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Model UN

Tuesday, November 8th, 2016

Model United Nations Position Paper

Non-communicable diseases (NCD) refer to chronic diseases that are long lasting and generally have slow progression. There are four main types of non-communicable diseases: cardiovascular diseases (heart attacks/stroke), cancer, chronic respiratory diseases (obstructed pulmonary diseases/asthma) and diabetes. These particular diseases are the leading cause of death in the world, accounting for approximately 63% of annual deaths, or 36 million people per year, majority of which occur in low and middle income countries.

This is quite true for the country of Afghanistan. In fact, of the 250,000 deaths recorded in 2014, non-communicable diseases accounted for 37%. Additionally, the probability of dying between the ages of 30 and 70 from one of the four main NCDs is 31%. These percentages are much too high. Due to the poorer nature of the country, the government of Afghanistan has not quite established a proper national system response to NCDs. In order for Afghanistan to combat this high percentage of deaths, it needs to have an operational NCD branch within the Ministry of Health. This branch will help oversee the health of each of its citizens along with promote activities that will help to reduce the effect of the disease on the population.

It is also widely known that tobacco use is the most common risk factor for NCDs. Every year in Afghanistan, 23200 citizens are killed by tobacco-caused diseases, primarily NCDs. However, the government of Afghanistan has been working to limit the areas in which tobacco may be consumed. They have established “Smokefree HealthCare Facilities” which prohibit smoking in any health care facility. Additionally, the have established smoke-free universities, which prohibits the younger generation from smoking inside their education building. However, they have yet to implement smoke-free zones in several public places including: government buildings, restaurants, public transport etc…

The government of Afghanistan has tried with the best of its ability to combat non-communicable diseases and all of their risk factors, however due to the country being categorized as a low-income zone, there is not much that the country of Afghanistan itself can do. That is why we require the support from the Model UN. In order to combat this high mortality rate rooting from NCDs, we must work together to lower the risk factors, and thus help the population. These diseases are not transferred from one person to the other; it is solely a person’s genetics and their life habits that affect the disease.

This is why Afghanistan needs the assistance of the UN. We would like to begin with creating more smoke-free facilities in order to limit a person’s tobacco consumption, which as a result would lower the amount of tobacco consumed. Additionally, creating awareness of the disease and its risk factors would also likely help the at risk population to change their bad habits before it becomes too late.

This is a true crisis situation. The government of Afghanistan does not have the funding readily available in order to combat this problem. Lifestyle choices including: diet, physical activity, housing etc... all attribute to the cause of non-communicable diseases. In order to prevent other people in this population from getting sick, we must all work together to educate the population.

Citations

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