

Chronic Disease Prevention & Control in the Americas



Monthly Newsletter of the PAHO/WHO Chronic Disease Program
Pan American Health Organization
Regional Office of the World Health Organization



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PARTNERS FORUM FOR ACTION ON — CHRONIC DISEASE —

Special Issue: Update on the Partners Forum

This special issue provides updates for our readers on the activities we have implemented since the launch of the Partners Forum last December (covered in the [September–December 2009 issue](#)).

The work to fulfill the decisions made at the launch is challenging, as we are exploring new territory in launching such a partnership.

We are happy to report the following:

Developing the Partners Forum Infrastructure

- 1) **Commitment to Action Approved—How to Join:** The Partners Forum website now contains the [Commitment to Action](#), with instructions for joining (the full text appears at the end of this issue). A nominal membership fee announced in December for 2010 is provisional and is due upon signature of the Commitment to Action. The Interim Steering Group will approve a definitive structure for membership contributions.
- 2) **Establishing the Interim Steering Group by end of May:** As discussed on December 4, interested members who sign up by 30 April will be eligible for membership in the Interim Steering Group. The group, whose composition responds to the principle of ensuring balance of all the represented interests, will be responsible for the key arrangements (terms of reference,

resource mobilization framework and strategy, agenda for 2010/2012) to move the Forum to operationalization by end of 2010.

- 3) **Working Group Activities Started:** Healthy Diet/Salt Reduction, Healthy Workplaces and Access to Health Services Working Groups have begun to prioritize their action plans for 2010. PAHO/WHO is facilitating the organization and initiation of their activities. Their work will serve as models to help activate the other Working Groups by May 2010.
- 4) **Establishing the Secretariat:** We are in the process of establishing the Secretariat at PAHO/WHO that will support the implementation of the Partners Forum. The Secretariat will provide or help define the necessary organizational structure, staff, roles and responsibilities, timeline, tools for working groups and expertise to guide the process.



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As a reminder on how the Partners Forum will operate, we are sharing the diagram below, which shows how it will be divided into regional and subregional activities and further supported by working groups.

Partners Forum for Action on Chronic Disease: a social technology tool to respond to countries' needs



Avoiding 3 million preventable deaths

Building Internal and External Capacity to Partner

1. **Training in Partnership and Negotiation Skills – Washington, DC, May 2010**
We are holding a training session in WDC on May 10-13. Its aim is to provide the working group facilitators with the appropriate expertise to broker partnerships. The training is part of a broader program that PAHO/WHO will deliver in 2010/2011 to build capacity to partner among its staff and external partners as well.
2. **Designing a Toolkit for Countries**
Together with PAHO/WHO's External Relations, we have kicked off a project to

design a toolkit/guidelines for in-country implementation of multi-stakeholder activities. The toolkit will provide appropriate guidance to countries on how to prioritize the process, identify and engage stakeholders, and manage dialogue with different sectors. It is meant to boost the effectiveness of activities that working groups are launching at the regional level.



We are working to embed the Partners Forum and its multi-stakeholder approach more strongly within the Organization to leverage its expertise and resources to further support the PF agenda. One example is the engagement of PAHO/WHO's Chronic Disease Team to facilitate working groups.

- **Trinidad and Tobago PF** launched their Partners Forum on 10 March (see the [government's press release](#)), following preliminary meetings and process that we supported in December 2009.
- **The US Mexico-Border** will follow on 7 May. See [Policy Forum Report](#) from last October for more information.



Do expect a further communication from us before the end of April. In the meantime, we invite your questions and comments.

The following is the text of the Commitment to Action signed by each member of the Partners Forum.

Today, 250 million people in the Americas suffer from chronic diseases. Each year 4.5 million people die of chronic disease, i.e. 77% of all deaths in the region. The number of deaths is projected to increase by 53% by the year 2030. The human suffering and economic cost will be enormous. Yet it is almost entirely preventable.



