
Delivering integrated care: New clinical courses on NCDs to support the health workforce

NCD Academy is a first-of-its kind partnership to equip primary care providers—including general practitioners, internists, nurses, and community health workers—with education available whenever, wherever, and at no cost on fundamental skills for the prevention and basic management of major noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).

Led by the American College of Cardiology, in collaboration with the World Heart Federation and NCD Alliance, and supported by Viatris, NCD Academy premiered in 2020 with courses for the integrated management of cardiovascular disease and COVID-19; and from this week, two new courses follow with foundational lessons on NCDs and cancer care.

As highlighted by the report [Protecting Populations, Preserving Futures: Optimising the health workforce to combat NCDs and achieve UHC](#) [1], a well-trained health workforce with a wide range of skills and expertise on NCDs can be a critical lever for health system strengthening and the provision of integrated, people-centred care.

[NCD Academy](#) [2] was founded in 2020 to address this educational gap especially in low-and-middle-income countries (LMICs) and reframe NCDs as interrelated rather than isolated conditions in a world where multimorbidity has become the norm rather than the exception.

Following the courses *Cardiovascular Disease & Stroke Prevention* and *COVID-19: Protecting Patients at Greatest Risk*, the course ***NCD Academy: A Call to Action for Primary Healthcare Teams*** was launched this week with a series of overarching foundational lessons on NCDs explaining the rationale behind primary health care (PHC) and its relevance in LMICs. Lessons aim to provide an overview of NCD epidemiology, introduce the consequences of NCD multimorbidity, and present proven models for team-based and integrated care.

Developed by an international team of experts from the [American Society of Clinical Oncology](#) [3] (ASCO), the NCD Academy has also launched a course on basic cancer management: ***Cancer Care: Insights for Primary Care Providers***. Curative therapies for cancer are widely available in fewer than 30% of LMICs as of 2016. However, governments are scaling up their capacity quickly, and frontline health workers will be pivotal to connecting patients with specialised services early as they become more prevalent. This course aims to provide the necessary skills for PHC providers to be an active participant in cancer prevention and management.

These two new courses are currently available in English [HERE](#) [4] but will soon debut in Spanish and Chinese. New languages are also coming to NCD Academy with the upcoming release of the *Cardiovascular Disease & Stroke*

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Published on NCD Alliance (<https://ncdalliance.org>)

Prevention course in Italian and Portuguese. Moreover, courses in three other NCD tracks are under development, including diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and mental health; and a course in NCD advocacy for healthcare professionals is also planned for this year.

Post Date: Tuesday, 26 January, 2021

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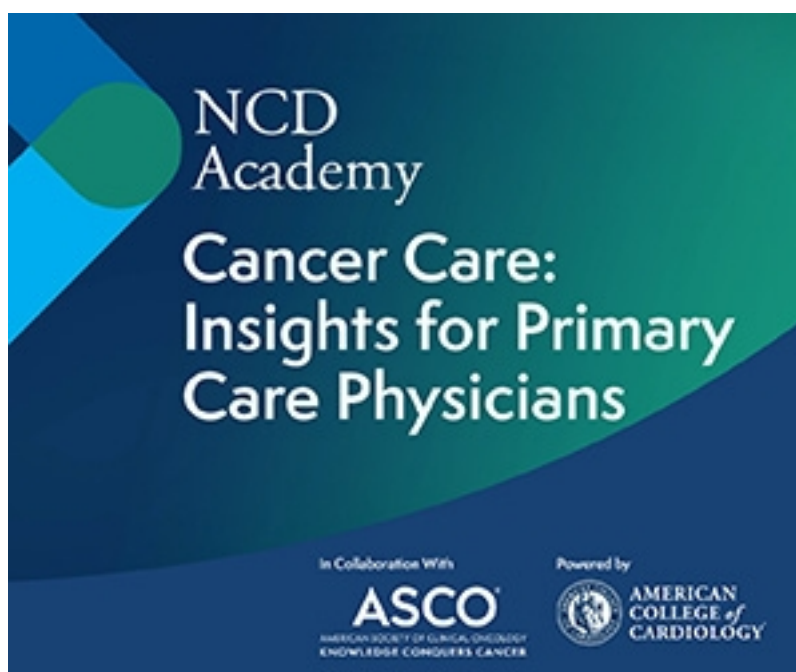
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