Education ..... 6



*President Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan of Suriname and Colleague View Posters from the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) on Prevalence of CNCDs in the Caribbean*

## CARICOM Leaders Declare War on Chronic Diseases

At the end of their special one-day Summit in Port-of-Spain, the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) approved a comprehensive program to unite the region to stop the epidemic of chronic noncommunicable diseases (CNCDs). The region's leaders unanimously adopted the historic [Declaration of Port-of-Spain](#) to combat the scourge of CNCDs, which account for more than half of the cases of sickness and death in the Caribbean.



*PAHO Director, Dr. Mirta Roses, and PAHO Assistant Director, Dr. Carissa Etienne, at Summit*

The Declaration underscored the link between health and development articulated by the Heads of Government in their 2001 [Nassau Declaration](#) that “the health of the region is the wealth of the region” and reaffirmed their resolve that health should be viewed not only as an outcome of development but also as a necessary input of development.

It recognized CNCDs—heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and cancer—as the major causes of sickness and death in the region and a great economic burden as well.



*PAHO Director, Dr. Mirta Roses, Speaks at Summit*

The Summit zeroed in on unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and tobacco use as the main underlying lifestyle causes of chronic diseases and, in what St. Vincent & the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves termed “a wellness revolution,” it identified specific strategies to prevent the further spread of the epidemic and treat the disorders where they occur.

The planned strategies include the promotion of healthy lifestyle practices by individuals, communities and national populations and the adoption by the governments of the region of public-policy measures that are conducive to wellness and well-being.



*Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines*

Among the promised policy measures are increased provision of adequate public facilities such as parks and other recreational spaces to encourage physical activity, reintroduction of physical education in schools where necessary, and regulation of labeling of food products and of food importation to conform with the requirements for healthy food supplies.

The Port of Spain Summit, the first conference in the world of any group of Heads of Government on chronic diseases, was addressed by the host, Prime Minister Patrick Manning of Trinidad & Tobago; the Chairman of CARICOM, Prime Minister Owen Arthur of Barbados; the Secretary-General of CARICOM, Mr. Edwin Carrington; the Prime Minister of St Kitts & Nevis, Dr. Denzil Douglas, who in his capacity as the Lead Head of Government with responsibility for Health made the first technical presentation; and Sir George Alleyne, Chairman of the Caribbean Commission on Health & Development (CCHD), which produced the blueprint of the plan of action to give effect to the *Nassau Declaration*. Also present were representatives of PAHO and WHO: from PAHO, Dr. Mirta Roses, Director; Dr. Carissa Etienne, Assistant Director; Dr. Jarbas Barbosa da Silva, Area Manager of Health Surveillance and Disease Management; Dr. James Hospedales, Chief of the Noncommunicable Disease Unit; and Dr. Adriana Blanco,



**PAHO Director, Dr. Mirta Roses, with Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago**



**PAHO Director, Dr. Mirta Roses, with Dr. Catherine LeGales Camus, Assistant Director General of WHO**

Technical Officer, Tobacco Prevention and Control; as well as Dr. Fitzroy Henry, Director of the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute ([CFNI](#)); Dr. Glenda Maynard, Director of the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre ([CAREC](#)); Dr. Bernadette Theodore-Gandi, Coordinator of the Caribbean Program Office ([CPC](#)); and Dr. Carol Boyd-Scobie, PAHO/WHO Representative in Trinidad and Tobago; and from WHO Headquarters in Geneva, Dr. Catherine LeGales Camus, Assistant Director General.

The new plan attracted immediate pledges of support from important international partners, including the [World Bank](#) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), which supported CARICOM and the Government of Trinidad & Tobago in the organization of the Summit. Preparation for the Summit was supported by a grant from the Public Health Agency of Canada ([PHAC](#)).

Source and contact for further information: Clare Forrester, Media and Communication Consultant, CARICOM Heads of Government, Health Summit, [antoye@yahoo.com](mailto:antoye@yahoo.com) (876) 970-4250.

