



## Virtual Event

### ***NCDs & COVID-19: Learning lessons, building back better for the future***

**Co-hosts: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, WHO, NCD Alliance**

Monday 13 July 2020, 14:00-15:45 CEST

## **PROGRAMME AND SPEAKER PROFILES**

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Evidence from the COVID-19 pandemic shows that people living with noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are at higher risk of becoming severely ill or dying from the virus. The deadly collision of NCDs and COVID-19 threatens to leave a legacy of long-lasting impacts, requiring chronic care, in three ways:

1. as a result of the virus itself,
2. as a result of disrupted or delayed care, screening and diagnosis,
3. as a result of policy responses (lockdown, travel restrictions, distancing) increasing exposure to NCD and mental health risk factors.

The pandemic starkly exposes the link between NCDs, communicable diseases and health emergencies. As WHO Director General Dr Tedros said in his address to the 73rd World Health Assembly: ***“COVID-19 is not just a global health emergency, it is a vivid demonstration of the fact that there is no health security without resilient health systems, or without addressing the social, economic, commercial and environmental determinants of health.”***

Both COVID-19 and NCDs take lives indiscriminately, reinforcing one another and disproportionately impacting the poorest communities and the most vulnerable people in many country. The fallout will exacerbate inequalities, potentially risking economic and political stability. Emergency preparedness - today and in future - depends on strong health systems, a resilient, qualified, well-resourced health workforce, and healthy populations.

Countries' preparedness for health crises is ranked by the Global Health Security Index. But the ranking is confounded by the current COVID-19 pandemic: Many countries judged to be among the best prepared are seeing the biggest tolls from COVID-19, whilst others thought to be ill-prepared are faring comparatively well. The Index ignores population prevalence of NCDs and their risk factors – could this explain the chasm between expectation and reality?

This virtual event will convene global thought leaders to discuss the following questions:

***What are the lessons from COVID-19 on the links and interconnections between NCD prevention and treatment and epidemic preparedness, health emergencies and human security?***

***How can the international community bridge these two previously siloed global health and development challenges, in terms of policy and practice?***

***How do we ensure that the pivot to the pandemic does not come at a cost of undermining progress made in NCDs and global health in recent years?***

***Above all, how do we 'Build Back Better', and ensure political leaders invest and prioritise health and NCDs differently in future?***

## PROGRAMME

Moderator: **Prof Ilona Kickbusch**

### **Welcome video addresses from co-hosts**

- **Todd Harper**, President NCD Alliance
- **Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, Director-General, World Health Organization (WHO)
- **Dag-Inge Ulstein**, Minister of International Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

### **Leaders' video addresses**

#### **Panel discussion:**

- **Ms Nupur Lalvani**, youth advocate living with T1 Diabetes, Healthy India Alliance
- **Sir George Alleyne**, Director Emeritus, PAHO
- **Ms Sandhya Singh**, Director Noncommunicable Diseases, National Department of Health, South Africa
- **Dr Shannon Hader**, Deputy Executive Director, UNAIDS
- **Dr Jennifer Cohn**, Vice President for Cardiovascular Health, Resolve to Save Lives
- **Dr Kai v. Harbou**, Head of Sub Office, World Health Organization, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

#### **Conclusions:**

- **Dr Bente Mikkelsen**, Director NCDs, WHO
- **Ms Katie Dain**, CEO, NCD Alliance

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

### WELCOME

#### **Mr Todd Harper, President, NCD Alliance and CEO, Cancer Council Victoria, Australia**



For three decades, Todd Harper has led organisations dedicated to global public health and prevention, including Cancer Council Victoria, Quit Victoria and VicHealth. Todd is President of the Board of the NCD Alliance (2019-2021).

Since 2011, as Cancer Council Victoria's Chief Executive Officer, Todd has led the organisation's important work in cancer research, prevention, support and advocacy. During this time Cancer Council has led research initiatives in tobacco plain packaging, screening campaigns, obesity prevention, been at the forefront of bans on solariums and campaigns on unhealthy food, alcohol and smoking.

Todd has a Bachelor's degree in Economics, a Postgraduate Diploma in Health Promotion, a Master's Degree in Health Economics, and was recently awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Deakin University for 'outstanding contributions and commitment to public health and for willingness to be innovative and brave in advocating for public health'.

#### **Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization (WHO)**



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was elected as WHO Director-General for a five-year term by WHO Member States at the Seventieth World Health Assembly in May 2017. He is the first WHO Director-General to have been elected from multiple candidates by the World Health Assembly, and is the first person from the WHO African Region

to serve as WHO's chief technical and administrative officer. Immediately after taking office on 1 July 2017 Dr Tedros outlined five key priorities for the Organization: universal health coverage; health emergencies; women's, children's and adolescents' health; health impacts of climate and environmental change; and a transformed WHO.

Dr Tedros served as Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2012–2016. In this role he led efforts to negotiate the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in which 193 countries committed to the financing necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Dr Tedros served as Ethiopia's Minister of Health from 2005–2012, where he led a comprehensive reform of the country's health system. The transformation he led as Ethiopia's Minister of Health improved access to health care for millions of people. Under his leadership Ethiopia invested in critical health infrastructure, expanded its health workforce, and developed innovative health financing mechanisms.

