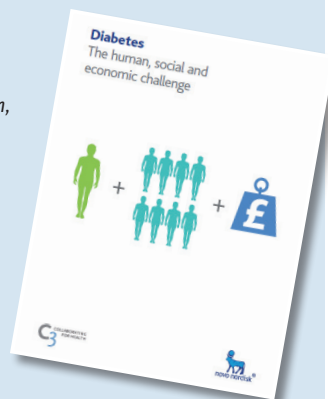


Diabetes in the spotlight

Diabetes impacts on development in developing and developed countries, and a recent publication about the disease in the UK, *Diabetes: The Human, Social and Economic Challenge* (produced with leading pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk) has helped raise the debate. The book presents the key facts and issues in a simple and attractive format, and is aimed at physicians, as well as decision-makers including MPs.

In May, C3 held a joint 'Question Time'-style event at the Houses of Parliament with Diabetes UK and Novo Nordisk. Well over 100 people attended, and the event was a chance for patients, healthcare workers and others to question politicians on how current health reforms will impact on diabetes care and prevention. Twitter followers were also invited to ask questions during a live feed, and the panel included Baroness Barbara Young, the chief executive of Diabetes UK, and MPs from all three main political parties. Among the many questions put to them were concerns about the health and social care bill and potential gaps in services.



C3 challenge to nurses

Nurses attending the International Council of Nurses conference in Malta were challenged by C3 to look at their lifestyles as an example of the potential link to NCDs. A C3 booth at the conference, provided by Pfizer, invited delegates to describe their diet, how much exercise they took and how much they drank or smoked, and to undergo simple health checks. While smoking and drinking levels were low, levels of physical activity and fruit and vegetable intake were of concern, and only around 50% of nurses taking part had a healthy weight. For the nurses, the survey was a great introduction to C3's work as well as wider issues of NCDs, and the conference featured a range of debates on NCD prevention and treatment, which will now be a focus of the ICN's future work.



C3 mans the wellness booth at the ICN

Farming link to NCDs

What you grow and what you eat has a real impact

C3 is keen to get agriculture and its role in preventing NCDs higher up the agenda. So far, governments and others appear to have given little thought to this, and the publicity around the UN HLM would be a timely opportunity to raise it. C3 attended an event run by the Chicago Institute (a not-for-profit organisation encouraging partnerships with the private sector) to highlight the difference that encouraging local food consumption could make. Part of the challenge is to come up with simple messages, as too often nutrition information can be denied a wider audience through being over-complicated.

A Prudent approach...

C3 director, Christine Hancock, recently gave PruHealth employees fresh insights into NCDs and the importance of workplace health. Christine addressed a number of meetings for their sales teams and agents on how to encourage PruHealth clients to make healthy choices. The immediate achievement for C3 was that one woman publicly announced that she would give up smoking, and she has promised to keep in touch on her progress.

Breakfast seminar: community key to tackling NCDs

C3's International Breakfast Seminars continue to attract high turnouts and the latest, given by Dr Denise Stevens, president of MATRIX Public Health Solutions, was no exception. This seventh seminar examined Community Interventions for Health (CIH: www.cih.net), a global initiative exploring how environments influence behaviour and ultimately can reduce NCDs.



Girls get bicycle training at the CIH site in India

CIH has pilot projects in Mexico, South India and China, with both implementation and comparison sites in each. After 18 months of activity, final data collection is under way, monitoring interventions in neighbourhoods, schools, workplaces and health care settings, addressing behaviour change, policy changes and the environment.



Taking questions at the seminar

Denise described the initiative's most innovative feature – an environmental scan that draws a 400m radius around a school, then assesses the options within that area for exercise and play, eating, media, shopping, and so on. With up to 20 schools in each site, data collection has been a sizeable task, but the resulting map is fascinating – the access, or lack of it, to fresh fruit and vegetables, fast food, parks or tobacco sharply points up the risk factors leading to NCDs.

In China, the CIH team worked with local primary health care organisations to reach around 2 million people to improve health and reduce smoking. In Mexico, CIH worked with physical-activity promoters from the national

sports authority to influence local residents and encourage dance and other activities. In India, CIH linked up with 'anganwadi' workers, who work in maternal and child health in poorer communities, accessing 200,000 households with messages on diet, tobacco use and physical activity – as well as setting up other projects such as encouraging girls to use bicycles.