We—leaders from government, businesses, international organizations, NGOs, the health sector, faith-based organizations, communities, academia, the media, and international agencies—recognize the seriousness of the threat of chronic diseases to our society. The main conditions—heart

disease, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity—cause the majority of premature deaths as well as much suffering, and cost hundreds of billions of dollars annually in direct and indirect costs.

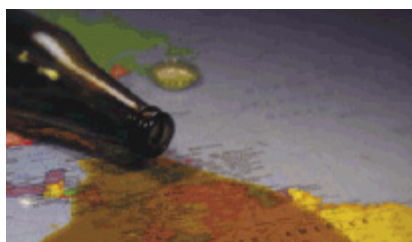
We understand that the root causes of chronic diseases are many and complex. Risk factors such as

- ☹ tobacco use,
- ☹ unhealthy diets,
- ☹ physical inactivity, and
- ☹ harmful use of alcohol



are deeply embedded in our lifestyles and are influenced by factors largely outside the traditional health sector, including socio-economics, education, the physical environment, sedentary work patterns, the breakdown of communities, safety and crime, changes in social and recreational life, and the pricing, availability, and ingredients of food. The complexity of these issues means they cannot be tackled by one sector of society alone. They require a coordinated “all-of-society” approach.

There are known, cost-effective interventions to prevent and manage chronic diseases. But implementing these in a



comprehensive manner requires building and deepening partnerships and alliances in new ways and on an unprecedented scale.

Governments cannot do it alone; they need the support of the private sector and an empowered civil society. Civil society cannot do it alone; people need an environment—shaped by government policies and responsible business practices—that makes healthy lifestyles easy and attainable. Businesses cannot do it alone; they need a responsive environment to



support their goals, informed consumers and markets offering a range of products and services that support healthy choices.

We, representatives of responsible entities from many sectors, recognize that we must act now to mitigate the growing chronic disease health burden and to improve health. We must combine our resources, competencies, social capital, and reach through innovative collaborations to change the way people live. We must educate people, encourage them, provide opportunities for, and enable, healthy and more active lifestyles. And we must find new ways to provide the necessary mass-scale access to information, preventive health care, medicines, and services for the rapidly growing numbers of people who suffer from chronic disease.



As a result of the above, the Pan American Health Organization, Regional Office of the World Health Organization has established the Partner's Forum to convene organizations from different sectors to undertake innovative joint action against chronic diseases.

As members of the Partners Forum, we commit to:

- **Raising the profile of chronic disease issues** on the public policy agenda and awareness of the potential for win-win, multisectoral partnerships to effect change;
- **Catalyzing new multisectoral partnerships** that drive direct social, environmental, and policy action to promote healthy lifestyles and prevent chronic diseases;
- **Increasing the impact of existing chronic health initiatives** through coordination, collaboration, and the adoption of multisectoral approaches;

- **Building capacity for multisectoral partnering** through training and the exchange of ideas, experiences, and lessons across sectors and regions;
- **Developing and promoting efficient and effective solutions** to the biggest health challenge facing the Americas today.

As a consequence of our commitment to the Partners Forum, we will:

- **Recognize individual and collective efforts and work together with other sectors** to tackle the causes and improve treatment of chronic disease;
- **Respect the spirit of the Partners Forum** by promoting collective action, refraining from advocating individual agendas and interests that would compromise the goals of the Partner's Forum;
- **Build our connections with, and enhance our understanding of all sectors** to create effective, collective, innovative multisectoral programs;
- **Respect the rights and reputation of other partners**, including due regard for their property and refraining from using others' names and logos without their approval;

- **Share the values and principles of the Partners Forum** and refrain from actions that could be perceived as infringing on integrity, independence and impartiality of others or that can pose or can be perceived as posing conflicts of interest;
- **Share successes and seek opportunities to scale up and replicate those efforts.**

As members of the Partners Forum, we agree to provide the following:

- **Organizational commitment** (e.g., policy and programs on healthy workplaces);
- **Resources** (e.g., technical skills, core competencies, financial, in-kind support);
- **Senior-level representation** with decision-making authority at Partners Forum;
- **High-level support** (e.g., chairman/CEO/minister signature).

