When designing an intervention program to address non-communicable diseases (NCDs), it is important to evaluate and analyze the wider environment surrounding the healthcare system. This includes the policy environment, system components, and the social/lifestyle factors contributing to NCD risk. When analyzing a healthcare system, a holistic approach can identify the potential intervention opportunities that have the most impact on improving patient care.

Analytical approach

1. Map the NCD patient pathway to find the weakest points and their causes, specific to your country
2. Investigate the social and health environment patients live in; this can be used to identify points of contact, key stakeholders, guidelines/policies and other influencers in the patient pathway
3. Establish a framework for an intervention program(s) with a holistic approach
4. Create an intervention program(s) which addresses the weakest point in the patient pathway

Why use a holistic approach?

By looking beyond the healthcare system and identifying all the key influences on patient health (social, health and market) you can design interventions that are specifically tailored to the needs of the local situation. This approach can also identify opportunities for innovative health solutions which can have a high population impact.

Big impact, low cost

Interventions which focus on the lower levels of the CDC public health action pyramid tend to be more effective because they reach a wider section of people and need less cost-intensive individual effort.

Innovative interventions in these lower levels call for partnership models that mobilize new patient influencers for long-lasting population-wide impact and change.
Analysis from all angles
Looking beyond the health system

Map and analyse the patient pathway

The patient pathway will vary with geography, so mapping should be specific to a target area. By mapping the pathway any gaps or patient drop-off points, as well as the reason for them, can be identified.

An example of a mapped patient pathway:

An in-depth analysis of the entire care cascade will reveal patient contact points, guidelines and policies, key stakeholders, and other influencers at each step. These stakeholders and influencers are the starting point for new partnerships, that can lead to innovative health solutions to address the gaps in the patient pathway.

Find the gaps in the cascade for new innovative health solutions

Vietnam: Screening points ran by non-traditional health partners
Ghana: SMS digital health reminders to help patients stay engaged
Brazil: Raising heart health awareness at football matches and Carnival

For more information, please see the Implementation Guide, and the Novartis Foundation website

We acknowledge the contributions of partners to the Novartis Foundation initiatives: Community-based Hypertension Improvement Project, Communities for Healthy Hearts and Better Hearts Better Cities.