

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF HYPERTENSION: SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA TODAY

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Abstract

Introduction:

Top priorities in sub-Saharan Africa appear to be infections and malnutrition. A re-setting of priorities would become necessary with the increasing numbers in the population with poor cardiovascular health that have the right to a fair share of the meagre resources available.

Dearth of data.

There is dearth of reliable data on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Many countries in the SSA are yet to evolve any focused programme on NCDs. When data are not available it is often assumed that problems do not exist and this situation leads to neglect from governments of preventable problems. Available data from few countries in the SSA have highlighted the enormous problems by NCDs. The available data also show that 250,000 deaths could be prevented each year if hypertension is managed effectively.

Guidelines in SSA

Only three countries in the SSA appear to have approved guidelines for the management of hypertension. South Africa published the first in 1995 and the second in 2000, Nigeria published the first in 1999 and the second is about to be released, the Seychelles released their first guidelines in 2002.

Country	First of the Guideline	Frequency	Last lished	Pub-	Remarks
South Africa	1995	Every 5 years	2000		Review of current guideline done in 2003
Nigeria	1997	Every 5 years	In press		Guidelines Committee to ensure regular publication
Seychelles	2002	-	2002		
*Other Countries	?		?		

The highlights of these guidelines are presented in this paper.

There are epidemiological, genetic, and haemodynamic evidence that a common guideline could be prepared for the SSA. Similarities in the available guidelines also support the possibility of evolving a common guideline.

A meeting of hypertension experts from Africa in Brussels in May 2003 resulted in the publishing of the recommendations for prevention, diagnosis and management of hypertension and cardiovascular risk factors in sub-Saharan Africa. This recommendation takes care of peculiarities in the management of hypertension in sub-Saharan Africa. The recommendations takes full cognizance of existing current statements on the management of hypertension by the WHO/ISH and the Cardiovascular Risk Management Packing in Low- and Medium Resource Settings, the JNC 7, and the working group of the International society of hypertension in Blacks.