The message from CIH is clear: health education is vital, as is getting right down to ground level to influence communities. Debate after the seminar was spirited, with questions on how such projects can best be sustained in the long term, and how food, pharmaceutical and other industries can get involved.

The first 1,000 days...



Group working at the London meeting

C3 has continued its involvement with a Novo Nordisk, Johnson & Johnson and PepsiCo partnership exploring the early origins of health, which is so important for long-term health. C3 was in New York in June, meeting with UN agency representatives and others, and convened a meeting in London later in the month to consider the evidence for taking action, and to discuss interventions and advocacy. A review of existing studies in this field has been commissioned from Bazian, to identify the most promising areas for intervention.

The next steps will bring together the partners in the project to design and implement programmes aimed particularly at ensuring optimal nutrition, preventing and managing gestational diabetes and promoting health literacy in developed and developing countries including South Africa. Some interventions are likely to focus on empowering young girls to take control of their lives and their health prior to pregnancy, as well as during pregnancy, to give both them and their babies the best chance of avoiding the future development of NCDs.

Publishing with the next generation

C3 is engaging with young professionals working in health and other fields on NCDs and prevention. Our most recent work has been an article on young people and NCDs, written jointly with six others from the Young Professionals Chronic Disease Network (www.ypchronic.org) and published in the *Commonwealth Health Ministers' Update 2011*. C3 is also a contributor to the YP-CDN Manifesto on NCDs, described as 'the social justice issue of our generation'.



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Publicising health – and C3!



Following its well-received publication on the challenges of diabetes, C3 has also produced a report on physical activity and health (available on our website), which sets out the evidence for the benefits of exercise on specific conditions, and a number of short case studies.

Another recent publication is a pithy introduction to C3 and the need for action on NCDs, published in the May edition of the UK journal *Primary Health Care*.

Finally, C3 was featured in a supplement about diabetes, published with *The Times* newspaper, to coincide with Diabetes Week in the UK.

About C3

C3 Collaborating for Health is a registered charity, based in London and working globally: www.c3health.org. Its **vision** is for the eradication of preventable chronic diseases in the UK and worldwide, and its **mission** is to foster partnerships and build collaboration between the different organisations that, between them, can overcome the many barriers to a healthy diet, stopping smoking and being physically active.



NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2011

CONTENTS

UN High-level Meeting: The final countdown	1
Diabetes in the spotlight	2
C3 challenge to nurses	2
Farming link to NCDs	2
A Prudent approach...	3
Breakfast seminar: community key to tackling NCDs	3
The first 1,000 days...	4
Publishing with the next generation	4
Publicising health – and C3!	4
About C3	4

www.c3health.org

C3 is now on [twitter](https://twitter.com/c3health)
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UN High-level Meeting: the final countdown



C3 at the UN civil-society hearing

On 19–20 September, the UN High-level Meeting (HLM) on the prevention and treatment of non communicable diseases (NCDs) will be in session – debating one of the most serious challenges the world faces. The huge efforts made by C3 and others to prepare for the UN meeting are now focusing on this final run-up.

Top of our agenda has been helping develop and strengthen partnerships prior to the HLM – ensuring that a united call for action is heard by global leaders. In June, we attended the civil-society hearing at the UN General Assembly in New York. An interactive event, it brought together civil-society organisations from around the world to discuss three themes: the scale of the challenge; national and local solutions; and what is needed to enhance global cooperation? WHO deputy secretary general, Ala Alwan, acknowledged the passion of those present emphasising the vital contribution civil society would make to the HLM and to activities up to and beyond September.

C3 tweeted live from the event – you can see our Twitter stream at www.twitter.com/c3health.

Our website www.c3health.org also features a wealth of information about the UN HLM, and we are strongly supporting the NCD Alliance, bringing together concerned civil-society organisations worldwide.

NCD factfile

- 32 million people will die of NCDs in 2011
- 9 million will be under 60
- 90% of the 9 million are from developing countries
- Less than 3% of all donor funding goes on prevention and treatment of NCDs

A new book of case studies on NCD prevention, commissioned by the Commonwealth Secretariat and written by C3, has been widely welcomed as providing key information for health ministers and others ahead of the HLM. Researching the book was a great opportunity for C3 to work with its international network – and we are grateful to those who responded so generously with their time and ideas.