### Mr. Golding a Hit at CARICOM Summit

Less than four days after his installation as Jamaica's eighth Prime Minister and a few hours after attending the swearing-in of his Cabinet, Mr. Bruce Golding breezed into Port-of-Spain to make his debut as a Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Head of Government.

Mr. Golding emphatically reaffirmed his commitment to Caribbean regionalism when he told his colleagues at the special Summit on chronic noncommunicable diseases (CNCDs): "The Jamaica delegation is fully supportive of the [Declaration of Port-of-Spain](#)," which was later approved unanimously by the representatives of all Caribbean states.



**Mr. Bruce Golding, Prime Minister of Jamaica, at Press Conference**

Before his brief endorsement of the Port-of-Spain Declaration on the floor of the conference, the self-

styled “new kid on the block” attracted the attention of communications media practitioners reporting on the Summit. As St. Vincent & the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves left his place to engage in animated conversation with Mr. Golding, the score of video and still cameras in the conference hall focused on Mr. Golding and Dr. Gonsalves. Later, during a 15-minute break between sessions, the media representatives swooped on Mr. Golding and bombarded him with questions, largely about his promise of “constructive engagement” with the People’s National Party opposition and his commitment and that of his new administration to CARICOM.

On the latter issue, Mr. Golding declared: “We remain committed to CARICOM. Our problem with CARICOM is that CARICOM has been too inward-looking.” Referring to globalization, he said: “There may be opportunities that are beyond our reach as separate entities but which we may be able to grasp if acting together as a response to the challenges of globalization.”

Other members of the Jamaica delegation included Dr. Kenneth Baugh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Rudyard Spencer, Minister of Health & the Environment; Dr. Sheila Campbell-Forrester, Chief Medical Officer; Mr. Peter Black, Jamaica’s High Commissioner to Port-of-Spain and to CARICOM; Mrs. Pat Sinclair-McCalla, Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister; and Mr. Rae Barrett, Chief Executive Officer of the National Health Fund.

Source and contact for further information: Clare Forrester, Media and Communication Consultant, CARICOM Heads of Government, Health Summit, [antoye@yahoo.com](mailto:antoye@yahoo.com) (876) 970-4250.

## Nicaragua Plans a National Cancer Control Program

In July 2007, PAHO led a mission of seven international agencies to assist the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health to design a National Cancer Control Plan and create a National Cancer Control Committee. Working



together with over 50 cancer stakeholders from the Ministry of Health, Social Security System, National Radiotherapy Center, and nongovernmental organizations, plans were established for interventions on cancer prevention, screening and early detection, treatment, palliative care, building civil society, and cancer registration. The mission generated a tremendous amount of enthusiasm, support, and involvement among the many stakeholders and helped determine the public health priorities to improve cancer prevention and care.

Nicaragua will soon receive a donation of a Cobalt-60 unit for radiotherapy from the International Atomic Energy Agency ([IAEA](#)), as part of their Program for Action on Cancer Therapy ([PACT](#)). Therefore, the development of a Nicaragua Cancer Control Plan will support this new infrastructure with a comprehensive program that includes cancer prevention and early detection initiatives.

Source: Silvana Luciani, Noncommunicable Disease Unit, PAHO-Washington.

## Upcoming Events

### El Paso, Texas: Two Diabetes Meetings

#### “Faces of Diabetes” Conference, 28 September

The El Paso Diabetes Association ([EPDA](#)) will be holding its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual “[Faces of Diabetes](#)” Conference on Friday, 28 September 2007, at the Radisson Suite Hotel in El Paso.



The *main topic* will be *pediatric/gestational* diabetes and its treatment, management, and current research. The information provided will assist physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, physician’s assistants, pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals with management of type 1 and type 2 diabetes, overweight/obesity, and pregnant



patients with type 1 and type 2 diabetes throughout the continuum of pregnancy in an outpatient and acute care setting.

Source: EPDA [Conference brochure](#), from information received by PAHO from Rosalba Ruiz at the PAHO [United States-Mexico Border Field Office](#) in El Paso.

