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World Heart Federation urges governments to act now on cardiovascular health

- *World Heart Federation calls on governments to increase efforts to prevent and control the growing epidemic of cardiovascular disease (CVD), the number one cause of death in the world*
- *Call comes one week ahead of World Heart Day 2016 at World Health Organization's Global Hearts Initiative Meeting*

The World Heart Federation (WHF) is today issuing a global policy call to governments around the world to implement reliable and fit for purpose surveillance and monitoring systems for cardiovascular disease (CVD) in order to better prevent, treat and control the world's biggest killer.

CVD - including heart disease and stroke - is the leading cause of death globally, claiming 17.5 million lives each year. However, at least 80% of premature deaths from CVD could be avoided¹ by addressing risk factors such as tobacco use, raised blood pressure and physical inactivity; and improving the use of simple treatments after a heart attack or stroke.

The call to policymakers and governments has been made today by WHF at World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Hearts Initiative meeting and comes one week ahead of World Heart Day 2016 which will see the launch of the World Heart Federation's policy brief executive summary, which identifies gaps and needs in global CVD monitoring and surveillance systems.

WHF points to three practical steps that policymakers can take to collect reliable data which will provide the evidence needed to form accurate and impactful policy to tackle and prevent CVD, strengthen health systems and ensure that people get the best care:

- Strengthen vital registration and cause of death registration systems
- Include coverage of CVD key interventions into existing health information systems
- Collect information on a representative subsample of the population on the prevalence and quality of care of patients with hypertension and CVD; and undertake periodic data collection on the behavioural and metabolic risk factors (harmful use of alcohol, physical inactivity, tobacco use, unhealthy diet, overweight and obesity, raised blood pressure, raised blood glucose, and hyperlipidemia), and determinants of risk exposure such as marketing of food, tobacco and alcohol in a sub sample of the population.

Also today in New York City at the Council for Foreign Relations the World Health Organization (WHO) launches its Global Hearts Initiative. Designed to help prevent heart

¹ <http://www.world-heart-federation.org/what-we-do/world-heart-day/about-world-heart-day/>



attacks and strokes, the Initiative will help governments to implement both population-level and clinical interventions to reduce CVD rates.

Dr Salim Yusuf, President, WHF, says: “We know that robust monitoring and surveillance are key to guiding what policies and strategies we implement and whether they are successful in reducing CVD rates. Countries that measure these rates are also the ones which demonstrate the greatest reductions in CVD.

“We are calling on governments to reinforce their commitment to preventing premature deaths by taking some key steps toward better surveillance of their populations.”

Nancy Brown, CEO, American Heart Association, comments: “CVD is the world’s number one cause of death and tackling it must happen on the global stage. To achieve this we need accurate data upon which countries can build their health strategies, so we very much welcome this call on national government to improve surveillance and monitoring of CVD. No matter what the country, we all benefit from shining the spotlight on the gaps and opportunities in global data collection.”

Wherever you are in the world, you can show your support for World Heart Day and help raise awareness of the need to reduce the number of deaths from CVD by tweeting @worldheartfed with your healthy heart selfie. Don’t forget to use the hashtag #HealthyHeartSelfie so we can repost your picture on our Wall of Selfies.

For more information World Heart Day 2016:

<http://www.worldheartday.org>

Read the full [global policy call](#)

[Download the WHF template letter](#) calling on governments to implement simple and reliable surveillance and monitoring systems for cardiovascular disease (CVD)

-ENDS-

This press release is available in a number of different languages. Please email the press contacts below for more information.

For more information about [insert name of organisation] please visit [insert website] or contact [insert name and contact details]

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About World Heart Day 2016

World Heart Day was founded in 2000 to inform people around the globe that heart disease and stroke are the world’s leading causes of death, claiming 17.5 million lives each year. World Heart Day takes place on 29 September every year. The theme of this year (the start of a two-year campaign) is **power your life** - we want everyone to understand what they can do to fuel their hearts and power their lives. We are also calling on global governments and policy makers to implement reliable, simple and fit-for-purpose surveillance systems for monitoring the burden and treatment of cardiovascular disease (CVD).



This World Heart Day we've joined forces with **Bupa** and **Philips** to make World Heart Day more powerful than ever. With their support, we are raising awareness and encouraging individuals, families, communities and governments to take action and help us to achieve our goal of a 25% reduction in premature deaths from CVD by 2025. Together, we aim to help people everywhere to live longer, better, heart-healthy lives.

For more information about World Heart Day 2016 including access to the campaign materials [visit the website](#).

About the World Heart Federation

The World Heart Federation is dedicated to leading the global fight against cardiovascular disease (CVD), including heart disease and stroke. We are the only global advocacy and leadership organization bringing together the CVD community to drive the CVD agenda and help people live longer, better, more heart-healthy lives. Working with more than 200 member organizations in over 100 countries, we strive for a 25% reduction by 2025 in premature deaths from cardiovascular disease around the world. For more information, please visit: www.worldheart.org; www.facebook.com/worldheartfederation and twitter.com/worldheartfed.