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High level commission on non-communicable diseases to be established by WHO

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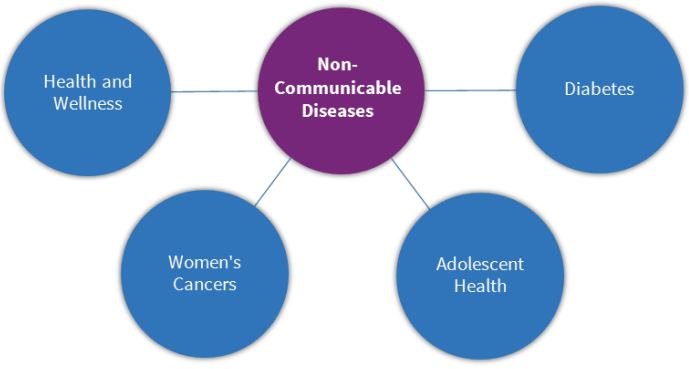
The commission will identify innovative ways to curb the worldâ??s biggest causes of death and extend life expectancy for millions of people



World Health Organisation (WHO) is planning to establish a new high level commission on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). This was announced by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO at the 64th Session of WHO's Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in Islamabad.

The commission will identify innovative ways to curb the world's biggest causes of death and extend life expectancy for millions of people.

Ongoing political efforts to accelerate action on cardiovascular disease, cancers, diabetes and respiratory disease, as well as reducing suffering from mental health issues and the impacts of violence and injuries will also be supported by the commission.

This high level commission will be chaired by Dr Sania Nishtar, a prominent global advocate for action against NCDs, former Federal Minister of the government of Pakistan and civil society leader. She has also previously served as co-chair of the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity.

According to WHO data, "NCDs kill approximately 40 million people globally each year, accounting for 70% of all deaths. About 15 million of those deaths are in people between the ages of 30 and 69. Low- and middle-income countries are particularly affected by NCDs with more than 80% of all deaths from NCDs occurring in these countries. Violence and injuries take an overwhelming toll on young people, particularly boys."

In 2015, world leaders committed to reduce premature deaths from NCDs by one third by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Recent WHO reports indicate that the world will struggle to meet that target.

Dr Tedros said, "We urgently need new approaches and action on a dramatically different scale if we are to stop people dying unnecessarily from Non-Communicable diseases."

"I am committed to engaging the very best people in the world to address our health challenges. So, I am especially pleased that Dr Nishtar has agreed to lead this commission. I know she will bring impressive knowledge, credibility, and commitment to this effort", he added.

Progress of the same will be reviewed by ministers and other health leaders from around the world progress in Montevideo, Uruguay at the WHO Global Conference on Non-Communicable Diseases, which will be co-hosted by WHO and the President of Uruguay.