



ABBOTT HEALTHCARE EXCELLENCE FORUM
SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

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Top Killers

In healthcare, the tendency is more on managing events after they happen rather than adopting a proactive approach to prevention. This is a major reason why the number of CVD patients continues to increase each year and why cardiovascular disease continues to be one of the leading causes of death and disability.

Approximately 17.7 million people die from CVD annually. Nearly a third of all deaths around the world are due to heart disease and stroke. Approximately 80 percent of these deaths occur in low and middle-income countries. With the CVD burden increasing consistently, it has now become even more important to tackle this top killer. Both prevention and treatment of heart disease need to be a top priority, a fact that is often emphasised by the European Society of Cardiology.

Prevention and treatment for CVD and other top killers such as cancer, diabetes and even medical errors will partly be dependent on how effectively we can manage public health risk factors including smoking, obesity, physical inactivity and poor diet in the case of the former, and safety in healthcare settings with the latter. Also, conditions like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes need to be managed more effectively as they increase the risk of cardiovascular-related complications. People must be motivated to take care of their heart health so that they can play an active role in preventing the onset of this disease altogether.

While there is no doubt that progress has been made in the management of cardiovascular disorders, the reality is that cardiovascular disease remains the number one killer around the globe. There are two major issues that make prevention and treatment difficult. First, treatment of cardiovascular disease remains quite expensive. Second, even though there is constant discussion about risk-factors, management of these risk factors, especially among the younger population, still lacks the right amount of effort and resource allocation. We don't realise that preventing the disease before its onset is one of the most cost-effective ways of dealing with this disease.

One factor underlines healthcare wherever we live; the continuing fight to treat top killer conditions more effectively and to reduce mortalities. In this issue, Joe Kiani, founder of the Patient Safety Movement looks at how we can bring preventable hospital deaths to zero by 2020 while Henk-Jan Aanstoot from the award-winning VBHC Diabeter Clinic shares advice on successfully tackling diabetes. The critical issue of how to approach gender effectively in healthcare policy and treatment is examined by Sinead Hewson, Peggy McGuire, and Kristin Semancik from the European Institute of Women's Health and the potential of mapping use to tackle multi-morbidities is put under the microscope by Hamish Robertson and Nick Nicholas.

In addition to Top Killers, we take a look at the latest Winning Practices including a sustainable business model for general hospitals, how 5G will develop telesurgery, competence in radiology and new methods of patient empowerment through digitisation.

We hope you are as inspired by what you find in the pages of our Top Killers issue as we have been creating it. Happy Reading. ■



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