
NCD Diaries launches its inspiring fourth series on prevention

Jothan Johnson, lived experience of multiple chronic conditions, delivering a speech at the opening of the Stroke Ward Sierra Leone

If you or a loved one have ever suffered from a chronic disease that you know could have been prevented, you understand the intense emotions that can go along with that. The NCD Alliance and Our Views, Our Voices are pleased to announce the launch of the fourth series of the NCD Diaries: *Prevention through the lived experience lens*. In this inspiring series, you'll read, see and hear how the Diarists channelled those feelings into constructive power, choosing to take action through advocacy and education.



MY PICTURE HERE SHOWS ME HAVING FAITH IN DESTINY AND KNOWING THAT I MUST RISE TO MY HEALTH CHALLENGE AND ENSURE THAT THE MAJORITY OF OUR PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT HYPERTENSION AND OTHER NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs) AND WHAT ACTION THEY NEED TO TAKE.

- From the visual diary of [Benjamin Olorunfemi](#) [1], **lived experience advocate with hypertension**

Coming from diverse backgrounds and locations, the Diarists in this series all have one thing in common: their NCD journeys led them to become voices for positive change, raising awareness of NCDs and their risk factors and calling on governments and decision makers to ensure that NCD prevention gets the attention it deserves.

The Diarists in this series also live with diverse NCDs, from diabetes to high blood pressure to stroke. In most instances, their disease outcomes could have been improved with prevention and earlier detection. As they explain, this was the motivation for becoming NCD prevention advocates, and for reaching out to their communities to try to help others avoid disease. They share their lived experiences relating to why they feel action on NCD prevention and health promotion is crucial, and how they advocate on these topics.

“I would like my NCD Diary to serve as an awareness tool on prevention for decision-makers and the public, and to empower my diabetes peers to advocate for each and every one of us.” - from the written diary of [Mariana Gomez](#) [2], lived experience advocate with multiple chronic conditions

Since the NCD burden has increased so rapidly in low- and middle-income countries, many people are not adequately aware of the danger of the main NCD risk factors - tobacco and alcohol use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and air pollution. The Diarists call on governments around the world to take stronger actions to protect populations from these and other risk factors and to create health-promoting environments.

“Exposure to risk factors, lack of public awareness, health education and a lack of resources are contributing to the development of NCDs. These factors are either social or commercial determinants of health. Information and health education on the prevention and management of NCD risk factors will go a long way to reduce, control and manage these diseases.” - from the written diary of [Grace Achodo](#) [3], NCD activist living with multiple chronic conditions

The Diarists also discuss the challenges of getting a timely diagnosis. Barriers such as a lack of health professionals, cost, and distance to healthcare centres mean that many people don't get diagnosed until their conditions are at an advanced stage, making treatment far more expensive, complicated and resulting in poorer health outcomes. This is especially true in low- and middle-income countries, where most of the NCD Diarists live. The underlying determinants of health, including social and commercial determinants such as poverty, gender discrimination and unhealthy food environments, increase NCD risk and further hinder access to timely diagnosis and care.

Visit the NCD Diaries webpage to [view the full series](#) [4]!

The NCD Diaries is a participatory, community-based and multimedia storytelling project that highlights individual lived experiences and calls for action on NCDs. It is made possible thanks to NCD Alliance's partnership with the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust.

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