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News »

## NEWS

## Pakistan announces national plan for prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCD)

Pakistan has announced a national plan for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCD), which did not feature in the country's health policy before now.

"The plan provides an integrated framework for action; this is a concerted approach to addressing the multidisciplinary range of issues within a prevention, control and health promotion framework across the broad range of NCDs", says Sania Nishtar of Heartfile, a non-governmental organisation which played a leading role in developing the plan and putting NCDs on health agenda.

The National Health Survey of 1990-94 indicated that a third of Pakistani adults older than 45 years have high blood pressure, and that 40% men and 12.5% women use tobacco in one form or another. The prevalence of diabetes is also very high at around 10%. But, although NCDs are major cause of mortality and morbidity in Pakistan, the National Health Policy 2001 did not tackle these diseases.

According to Nishtar, the plan defines groups of NCDs so that they can be targeted through a set of "harmonising actions" and "integrating actions" within existing public-health systems using an evidence-based approach.

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