New resources highlight linkages between COVID-19 and people living with NCDs

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"In preparing national COVID-19 responses, with support from WHO, governments must recognise the compounding severity of NCDs and act to mitigate the impact on PLWNCDs and health systems". - NCD Alliance

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, the NCD Alliance (NCDA) is committed in raising the voices for the rights of people living with noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), older people and marginalised groups. To understand the impacts and linkages between COVID-19 and NCDs, NCDA have published **two** resources: **a briefing note on the impacts of COVID-19 on people with NCDs** and **COVID-19 and NCDs frequently asked questions document.**

Briefing Note: Impacts of COVID-19 on people living with NCDs

> The COVID-19 pandemic exposes the existing link between NCDs, communicable diseases and health emergencies, and the need to stop addressing health issues in siloes.

This briefing note [1]is for policymakers and provides **key messages on the impact of COVID-19 on people living with NCDs (PLWNCDs)**, along with supporting evidence. It is based on recent data as of April 2020, whilst recognising that the evidence base is still rapidly developing.

It provides four key messages [2]**:**

1. People living with NCDs are at a higher risk of severe complications and death from COVID-19;
2. People with compromised immune systems (e.g. due to cancer treatment, diabetes, COPD, steroid treatment) are at high risk of developing complications from COVID-19;
3. Evidence indicates that COVID-19 and its treatments may also cause life-threatening or long-lasting impacts;
4. COVID-19 is disrupting the provision of essential public health functions and necessary health services, including for people living with NCDs.

COVID-19 and Noncommunicable Diseases: Question and Answers, April 2020

Evidence from science, healthcare professionals, and government guidelines on self-isolation from the COVID-19 pandemic shows many intersections between COVID-19 and NCDs. People who are over 60 years of age and people living with noncommunicable diseases (PLWNCDs) and conditions including hypertension and obesity, have a substantially higher risk of becoming severely ill or dying from the virus.

This question and answers resource [3] aims to give a **brief summary of the linkages between COVID-19 and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)**. It is not a comprehensive review. Information is provided on **eight** frequently asked questions on risk to COVID-19:

1. Are people living with NCDs at higher risk from COVID-19?
2. Will there be an impact on funding and NCD programme delivery?
3. How does COVID-19 affect people living with NCDs? (cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, obesity, dementia)
4. How does COVID-19 impact people living with or affected by mental health conditions?
5. What is the role of diet and physical activity during COVID-19?
6. Does air pollution increase the risk of COVID-19?
7. Does smoking and tobacco use increase the risk of COVID-19?
8. What preparedness steps could be taken to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on people living with or affected by NCDs?

For more information, please visit NCDA's resources page [4] for updates, and our page of calls to action from the NCD civil society movement [5] in response to this new pandemic.

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