### US-Mexico Border Diabetes Project Forum: 31 October

On Wednesday, 31 October 2007, a Community Forum will be held in El Paso, Texas, USA, to present the results of the US-Mexico Border Diabetes Prevention and Control Project. Forum details can be obtained by contacting [Rosalba Ruiz](#).

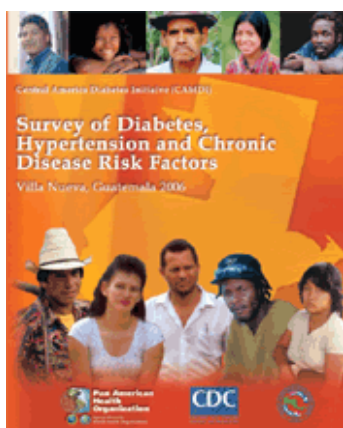


Source: Invitation received by PAHO via an e-mail from Rosalba Ruiz at the PAHO United States-Mexico Border Field Office ([PAHO/FEP](#)) in El Paso.

## Information Resources

### Guatemala Survey on CNCD Risk Factors

The health situation in Guatemala is evolving from one in which the epidemiologic profile is characterized by the predominance of infectious diseases and disorders due to nutritional deficiencies to one in which chronic noncommunicable diseases (CNCDs) are prevalent. Taking this situation into account, PAHO's **Central American Diabetes Initiative (CAMDI)** conducted a survey on CNCD risk factors and has published the results in the [Survey of Diabetes, Hypertension and Chronic Disease Risk Factors: Villa Nueva, Guatemala, 2006](#).



The **objectives** of the survey were to:

1. Determine the prevalence of diabetes mellitus and hypertension in people 20 years of age and older in a sample taken from the Municipality of Villa Nueva, Department of Guatemala.
2. Determine the prevalence of risk factors for diabetes and hypertension.
3. Determine the relationship between the prevalence of these diseases and certain demographic, environmental, social, cultural, and economic factors.



This project used **two types of variables**:

1. *Primary variables*, which were the object of the study; and
2. *Secondary variables*, which, in conjunction with the primary variables, make it possible to evaluate their tendencies in different contexts and situations.

In conclusion, the prevalence of diabetes mellitus found in the town of Villa Nueva is higher than the prevalence reported in most countries of Latin America; the prevalence of hypertension reported here is comparable to that reported in most Latin American studies. It is particularly important that, despite having a younger population, Villa Nueva had a prevalence of diabetes similar to the prevalence in the United States. This means that in the future there will be an important increase in the prevalence of diabetes as the population ages, unless preventive strategies are introduced. The data presented indicate that diabetes affects people with a lower educational level, which suggests that the poorest people bear the greatest burden.

## Cuba: New Publication on Diabetes Education

PAHO recently published a new book in Spanish,

[Therapeutic Education: Proposal for a Theoretical Model Based on the Experiences of the Cuban Diabetes Program](#). This work

(the prologue and table of contents of which is [translated](#) on the PAHO Web) shows how different sociodemographic events have influenced the population's current health profile, pointing to noncommunicable diseases as a major adult health problem.



Nowadays, therapeutic education for people with this type of disease, as well as for their closest family members, constitutes an important challenge for both research and clinical practice, since the optimal quality of the treatment and quality of life of the people with these diseases depend on their comprehension, skill and motivation—things they need to have in order to handle day-to-day arrangements and self-care—as well as on the

capacity of health providers to achieve the necessary level of comprehension, skill, and motivation among the personnel who offer their services.

In addition to compiling the theoretical foundation, applicability, and systematization of a model for therapeutic education, this book can serve as a guide for its readers to find their own roads in strengthening action aimed at the design, implementation, and evaluation of education programs for people with chronic diseases and—why not?—at any program geared towards educating and empowering people with other types of diseases that require developing their own control abilities.



*Source:* Excerpts from book's [prologue](#) written by Prof. Oscar Mateo de Acosta, Dr. Sc. and translated by PAHO.

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](mailto:hospedaj@paho.org)) with copy to Pilar Fano ([fanopili@paho.org](mailto:fanopili@paho.org)) and Suzanna Stephens ([stephens@paho.org](mailto: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>