

## **Workshop EHP: The Role of eHealth in the Prevention of Childhood Obesity**

### **Second Pan American Conference on Obesity (PACO II)**

#### **The Facts**

The Americas and much of the world are experiencing upward trends in childhood obesity, with rates doubling or even tripling over the past 20-30 years in most countries. The obesity epidemic threatens many gains in childhood health, and is a factor of a larger problem, the silent epidemic of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).

#### **Background**

The United Nations High-Level Meeting (UNHLM) held in September 2011 put forward a declaration, which argues that tackling the NCDs epidemic will demand a multisectoral approach. All talents are needed to eliminate the epidemic, highlighting the importance of educating the public and mobilizing key social actors. The World Health Organization identified communication and advocacy as low-cost, high-impact interventions in combating NCDs. The eHealth Strategy and Plan of Action for the Americas, approved last year by countries and territories in the region, can help to intensify efforts in these public health interventions.

#### **The role of eHealth**

The effective application of eHealth has proven to improve people's quality of life as well as health knowledge and education. Based on the premise that access to health information is a basic right of all people, eHealth facilitates the communication and widespread distribution of health information. Through the use and application of information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as social networks and text-messaging through mobile devices, eHealth offers the promise of innovation in improving two-way communications and interaction. In addressing the childhood obesity epidemic, eHealth facilitates the promotion of community participation, mobilization and strengthening of support networks.

#### **Purpose of the workshop**

In this workshop, participants will learn about the importance of having a strategy and plan of action that integrates eHealth into public health efforts. Participants will discuss and share experiences on eHealth in fighting NCDs and will identify eHealth initiatives that are both feasible and successful to address childhood obesity. To conclude, participants will develop a proposal for the next-steps that will be presented at the Second Pan-American Conference on Obesity, with Special Attention to Childhood Obesity.



## Workshop objectives

- Provide an understanding of eHealth as the cost-effective use of ICTs that helps the public make informed decisions about their health and that of their families.
- Provide a venue for the discussion and sharing of experiences on eHealth practices used to tackle NCDs challenges.
- Identify practical applications for the use ICTs in addressing obesity, particularly childhood obesity.

## Expected Results

A proposal for the next-steps: coordinating efforts between childhood obesity programs and eHealth developments in the region of the Americas

## Date and Venue

The Pan-American Workshops on the Role of eHealth in the Prevention of Childhood Obesity will take place on June 14, 2012 and will precede the Second Pan-American Conference on Obesity, with special attention to childhood obesity to be held June 15-16, 2012. Both events will be celebrated in Oranjestad, Aruba.

## Presenters

- David Novillo, Advisor on Knowledge Management and Organization Learning, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
- James Hospedales, Senior Advisor on Prevention & Control of Chronic Diseases, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
- Alfonso Contreras, Advisor on Health Education and Behavioral Change, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
- Romina Cialdella, Communication Specialist, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization

## Program

### Thursday, June 14, 2012

8.30 – 9.00 [Welcome](#)

9.00 – 9.30 [Strategy and Plan of Action on eHealth for the Region of the Americas](#)  
David Novillo, Advisor on Knowledge Management and Organization Learning

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- 9.30 – 10.00 “Get the Message” initiative  
James Hospedales, Senior Advisor on Prevention & Control of Chronic Diseases
- 10.00 – 10.15 Discussion (“Get the Message” initiative)
- 10.15 – 10.30 Break
- 10.30 – 11.00 PAHO’s first mobile app to improve access to the electronic database for the Global School-based Student Health Survey (eGSHS) including risk and protective indicators for NCDs.  
Alfonso Contreras, Advisor on Health Education and Behavioral Change
- 11.00-11.15 Discussion (PAHO’s first mobile app to improve access to the electronic database for the Global School-based Student Health Survey (eGSHS) including risk and protective indicators for NCDs)
- 11.15 – 11.45 The use of social networks and other ICTs in the prevention of childhood obesity  
Romina Cialdella, Communication Specialist
- 11.45 -12.00 Discussion (The use of social networks and other ICTs in the prevention of childhood obesity)
- 12.00 – 14.00 Working Groups
- 14.00 – 14.30 Conclusions

