

Innovative care for chronic conditions: building blocks for action

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Chronic health conditions have been on the rise across the world. But few health care systems, have proved able to cope with managing this dramatic increase in chronic conditions. This report from the World Health Organization (WHO) provides a comprehensive framework for the prevention and management of Chronic health conditions around the world. Chronic health conditions were defined in this report as “health problems that persist across time and require some degree of health care management”. This new report addresses how policy makers can take effective and innovative action to tackle these conditions. The report addresses the following issues:

- Exploring chronic conditions, including how and why they are increasing, what is their economic impact on patients, families, communities, and governments, and how to reduce their prevalence.
- The deficits in current systems of health to successfully manage chronic conditions because the acute care model dominates health care systems. The acute care model increased health care expenditures without improving populations' health status.
- A new framework for health care systems to improve care for chronic conditions. This framework is comprised of fundamental components within the patient, health care organization and community, and policy levels. These components were described as “building blocks” that can be used to re-design a health care system to manage long-term health problems more effectively.

The report describes eight essential elements for improving and creating innovations in the care of chronic conditions. These elements include:

- Supporting a shift in attitudes, so that decision-makers, health workers and patients are aware that a shift in resources from the acute, episodic model of care is needed to meet the different of chronic conditions.
- Building political commitment to the process of preventing and managing chronic conditions.
- Avoiding fragmentation of services, to ensure that the care for chronic conditions is integrated.
- To align and analyze policies which affect chronic conditions, such as agricultural regulations, labor laws and health education.
- To use new, team care models and evidence-based skills for managing chronic conditions, worth more efficient use of health care personnel.
- To re-oriented Health care for chronic conditions around the patient and family.
- To support patients within their communities, because communities can fill a crucial gap in health services that are not provided by organized health care.
- To emphasize prevention, as many of the complications of chronic conditions can be prevented or reduced.

This report provides a well-formulated framework for decision-makers and health service planners to implement strategies for comprehensively managing chronic conditions.