

Tackling the UK's biggest killers: a consensus for cardiovascular disease

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is one of the UK's biggest killers, causing a quarter of all deaths in the UK, amounting to, on average, one death every three minutes. CVD is also a major driver of health inequalities across the UK and is responsible for around a quarter of the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived parts of England. Around 7.6 million people across the UK are living with a heart or circulatory disease, with millions more living with conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, chronic kidney disease (CKD) and high cholesterol, putting them at increased risk of developing CVD. Every year, CVD healthcare costs are an estimated £12 billion in the UK, and costs to the wider economy reach £28 billion. In fact, heart disease is the single largest factor behind people leaving the workforce due to ill health, which is a major factor in the UK's faltering economic performance. Improved CVD outcomes are therefore key to achieving the Government's Health and Growth Missions.

The case to tackle CVD is unequivocal. The Government's manifesto commitment to tackle the UK's biggest killers, including CVD, recognised this.

Positively, CVD is largely preventable, with around 70% of cases in the UK attributed to modifiable factors such as obesity and smoking, so while the challenge we face may be great, the reward will be greater. The upcoming 10 Year Health Plan provides a vital opportunity for Government to set out a clear, strategic framework for its wider health mission. But following on from this, a more targeted plan to drive forward action to address CVD and its risk factors is needed. One which sets out clear metrics and considers the entire cardiovascular pathway, from expanding primary and secondary prevention, improving access to cardiac care including survival and rehabilitation from cardiac events such as heart attack, stroke and cardiac arrest, through to increasing much-needed investment in cardiovascular disease research.

We need a dedicated National Cardiovascular Disease Plan that sits beneath the 10 Year Health Plan.

With waiting lists for cardiac care at near-record levels in England alone, widening heart health inequalities, heart failure cases expected to double by 2040, and a projected shortfall for CVD research funding of over a quarter of a billion pounds over the next decade, this cannot be put off any longer. The right focus and action from Government could help to avoid up to 11,000 early deaths from heart and circulatory diseases in 2035 in England alone.

We have a vital opportunity to reverse a decade of lost progress in tackling premature deaths from CVD and put an end to the ongoing heart care crisis. We urge Government to seize it.

The following organisations support this statement:

ABHI

Abbott

Action on Salt

Alliance for Heart Failure

ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH UK FOR A CURE



ash.
action on smoking and health

AstraZeneca



Blood Pressure UK

Boston Scientific



British Association for Nursing in Cardiovascular Care
Your Voice in Cardiovascular Nursing

British Cardiovascular Society

BRITISH CONGENITAL CARDIAC ASSOCIATION



BRITISH SOCIETY FOR HEART FAILURE

British Society of Echocardiography

Bristol Myers Squibb

Cardiomyopathy UK
the heart muscle charity

Cochrane
Heart, Stroke and Circulation



CordisTM

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KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.



Edwards



HEART UK
THE CHOLESTEROL CHARITY



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