



MEDIA ALERT: Namibia takes Control of Diabetes: Commemorating World Diabetes Day

Windhoek: 16 November 2010: The Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) will commemorate World Diabetes Day through week-long activities, titled: "Diabetes Education and Prevention with the slogan: "Let's take control of diabetes. Now." In keeping with the theme of World Diabetes Day, events lined up target both health workers and the general public, noting that action is required at all levels in order to take control of this largely avoidable disease.



In Namibia, diabetes, as one of the four common chronic non-communicable diseases, ranks as one of the top 10 diseases and among the top 15 in-patient causes of death. According to WHO, there are an estimated 12 million people with Type Two Diabetes in Africa, and the numbers are growing by one million every two years. Yet, current resources are channeled into infectious diseases rather than to the needs and opportunities for interventions against non-communicable diseases (NCDs), through clinical trials, changing lifestyles and public policy.

Events include a public talk on diabetes prevention and management targeting doctors, dieticians and other health workers on 15 November 2010. The outcome of this information-sharing session will further inform the development of the national policy and strategy on non-communicable diseases. Members of the public are invited to a Diabetes and Healthy Lifestyle Walk and Fair on 17 November 2010 at Snyman Circle, which will also include diabetes screening and testing, nutrition advice, among others.

MoHSS, Physician Specialist, Dr I Katjitae says, "Namibia is commemorating World Diabetes Day to raise awareness about how to prevent diabetes through following a healthy lifestyle, the signs and symptoms of diabetes as well as how to manage the illness. Noting that early diagnosis is critical to reduce diabetic cases, the Ministry of Health and Social Services is also targeting health workers by, alerting them to the fact that with modern lifestyles, non-communicable diseases are on the rise with diabetes being a major illness. Through improved knowledge, diagnosis and treatment we can take control of diabetes. This year's commemoration thus is packed with practical education targeting both health workers and the public."

Programme of Events:

Event:	<i>Health Professionals information-sharing session on diabetes prevention and control in Namibia</i> <i>(Media are welcome)</i>
Date:	Monday, 15 November 2010
Time:	18:30 – 20:30 PM
Venue:	NICE Restaurant, Cnr of Hosea Kutako Drive & Mozart Street, No.2.
Event:	Diabetes and Healthy Lifestyle Walk and Fair
Date:	Wednesday, 17 November 2010
Venue:	The Walk starts from Government Office Park along Independence Avenue to Snyman circle
Time:	Gathering at 8:00 Am and start walking at 8:30 AM
Commemoration:	09H30 – 12H00 at Synman Circle

World Diabetes Day raises global awareness of diabetes - its escalating rates around the world and how to prevent the illness in most cases. Started by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and WHO, the Day is celebrated on 14 November to mark the birthday of Frederick Banting who, along with Charles Best, was instrumental in the discovery of insulin in 1922, a life-saving treatment for diabetes patients.

WHO estimates that more than 220 million people worldwide have diabetes. This number is likely to more than double by 2030 without intervention. Almost 80% of diabetes deaths occur in low and middle-income countries.

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