Born in the city of Asmara, Eritrea, Dr Tedros holds a Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Community Health from the University of Nottingham and a Master of Science (MSc) in Immunology of Infectious Diseases from the University of London. Dr Tedros is globally recognised as a health scholar, researcher, and diplomat with first-hand experience in research, operations, and leadership in emergency responses to epidemics.

#### **Mr Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway**



Norway has recently launched the world's first ever NCD-focused international development strategy, 'Better Health, Better Lives'. Minister Ulstein was appointed in January 2019, and as Minister of International Development is responsible for international development efforts in countries outside the OSCE, the Middle East, North Africa and Afghanistan. He is also responsible for development cooperation under the auspices of the UN system, the World Bank, the regional development banks and other global funds and programmes. In addition, he is responsible for the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation (Norec) and Norwegian Investment Fund for developing countries (Norfund).

#### **Professor Ilona Kickbusch – Moderator**



Professor Ilona Kickbusch PhD is known throughout the world for her expertise and is a sought-after senior adviser and keynote speaker. She has a strong commitment to the empowerment of women. She is the founding director and chair of the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. She has had a distinguished career with the World Health Organization and Yale University. The Lancet has profiled her as a global health reformer.

Professor Kickbusch is an expert in global health security, having served on the WHO's independent panel on Ebola, the WHO roster of experts on the International Health Regulations, as an associate fellow at Chatham House, Centre on Global Health Security and serves on the steering committee of the Health Security Conference. She has been appointed a member of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) - an independent monitoring and accountability body to ensure preparedness for global health crises co-convened by the World Health Organization and the World Bank Group. It was created in response to recommendations by the UN Secretary General's Global Health Crises Task Force in 2017 of which Ilona Kickbusch was also a member. Professor Kickbusch has contributed some short editorials, blogs and commentaries in relation to the governance of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as on the Ebola crisis, which can be found on her [website](#).

Professor Kickbusch has been awarded the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (*Bundesverdienstkreuz*) in recognition of her invaluable contributions to innovation in governance for global health and global health diplomacy. She works as an independent global health consultant based in Brienz, Switzerland.

## **PANEL DISCUSSION**



**Ms Nupur Lalvani**, youth advocate living with T1 diabetes, Founder Director [Blue Circle Diabetes Foundation](#), India, Healthy India Alliance

Nupur Lalvani has been living with type 1 diabetes for 25 years and is a Certified Diabetes Educator, diabetes and women's health and empowerment advocate. She is the founder of Blue Circle Diabetes Foundation (BCDF) a PLWNCD led, registered non-profit organization. BCDF works as a support group and in the areas of diabetes awareness and advocacy in India. It is a member of the Healthy India Alliance and the International Diabetes Federation's Blue Circle Voices. Nupur has participated in the drafting process of the India Advocacy Agenda and has been invited to regional and national consultations organised by the Healthy India Alliance & NCDA. She enjoys running marathons and ultras and being an

Editor at the Blue Circle Diabetes Blog.

**Sir George Alleyne**, Director Emeritus of the PanAmerican Health Organization



A native of Barbados, Sir George became Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB), Regional Office of the World Health Organization (WHO) on 1 February 1995 and completed a second four-year term on 31 January 2003. In 2003 he was elected Director Emeritus of the PASB.

From February 2003 until December 2010 he was the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean. In October 2003 he was appointed Chancellor of the University of the West Indies.

Sir George has received numerous awards in recognition of his work, including prestigious decorations and national honors from many countries of the Americas. In 1990, he was made Knight Bachelor by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for his services to Medicine. In 2001, he was awarded the Order of the Caribbean Community, the highest honor that can be conferred on a Caribbean national. The current focus of his work is the epidemic of noncommunicable diseases and their impact on all aspects of human development.

**Ms Sandhya A Singh**, Director, Cluster: Non-Communicable Diseases, National Department of Health, South Africa



Sandhya Arjun Singh is the Director: Non-Communicable Diseases at the National Department of Health in South Africa. Additional to strengthening the country's response to the priority NCDs, her responsibilities include management of other health programmes viz Disability and Rehabilitation, Older Persons, Eye Health and Palliative Care. Amidst competing priorities of HIV and AIDS and TB, a high proportion of population ageing and high impact of social determinants of health; promoting the NCD agenda at political and strategic levels, is a challenge to Sandhya and her

Team.

At a national level of government, Sandhya guides an integrated NCD response through; the review and development of related policies, strategies and guidelines; the development of appropriate models of care at PHC level; the monitoring of implementation of services at provincial and district levels and more recently, she participates in the national government's response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Her functioning is enriched through participation in related WHO technical consultations at all levels; the World Health Assembly Member State engagement on Resolutions and Reports as well as; BRICS consultations on NCDs. At an international level, she served as a member of the Policy Advisory Group of the World Cancer Research Fund International and chaired the National Advisory Committee of the Medtronic Philanthropy, four Country HealthRise Project. She remains grateful for many opportunities and her engagement with various stakeholders, including civil society, which allow her ongoing learning and development at professional and personal levels.

