

Accelerating Implementation of the 2007 Port of Spain Declaration on Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs)

PROMOTING HEALTH IN WORKPLACES, SCHOOLS AND FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONS

The 2007 Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Heads of Government Summit produced the landmark Port of Spain Declaration on NCDs. An evaluation of successes and challenges in implementing the Declaration's commitments has been undertaken.ⁱ This fact sheet highlights evaluation results, the current situation and how we can accelerate action.

2007 NCD Declaration mandates: Physical education in schools; physical activity and healthy eating in all settings

What we know

- No CARICOM Member State has met the indicator of having more than 50% of public and private institutions adopting healthy eating and physical activity programmes.
- A minority of Member States report policies in place to promote healthy eating in schools (six) or mandatory physical activity in schools (nine). However, there is a lack of monitoring and evaluation to determine whether these policies are actually implemented, or whether they are having any impact.
- In smaller countries in particular, where there is limited government capacity for health promotion activities, private and civil society organisations have key roles to play.

The way forward

Goal: to invest in new programmes and strengthening existing interventions.

Policies, plans and activities

Schools

- Review, update and standardise the Health and Family Life Education curriculum to include the NCD agenda.
- Ban advertising, promotion and sponsorship related to unhealthy foods targeting children.
- Place more focus on promoting health within tertiary education settings.
- Promote a wider range of physical activities in school programmes and make physical activity mandatory from pre-primary to tertiary level.
- Conduct an evaluation of the nutritional value of school meals.
- Train school canteen staff in child nutrition.
- Educate food vendors, parents and students on healthy food options.

Workplace

- Integrate interventions in the workplace as part of HR policy.
- All workplaces to offer NCD screenings for employees annually (free or heavily subsidised). Wellness programmes should be developed based on aggregated data from screenings.
- Develop toolkits to help establish sustainable workplace programmes.
- Strengthen current weakness where many workplace interventions target the obese rather than addressing wellness and population health.

Faith-based institutions

- A model based on the Seventh-day Adventist health programme can be used by faith-based and civil society organisations.
- Engage this sector in a more structured way, using their reach within communities.

We are making progress

An example: British Virgin Islands



In BVI a ground-breaking initiative to improve the level of nutrition and physical activity among hundreds of the nation's primary school children was launched in October 2015. The behaviour change intervention, implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture, promotes five targeted daily behaviours, like consuming a wide variety of foods; eating breakfast, fruits and vegetables; reducing intake of fats, salts and sugary snacks and drinks; and engaging in physical activity. Schools are encouraged to find creative ways of reinforcing positive changes, such as healthy lunch contests, walking and cycling clubs, adventure outings and the development of school gardens.

For more information go to: <http://www.onecaribbeanhealth.org/bvi-striving-for-healthier-happier-pupils/>

Visit our website at www.onecaribbeanhealth.org for full Evidence Briefs from the evaluation, recommendations for accelerating action and much more on NCDs.

