



Inviting applications for

# **REACH Media Fellowships for reporting on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)**

THEME: Cardiovascular Diseases (CVDs)

- Upto 15 Local Language Fellowships for Journalists in India reporting in local languages on regional health issues
- One National Fellowship for Journalists in India reporting in English on health at the national level

**APPLY BEFORE  
FRIDAY 28 AUGUST 2020**

Visit: <http://bit.do/REACH2020>

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REACH is delighted to invite applications for the third edition of the REACH Media Fellowships for Reporting on Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs, namely Chronic Respiratory Diseases, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases, Cancer and Mental Health).

NCDs kill 41 million people each year, equivalent to 71% of all deaths globally. Each year, 15 million people die from an NCD between the ages of 30 and 69 years; more than 85% of these "premature" deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. NCDs caused 80% of disability globally in 2017 and fall within the top ten causes of death.<sup>1</sup>

In India, NCDs account for 60% of deaths, exceeding the mortality from infectious diseases. NCDs are set to increase greatly the country's disease burden over the next two decades. India has set a target to lower deaths due to NCDs by 25% by the year 2025, otherwise known as the 25 × 25 target.

The REACH Media Fellowships for reporting on NCDs are intended to support journalists to explore issues related to Non Communicable Diseases. The Fellowship programme is in keeping with REACH's mandate to engage the media for consistent, high-quality reporting on NCDs. In year one, the Media Fellowships focused on Chronic Respiratory Diseases and in year two on Mental Health.

The theme of the third edition of the Media NCD Fellowship programme is Cardiovascular Diseases (CVDs). CVD is the name for the group of disorders of heart and blood vessels. They include hypertension (high blood pressure), coronary heart disease

(heart attack), cerebrovascular disease (stroke), peripheral vascular disease (diseases of blood vessels supplying the body except heart and brain), heart failure, rheumatic heart disease, congenital heart disease and cardiomyopathies (diseases of heart muscles).

CVDs are the most common non-communicable diseases globally, responsible for an estimated 17.8 million deaths in 2017, of which more than three quarters were in low-income and middle-income countries. Most CVD deaths are caused by heart attacks or stroke.<sup>2</sup> To help reduce the global burden of cardiovascular disease, WHO member states have committed to provide counselling and drug treatments for at least 50% of eligible people (defined as aged 40 years or older and at high risk of cardiovascular disease) by 2025.

## India and CVDs

In India, lifestyle factors such as unhealthy diets, sedentary occupations and stress are associated with the increase in CVD prevalence. In 2016, the estimated prevalence of CVDs in India was 54.5 million. Every fourth person in India dies due to CVDs. Ischemic heart disease (reduction of blood supply to the heart) and stroke are responsible for over 80% of these deaths. CVD deaths in India have almost doubled since 1990. More than half of the total CVD deaths in India in 2016 were in people younger than 70 years, this proportion being highest in the less developed states, where health systems are fragile.<sup>3</sup> The diagnosis and treatment of CVDs can be expensive and mostly require lifelong management.

[1] <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/01-06-2020-covid-19-significantly-impacts-health-services-for-noncommunicable-diseases>

[2] Cardiovascular Diseases (CVDs) Factsheet: [https://www.who.int/en/news-room/factsheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-\(cvds\)](https://www.who.int/en/news-room/factsheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-(cvds))

[3] Cardiovascular Diseases in India: Current Epidemiology and Future Directions Dorairaj Prabhakaran, Panniyammakal Jeemon, and Ambuj Roy Originally published 19 Apr 2016

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.114.008729> Circulation. 2016;133:1605–1620

## What timely and quality media reporting can achieve

Stories of high quality and impact in the mainstream media can lead to changes in the way CVDs are understood and addressed. The media has a critical role to play in:

- Explaining the basic facts about Cardiovascular Diseases
- Presenting people with CVDs as people first, with rights and agency, who need to be respected
- Clarifying the myths and misperceptions about CVDs
- Informing readers about how common CVDs are at the global, national and local levels
- Explaining how CVDs are diagnosed and managed
- Discussing the policy and programmatic needs of CVD programmes
- Explaining the environmental, socio-economic and genetic risk factors of CVDs
- Explaining the socio-political and economic determinants of health care to diagnose, treat and manage CVDs among communities, including among those most marginalized
- Raising public awareness and advocating for policy changes in the ways CVDs are addressed in India
- Focusing on CVDs among women and young people (at risk group)
- Highlighting the needs of individual states and districts to develop strong CVD programmes

News media content can influence individuals to make evidence-based healthy lifestyle choices and generate action around creating healthier environments and foods, cleaner air and water and safer transportation and this is a critical need for NCD prevention and control to progress in India. The REACH Media Fellowships are designed to address these needs and contribute to an effective public discourse on NCDs in the Indian media

For more information on how to apply, please go to <http://bit.do/REACH2020>