

World Hypertension Day

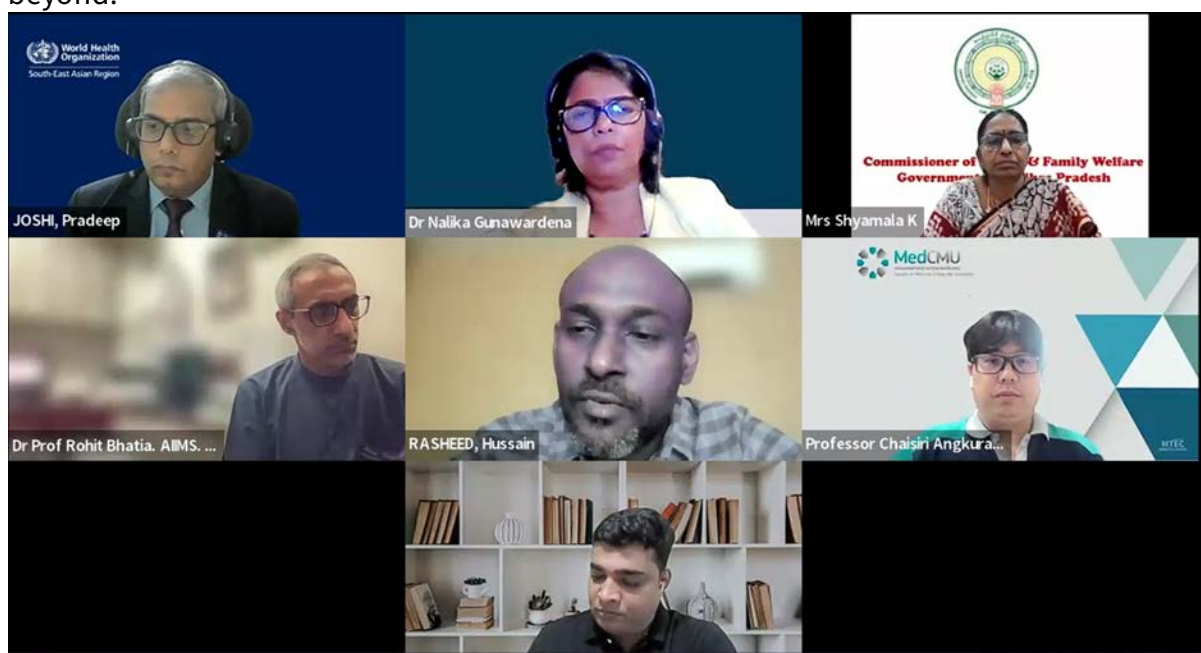
Achieving population level hypertension control in WHO South-East Asia Region

Webinar Summary

Date: 21 May 2025 | Time: 11:00 AM – 12:45 PM IST

Organized by: Department of Healthier Population and NCDs (HPN), WHO South-East Asia Regional Office (SEARO)

To mark World Hypertension Day 2025, the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office convened a webinar aimed at mobilizing action to improve hypertension control across the region. The theme for this year's World Hypertension Day is "Measure Your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control It, Live Longer!". The event brought together a wide audience, including NCD program managers, healthcare professionals, academic and research institutions, professional organizations, and other interested stakeholders. With a focus on practical, scalable solutions for population-level hypertension control, the webinar highlighted innovations, research evidence, and programmatic insights from across the region and beyond.



Mr. Rasheed Hussain, Director (HPN) WHO South-East Asia Regional Office (WHO SEARO), delivered the welcome remarks, underlining the urgency of tackling hypertension — a silent killer affecting millions across the region. He emphasized the need for integrated primary healthcare approaches, standardized treatment protocols, and community engagement to prevent, detect, and control hypertension more effectively.

Voices of people living with hypertension

A powerful video presentation from Parsa Municipality, Nepal, presented the lived experiences of people with hypertension. The video highlighted the importance of patient-centered care and community-level awareness on hypertension diagnosis, treatment and

management. It emphasised the need for reinforcing the health systems to adapt to patient needs and empower communities through education and supportive care environments.