**Dr Shannon Hader**, Deputy Executive Director, Programme, UNAIDS



Shannon Hader joined UNAIDS in March 2019 as the Deputy Executive Director, Programme, and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations. She leads UNAIDS' efforts in promoting an expanded and integrated United Nations system response to HIV at the country, regional and global levels, providing the strategic direction, advocacy, coordination and technical support needed to catalyse and connect leadership from governments and communities to deliver life-saving HIV services.

A public health physician, her career has reached across research, programme, policy and politics. Dr Hader holds a degree in biological sciences from Stanford University and doctor of medicine and master of public health degrees from Columbia University. She is board certified in internal medicine, paediatrics and infectious diseases.

In 2014, Dr Hader was appointed Director of the Division of Global HIV and Tuberculosis, United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), providing technical leadership, funding, evaluation and programme support to help to achieve an AIDS-free generation worldwide. Prior to that position, Dr Hader served as Vice-President and Director for the Center for Health Systems and Solutions at the Futures Group (now Palladium). She also held the position of Senior Deputy Director, HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD and TB Administration, for the District of Columbia, United States of America, from 2007 to 2010 and served as Director of CDC–Zimbabwe from 2003 to 2006.

Dr Hader brings to the position more than 20 years of international experience in global health, from responding to HIV and infectious diseases to strengthening health systems. She has served in key health leadership roles, emphasizing accountability, scale and impact for sustainable responses.

**Dr Jennifer Cohn**, Vice President Cardiovascular Health, Resolve to Save Lives



Jennifer Cohn, MD MPH, is a physician with a focus on improving access to and uptake of effective health products and models of care in low- and middle-income countries. Before joining Resolve to Save Lives, she served as Senior Director of Innovation at the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) where she led the design and implementation of multi-country implementation projects and studies, focused on the introduction and scale of innovative tools and practices. She is a clinical assistant professor of Infectious Diseases at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. Jennifer has served on national and international advisory groups on TB, HIV and viral hepatitis.

She is published in peer-reviewed journals including the Lancet, PLoS Medicine and Science. Jennifer received her MD from the University of Pennsylvania, is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases and earned her Master's in Public Health at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. At Resolve to Save Lives, Jennifer will serve as the Senior Vice President for Cardiovascular Health and oversee implementation of the Cardiovascular Health Initiative with a focus on large-scale hypertension management, global elimination of trans fat, and effective interventions to reduce sodium consumption.

**Dr Kai v. Harbou**, Head of Sub Office, World Health Organization, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh



Dr. Kai v. Harbou currently leads the WHO response to the COVID-19 outbreak in the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, the world's largest refugee camp cluster. He worked for the WHO Emergency Program for the past seven years both in emergency preparedness as well as response in various capacities at the Regional Offices for Europe and South-East Asia as well as the WHO Country Office Philippines and was deployed numerous times to support emergency response operations in the field in different regions of the world.

In the area of emergency preparedness, his work mainly focuses on country-level operations for protracted and acute emergencies, as well as capacity-building to strengthen operational capacities of WHO and partners. He holds a Medical Degree from Hamburg University and a Master Degree in Disaster Management from Copenhagen University.

Prior to joining WHO, Kai worked as a surgical resident at Yale School of Medicine, as a Research fellow at Mount Sinai Medical Center and for the German Red Cross in the area of Emergency Medical Services Systems.

## **CLOSING**

**Dr Bente Mikkelsen**, Director NCDs, World Health Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland



Dr Mikkelsen was formerly Director of the Division of Noncommunicable Diseases and Promoting Health through the Lifecourse at the WHO Regional Office for Europe and Head of Secretariat for the Global Coordination Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (WHO GCM/NCD) at WHO headquarters from its inception in 2014. She was previously Chief Executive Officer of the Southern and Eastern Norway Regional Health Authority (70 000 employees, US\$ 8 billion budget).

Dr Mikkelsen is trained as a gynaecologist and obstetrician and holds a master's degree in health administration and management from the University of Oslo.

**Ms Katie Dain**, CEO, NCD Alliance

Katie Dain is Chief Executive Officer of the NCD Alliance, a global network of civil society organisations dedicated to transforming the fight against non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Katie has worked with the NCD Alliance since its founding in 2009.



Katie is widely recognised as a leading advocate and expert on NCDs. She is currently a member of the WHO Independent High-Level Commission on NCDs, co-chair of the WHO Civil Society Working Group on the UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs, and a member of The Lancet Commission on NCDs of the Poorest Billion.

Her experience covers a range of sustainable development issues, including global health, gender equality and women's empowerment, violence against women, and women's health. Before joining the NCD Alliance, she held a series of policy and advocacy posts in international NGOs and government, including the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) in Brussels, leading their global policy and advocacy programme; the UK Government as a gender policy adviser; Womankind Worldwide, a women's rights organisation; and the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT), a HIV and sexual health charity.

She has a BA in History from Sheffield University, and a Master's degree in Violence, Conflict and International Development from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London.