

World Health Day 2016: Let's beat diabetes

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A consultation, organized by the WHO Country for India in collaboration with the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, on the occasion of the World Health Day 2016 made a strong call to all stakeholders to scale-up prevention, strengthen care and enhance surveillance to beat diabetes.

Among other stakeholders and dignitaries, present on the occasion were Mr Jagat Prakash Nadda, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW); Mr Shripad Naik, Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare and Minister of State (IC), AYUSH; Dr Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (IC), Prime Minister Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space; Mr B.P. Sharma, Secretary, MoHFW; Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Secretary, Department of Health Research & Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), MoHFW; Mr K. B. Agarwal, Additional Secretary, MoHFW; Dr Arun Panda, Additional Secretary, MoHFW; Mr C.K. Mishra, Additional Secretary and Mission Director, National Health Mission, MoHFW; Dr Jagdish Prasad, Director General Health Services; Mr Anshu Prakash, Joint Secretary, MoHFW and Dr Henk Bekedam, WHO Representative to India.

The Union Health Minister Mr J.P. Nadda highlighted the significance of a healthy lifestyle to combat noncommunicable (NCD) diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. He launched various mobile apps to create awareness regarding NCDs and for strengthening and empowering health workers in discharging their duties.

In her World Health Day message, Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia said, "Diabetes rarely makes headlines, and yet it will be the world's seventh largest killer by 2030 unless intense and focused efforts are made by governments, communities and individuals."

The Union Health Minister also launched on the occasion a number of initiatives: ICMR India DIABetes [INDIAB] Study Phase I; Guidelines on Dialysis Centre in a PPP Mode; 'Swasthya Bharat' Mobile Application; 'ANMOL' ANM Online Tablet

Application; 'e-RaktKosh'; and 'India Fights Dengue' mobile application.

Mr Nadda also released the WHO Global Report on Diabetes and WHO India Technical Report on Diabetes in India at the consultation.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Henk Bekedam, WHO Representative to India said, "Diabetes is a growing challenge in India. Simple lifestyle measures have been shown to be effective in preventing or delaying the onset of type 2 diabetes. Early screening, increased access to health care services, affordable diagnosis and treatment and patient empowerment for self-management are vital components to control diabetes."

"Diabetes and other NCDs represent a challenge to public health and national development. It is, therefore, imperative that we tackle this challenge now than later," he added. "Let us all resolve to beat diabetes," he urged.

Efforts to prevent and treat diabetes are important for achieving the Sustainable Development Goal, Target 3.4, dedicated to reducing premature mortality from NCDs by one-third by 2030.

The consultation saw active participation and the discussions focused on a broad range of issues on diabetes. The deliberations emphasized the need for multisectoral interventions for prevention of diabetes by supporting and strengthening integration of NCD prevention strategies within the plans and programmes of the non-health sector.

On the occasion, the WHO Country Office for India awarded the Public Health Champions for outstanding contribution to public health in India. These awards recognize and honour the best in the field in order to encourage them to press forward and others to emulate them.

The award winners were: Dr Paresh Vamanrao Dave, Government of Gujarat; Mahan Trust, Maharashtra; and SEARCH, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra for sustained contribution to public health. In the category of innovation, the awardees were Dr Bindeshwar Pathak, Sulabh International and Sangath, Goa.

The main goals of WHD 2016 are to increase awareness about the rise in diabetes, and its staggering burden and consequences and to trigger a set of specific, effective and affordable actions to tackle diabetes.

State-level consultations on the theme of World Health Day have also been organized at Hyderabad, Bangalore, Patna and Lucknow.