

Statement by Katie Dain on WHO rapid assessment of service delivery for NCDs during COVID-19

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Philippines: The Pandemic Sub-National Reference Laboratory at the Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital in San Fernando City, Pampanga on 9 May 2020. © Eric Sales / Asian Development Bank

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Monday June 1st, 2020

Statement by Katie Dain, CEO, NCD Alliance

On

[WHO Rapid assessment of service delivery for NCDs during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) [1]

As the [WHO report](#) [1] indicates, COVID-19 has been unforgiving on people living with noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and has laid bare the failure of the vast majority of governments worldwide to adequately guarantee the health of its citizens.

We were already suffering from chronic underinvestment in NCD prevention and treatment - including screening, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care - and the COVID-19 pandemic has come back to bite us as care and treatment essential to the wellbeing, recovery and even survival of people living with NCDs are being disrupted in almost every country.

According to the WHO Assessment, in the countries most affected by COVID-19 (community transmission): almost half (46%) of countries report disrupted services for cardiovascular emergencies (including heart attack and stroke), over half of countries report disrupted cancer treatment (54%); and almost two-thirds of countries report disrupted hypertension management (64%) and diabetes treatment (62%).

It is not an understatement to say that the emerging evidence is dramatic. People living with NCDs - including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, kidney disease, neurological diseases, cancer, as well as conditions such as hypertension and obesity - are at higher risk of severe complications and death from COVID-19.

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This has been a bitter pill to swallow but going forward must serve as a lesson hard learned, a wake-up call for all governments: that keeping your citizens healthy from preventable NCDs is not simply about a choice to invest in health, it is an investment in a country's economic stability and security, and tantamount for pandemic preparedness in the future.

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About the NCD Alliance

The NCD Alliance (NCDA) is a unique civil society network of 2,000 organisations in 170 countries, dedicated to improving NCD prevention and control worldwide. Our network includes NCDA members, national and regional NCD alliances, scientific and professional associations, and academic and research institutions. Together with strategic partners, including WHO, the UN and governments, NCDA is transforming the global fight against NCDs

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[1] <https://www.who.int/who-documents-detail/rapid-assessment-of-service-delivery-for-ncds-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>

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