The Novartis Foundation and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine join forces to put hypertension care and management on the global health agenda

- Global Health and hypertension community gather to highlight innovative delivery models for hypertension management in low- and middle-income countries
- Experts at London-based dialogue event will also focus on potential enablers to scale healthcare delivery models and critical need for evidence generation
- Deaths from hypertension are estimated at 9.4 million people annually globally, which is equivalent to all infectious diseases combined

London, December 1, 2015 – The Novartis Foundation and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine Centre for Global Non-Communicable Diseases are convening experts from the global health and hypertension community to highlight innovative delivery models for hypertension management and potential enablers to scale these models in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The dialogue event “At the heart of it: innovation and scale in hypertension management in low- and middle-income countries” is being held in London.

The Novartis Foundation recently launched the Community-based Hypertension Improvement Project (ComHIP) in Ghana and this is the second year they have organized a dialogue event aimed at innovating care for NCDs among populations in need. “At the Novartis Foundation, our goal is to build evidence on what type of healthcare delivery models and technologies are effective, and how we can achieve scale and sustainability with the right models,” said Dr. Ann Aerts, Head of the Novartis Foundation. “At today's event, we are aiming to bring all the pieces together, and plan for the right kind of collaborations and data across the global health community to have a real and lasting impact on the management of non-communicable diseases in low- and middle-income countries.”

The event is co-hosted by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, a world-leading center for research and postgraduate education in public and global health, with 3,900 students and more than 1,000 staff working in over 100 countries. The School is one of the highest-rated research institutions in the UK, and among the world’s leading schools in public and global health. The mission of the School is to improve health and health equity in the UK and worldwide; working in partnership to achieve excellence in public and global health research, education and translation of knowledge into policy and practice.

“People in low- and middle-income countries are suffering from non-communicable diseases at a younger age and with worse outcomes than those in high-income countries,” said Professor Peter Piot, Director of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, who opens the event. “If we don’t do something about this now, the impact on economies, productivity and people of these countries will be as big if not bigger than HIV/AIDS.”
Infectious diseases and maternal and child health issues are still critical priorities among the poorest populations, while at the same time, the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer is rising. More than 68% of all deaths globally are associated with NCDs and 82% of these deaths occur in LMICs. Deaths from hypertension, a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, are estimated at 9.4 million people annually globally, which is equivalent to all infectious diseases combined.

“Last year we came together to discuss how we could use lessons from infectious disease to innovate for treatment and care of non-communicable diseases. This year we are focusing on hypertension as it is one of the main causes of burden of disease globally, and although we have known for decades that there are effective anti-hypertensive treatments, uncontrolled hypertension still imposes an enormous burden on society, particularly in low and middle income countries. During this dialogue we will explore how best to plan for scale and sustainability of new and innovative healthcare models through partnerships and evidence generation,” added Dr. Pablo Perel, Director of the Centre for Global NCDs at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

The dialogue event showcases examples of delivery models for hypertension management and awareness in Africa, South Asia and Latin America, including a focus on epidemiology and urban environments. Urbanization is correlated with an increase in hypertension prevalence, and migration from rural to urban areas is associated with increased blood pressure.

For more information on the event, please go to: http://www.novartisfoundation.org/events/more/714/london-dialogue. The event will be webcast live and archived for later viewing. Those interested can register at http://www.novartisfoundation.org/events

Join the global health conversation: #HeartofInnovation

About the Novartis Foundation
The Novartis Foundation is a philanthropic organization pioneering innovative healthcare models that can have a transformational impact on the health of the poorest populations. We work hand-in-hand with our local and global partners to catalyze scalable and sustainable healthcare models to improve access and health outcomes, and to accelerate elimination of leprosy and malaria by focusing on interventions that aim to interrupt transmission. Everything we do is grounded in evidence and innovation, and our work is a continuous cycle of evaluation, adaptation and application. In 2014, the operational budget for the foundation was CHF 12 million and our programs reached 3.6 million people.

For more information, please visit:
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