SEAHEARTS milestones achievements and what next

Dr. Pradeep Joshi, Technical Officer (NCD), WHO SEARO, presented the progress of the SEAHEARTS initiative — a flagship regional program aimed at standardizing hypertension management. He outlined key achievements, including the development and implementation of national protocols aligned with WHO's HEARTS technical package, capacity building of frontline workers, and early signs of improved blood pressure control rates in selected areas. There was also mentioned of the 80-80-80 targets for hypertension with modeled projections. Looking ahead, there is an aim to expand coverage, ensure sustained drug availability, and promote digital innovations to support adherence and monitoring.

Ensuring the supply of medicines for implementing hypertension management protocols

Mrs. Shyamala K, State Nodal Officer NCDs, Government of Andhra Pradesh, India, presented an on-the-ground perspective on medicine supply planning. She described the steps taken by the state to align medicine procurement and distribution with national hypertension protocols. A systematic drug quantification approach, forecasting based on population needs, and efficient last-mile distribution mechanisms were critical enablers. Her presentation highlighted the importance of interdepartmental coordination and real-time stock tracking to avoid medicine shortages and ensure uninterrupted care.

Validated digital blood pressure measuring devices: A key to unlocking global hypertensin control

Dr. Bolanle Banigbe, Global Technical Director Hypertension Control, Resolve to Save Lives (RTSL), presented a recorded talk emphasizing the critical role of validated, automated blood pressure monitors in ensuring accurate and reliable readings. She explained how inaccurate BP measurements can lead to under- or over-treatment and undermine hypertension programs. Dr. Banigbe advocated for policies that mandate the procurement and use of devices validated for clinical accuracy, alongside training for providers and community health workers.

Effectiveness of home-based self-monitoring of blood pressure in a primary care

Professor Rohit Bhatia from the Department of Neurology at AIIMS, India, presented evidence supporting the effectiveness of home-based self-monitoring. He demonstrated how self-monitoring empowers patients, improves medication adherence, and facilitates early detection of uncontrolled blood pressure. Drawing on studies in primary care settings, Professor Bhatia emphasized the importance of integrating self-monitoring into broader care pathways and ensuring patients are educated on proper techniques for accurate readings. He underscored the importance of accelerating hypertension detection and control rates by going beyond the current efforts under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD) and the India Hypertension Control Initiative (IHCI).

Implementation research- improving hypertension control rates

Professor Chaisiri Angkurawaranon, Director, WHO Collaborating Centre on Prevention and Control of Cardiovascular Diseases in Primary Care, Chiang Mai University, Thailand shared key findings from implementation research on applying the HEARTS package in primary care settings. His presentation showcased improved hypertension detection and control rates through structured screening, standardized treatment protocols, and team-based care approaches. He emphasized the value of real-world research in identifying bottlenecks, informing policy, and scaling effective interventions within resource-constrained health systems.

Following the presentations by the distinguished panelists, there was an open forum for discussion and reflection moderated by Dr. Nalika Gunawardena, Regional Adviser (NCD), WHO SEARO. Participants were invited to raise questions and seek clarifications, promoting an engaging and interactive dialogue. A range of queries were addressed by the panel, with responses grounded in evidence from global and regional studies. Additionally, unanswered questions from the chat box were brought forward and thoroughly discussed. The forum highlighted a strong regional consensus on the need to prioritize hypertension control as a public health priority and emphasized the value of cross-country learning to drive collective progress.

The webinar on World Hypertension Day 2025 provided a useful forum for sharing experiences and catalysing regional momentum for better management of hypertension. The wide range of presentations—from implementation research and national policies to community perspectives—showcases the complexity of the hypertension problem. The WHO SEARO reaffirmed its commitment to support countries and stakeholders for the expansion of treatment coverage and control in the region.