Signatory Organization

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

I, (name) as CEO (or other title—Chairman, Secretary General) of (signatory organization) delegate (name) in my representation.

Date: _____

Healthy Workplaces Event on 22 April



One of the Partners Forum working group focuses on healthy workplaces. Workers spend in general two thirds of our lifespan in the workplace providing a unique environment for influencing the health of people.

Studies have demonstrated the health and economic impact of health and safety program in the workplace. For example, we know that worker's health contributed to a 5%–10% increase in overall productivity.ⁱ Also, healthy workplaces can lead to significant reduction in healthcare cost, in some instance up to 26%.ⁱⁱ Investing in healthy

workplaces also report as studies revealed an average of return of investment of \$3.50/dollar spentⁱⁱⁱ.

On April 22, PAHO will be celebrating the World Day for Safety and Health at Work. This international campaign is to recognize and reflect upon the role our occupation, working conditions, and workplace environment have on our health, families, and communities.

The theme for the PAHO 2010 World Day for Safety and Health at Work is **Healthy Workplaces**. PAHO is organizing this event in collaboration with the U.S. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health ([NIOSH](http://www.niosh.gov)) / Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](http://www.cdc.gov)).

The event will be held in PAHO-HQ from 10:30 am-12:30 pm EDT and broadcast live via the web. **Dr. Maria Neira**, Director of the Department of Public Health and Environment at the World Health Organization (WHO) will be one of keynote speakers among other keynote speakers from across the region. For more information, check our website at www.paho.org/april22.

ⁱ Berger ML, Howell R, Nicholson S, Sharda C. Investing in healthy human capita. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 2003;45(12):1213-1225.

ⁱ Chapman LS. Meta-evaluation of worksite health promotion economic return studies: 2005 update. *American Journal of Health Promotion*. 2005;19(6):1-11.

ⁱⁱⁱ Goetzel R, Ozminkowski R. The health and cost benefit of work site health-promotion programs. *Annu. Rev. Public Health* 2008; 29:303-323

SAVE THE DATE

Join the Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) for:

2010 WORLD DAY FOR SAFETY & HEALTH AT WORK

"HEALTHY WORKPLACES: MY WORK, MY HEALTH"

APRIL 22
10:30AM-12:30PM EDT
PAHO HQ, ROOM B
525 23RD ST. NW.
WASHINGTON, D.C.

FOR MORE INFO PLEASE GO TO
WWW.PAHO.ORG/APRIL22





2010 World Day for Safety and Health at Work

– April 28, 2010

Photography contest

“My work, My health”

Photo Contest:

“Healthy workplaces: My Work, My Health”

For this event, PAHO invites you to send photographs on the theme: **“Healthy workplaces: my Work, my Health.”** The contest is open to every worker living in the region of the Americas and the deadline is 31 March 2010. Prizes will be awarded:

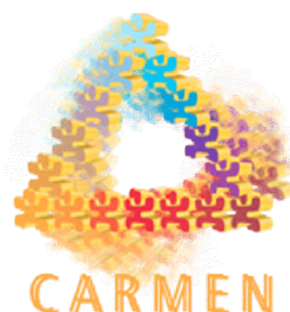
- 1st prize: US\$ 500
- 2nd prize: US\$ 300
- 3rd prize: US\$ 100

The three winners will have their photographs published by PAHO/WHO.

For more information on this contest, please [click here](#).

STOP THE GLOBAL EPIDEMIC OF CHRONIC DISEASE

PROMOTE. PREVENT. TREAT. CARE



Chronic Disease Prevention and Control in the Americas

To subscribe, please write a request to Pilar Fano (fanopili@paho.org). Readers are invited to submit their contributions of 1–3 paragraphs on activities related to chronic disease in the Americas by sending them to Dr. James Hospedales (hospedaj@paho.org) with copies to Suzanna Stephens (stephens@paho.org) and Pilar Fano (fanopili@paho.org). Letters to the Editor should be addressed to Silvana Luciani (lucianis@paho.org). Instructions and criteria can be found on the homepage for this newsletter at the web link below:

http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=66&Itemid=858&lang=en