Medtronic News

Medtronic Launches $17-Million Program to Improve Heart Disease, Diabetes Care for Underserved Populations

HealthRise Program Supports Localized Healthcare Access Projects in Four Countries as Part of Global Effort to Lessen the Burden of Chronic, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

MINNEAPOLIS - June 17, 2014 - Medtronic today announced the launch of HealthRise, a five-year, $17-million (USD) Medtronic Philanthropy program that supports community-based demonstration projects specifically designed to expand access to care and management of chronic, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease and diabetes.

HealthRise projects will initially be focused in selected communities in Brazil, India, South Africa and the United States. Projects will begin with comprehensive community health system assessments led by public health experts, community organizations and local leaders to identify barriers and gaps within that system for underserved populations, followed by grants to local organizations to improve community-based healthcare services that help people living with chronic diseases better manage their day-to-day health.

Using a "Continuum of Care" approach developed by Medtronic Philanthropy, grants will primarily be used to recruit and train frontline healthcare workers, conduct patient empowerment and education programs, and support local stakeholder engagement and policy efforts that will advance access to NCD healthcare. To drive this work, Medtronic Philanthropy has selected two global partners to implement and evaluate community projects:

- Abt Associates will coordinate the overall global program and each country-level program, which includes engaging experts and stakeholders, identifying and supporting local implementing organizations, and coordinating education and policy efforts based on lessons learned from the country programs.
- The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington will monitor and evaluate the projects, providing a strong evidence base of successful interventions, which will then be shared with global health community.

"We know that global change in healthcare access begins on the frontlines of villages, towns and cities all around the world," said Jacob A. Gayle, Ph.D., vice president, Medtronic Philanthropy. "We expect that, by convening experts and making resources more readily available, we will help fill a real need in the effort to strengthen health systems so that people at risk for, or living with a chronic disease, can live longer, higher-quality lives."

Worldwide, more than 100,000 people die every day from an NCD such as heart disease or diabetes, according to the World Health Organization. A disproportionate toll is taken within underserved populations out of reach from quality care, which includes those who cannot afford care, cannot travel to care because of distance or existing conditions, or have limited knowledge of their condition or how to navigate their local health care system or advocate for themselves.

Despite a World Health Assembly call to reduce premature mortality from NCDs by 25 percent by 2025, budgets and policies in many countries are not currently able to support localized action to reach that goal.

"To date, approaches to effectively address the rising burden of non-communicable diseases in underserved populations have not yet been widely implemented, shared or studied," says Dr. Christopher Murray, IHME director. "The hope with HealthRise, is that through collaboration with local leaders and stakeholders, we may see the spark that jumpstarts community-level efforts to drive down the rates of NCDs while developing best practices that can be replicated in other geographies."

"We look forward to bringing our best thinking and decades of experience in health - especially in strengthening health systems - to support Medtronic Philanthropy in addressing the difficult health issues that people with non-communicable diseases worldwide struggle with daily," said Jay L. Knott, Abt Associates executive vice president and chief business officer.

About Abt Associates

Abt Associates is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Associates is regularly ranked as one of the top 20 global research firms and one of the top 40 international development innovators. The company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in more than 40 countries. www.abtassociates.com

About IHME

The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) is an independent global health research organization at the University of Washington that provides rigorous and comparable measurement of the world's most important health problems and evaluates the strategies used to address them. IHME makes this information widely available so that policymakers have the evidence they need to make informed decisions about how to allocate resources to best improve population health.

About Medtronic and Medtronic Philanthropy

Medtronic, Inc. (www.medtronic.com), headquartered in Minneapolis, is the global leader in medical technology - alleviating pain, restoring health, and extending life for millions of people around the world. Medtronic Philanthropy focuses on expanding access to quality chronic disease care among underserved populations worldwide (www.medtronic.com/philanthropy)

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