

Puducherry govt partners with Abbott for diseases awareness

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The Government of Puducherry and Abbott have recently signed a three-year agreement to improve awareness of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) like diabetes, hypertension and dyslipidaemia (cholesterol related disorders) and thyroid disorders and also implement initiatives to fight them and record their prevalence in the union territory of Puducherry.

The government of Puducherry will provide the infrastructure and the necessary permissions and logistical arrangements in the Union Territory to run the project, while Abbott will provide subsidised diagnostics, educational support to healthcare providers, patient awareness material and will conduct diet guidance camps. Abbott will also provide Non-Communicable Disease management kits (including supplies to measure blood pressure, body mass index and blood glucose) and 150,000 glucose test strips free of cost to support monitoring of diabetes, as well as access to a unique internationally-recognized, evidence-based disease risk and health assessment tool.

The partnership program will reach out to the union territory's citizens and screen/monitor over seven lakh people, which is the general population of Puducherry who are thirty years or above. It will also build the skills of local healthcare providers through continued medical education.

This partnership for integrated health management is the first of its kind to be initiated by a government in India to capture and assess reliable population level screening/monitoring data. This data will help to create health risk maps to forecast the burden of these non-communicable diseases, facilitate early intervention, and ultimately help reduce disease burden in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

The health assessment tool will help the Government of Puducherry's healthcare providers to assess each individual's health risks and support the public health ecosystem to create a personalized care plan to drive better health outcomes for patients and increase the focus of preventive care. The assessment of population-level data of diabetes, hypertension, cholesterol and thyroid disorders will project the likely disease pattern over a period of three years, thereby enabling a targeted approach

to reduce the Union Territory's disease burden and also favorably impact the associated social and economic burden.

The partnership aims to focus on diseases with a significant, and often growing, impact in India. With an estimated 61.3 million people living with diabetes, India currently accounts for almost 17% of the global diabetic population. A further 77.2 million people in India are at risk of developing diabetes. Over a period of time, diabetes can damage the heart, blood vessels, eyes, kidneys, and nerves. The overall risk of dying among people with diabetes is at least double the risk of their peers without diabetes. An Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) study suggests that the country's incidence rate for dyslipidaemia is estimated to be 37.5% amongst adults aged between 15-64 years. Thyroid disorders in India are characterized by a high prevalence (approximately 11% of adult population), minimal diagnosis, low awareness and low involvement of doctors in treatment.

The Chief Minister of Puducherry Mr. N. Rangaswamy said, "The partnership with Abbott is one of the first in the country for a state or Union Territory to build awareness, provide treatment and better manage chronic diseases for its citizens, using its existing public health infrastructure. This partnership will not only improve patient outcomes, but also help address the growing disease burden and the associated economic burden of Puducherry. Leveraging its diversified healthcare expertise in areas such as diagnostics and pharmaceutical therapies, Abbott is uniquely positioned to be the right partner for this integrated health management solution."

Mr. Vivek Mohan, Senior Director, Global Integrated Health, Abbott, said: "Combating non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is a shared commitment in building a healthy society. Partnerships like these with government will help to prevent and manage these diseases effectively, in particular by strengthening the health care systems addressing NCDs."