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Role of Digital health Interventions amid the global crisis of Physical Inactivity

FHTS Contribution: Digital health intervention to enhance self management of metabolic syndrome among adults in Urban Poor settings of India, a study funded by Indian Council of Medical Research.

**By Dr. Mansi Gauniyal
(Public Health Researcher , FHTS)**

A recent study published in Lancet has revealed that in 2022, nearly a third of adults globally (31.3%; 1.8 billion) were insufficiently physically active, marking an increase from 23.4% (900 million) in 2000. This alarming trend underscores the global challenge of insufficient physical activity and its implications for public health.

The World Health Organization's (WHO) recent report also highlights the escalating rates of physical inactivity as a critical global health challenge. With nearly a third of adults worldwide failing to meet recommended activity levels, the implications for public health are profound and alarming. This alarming trend is particularly concerning given its association with a number of chronic diseases, including metabolic syndrome (MetS). Our ICMR funded study, titled, "Digital Health intervention to enhance self-management of Metabolic Syndrome among adults living in urban poor settings", aims to address these challenges by leveraging a human-centered design to develop a dashboard that includes tailored modules focused on physical activity, healthy diet, and mental well-being. This study focusing on understanding the behavioral patterns of MetS self-management among the urban slum population of Delhi, offers a microcosm of the broader

global issue. The urban poor, often grappling with socioeconomic disparities, are disproportionately affected by sedentary lifestyles and poor dietary habits, which are the key contributors to MetS. The recent report by WHO also highlights the need for tailored interventions that address specific population groups, such as women and older adults. The development of a digital health intervention, designed to enhance MetS self-management through tailored modules on physical activity, healthy diet, and mental well-being, directly responds to this critical gap. By focusing on human-centered design, our intervention aims to address the unique challenges faced by this population. For instance, the module on physical activity incorporates culturally appropriate exercises, considering factors such as space constraints, safety concerns, and time limitations. The dietary module is tailored to local food preferences and budgets, offering practical



guidance on making healthier choices. Moreover, the mental well-being component addresses stress management techniques, which are often overlooked in chronic disease management. To further promote physical activity, our intervention provides access to a digital dashboard containing yoga videos and motivational messages. This feature aims to make physical activity more accessible and enjoyable for participants, encouraging regular engagement. The increasing prevalence of physical inactivity, particularly among women and older adults, necessitates interventions that are accessible, engaging, and effective. Our proposed digital health intervention has the potential to contribute to this global effort by providing a scalable and personalized approach to MetS management. By addressing the behavioral, social, and environmental factors that influence physical activity and dietary habits, we can empower individuals to take control of their health and reduce the burden of MetS.



GLAD TO MAKE OUR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS NATIONAL URBAN HEALTH MISSION

It is imperative to recognize that while our study focuses on a specific population, the findings have broader implications for global health. The development of effective interventions for MetS management in urban slums can serve as a model for other low- and middle-income countries facing similar challenges. By sharing

knowledge and best practices, we can accelerate progress towards the global target of reducing physical inactivity and improving population health. Our MetS intervention, incorporating a digital dashboard to promote physical activity, aligns with the global call for action by targeting a vulnerable population and addressing key determinants of health. By combining health education, behavior change techniques, and digital health solutions, we can empower individuals to take control of their health and reduce the burden of MetS.





How are children and youth falling under the trap of the Nicotine industry?

FHTS Contribution: Observance of World No Tobacco Day 2024

Globally an estimated 37 million children aged 13-15 years use tobacco and the use of electronic products is more prevalent among young people as compared to the younger generation. Lifetime tobacco users get hooked before the age of 21 years. To catch the younger generation into the trap, companies are rapidly coming up with new products that hit the market at a large scale before getting noticed by the regulatory authorities. The product range has expanded from cigarettes, cigarillos, and shisha to e-cigarettes, nicotine pouches, and heated tobacco products. To make the products more appealing and addictive to the young ones, companies are coming up with new flavors, sleek designs, and child-friendly packaging, selling near schools and displaying them at eye level with snacks or sweets. To distract the consumers, the industry is fooling around the youth with tactics of positioning nicotine as safer as compared to



cigarettes even though nicotine is itself addictive and harmful, especially to children and youth. With the penetration of digitization into children's and youth's lives, it has become easy for the nicotine and tobacco industry to market these products through social media, gaming platforms, and streaming services with the involvement of influencers and celebrities, offering these products at low prices and buy one and get one free options, sponsoring youth festivals to enter a wide market and expand their horizon of trapping the children and youth into addiction. This industry is playing at the forefront by portraying itself to be involved in corporate social responsibilities and creating a positive perception. With more complexities in regulating advertising on digital platforms, even the countries

where the advertising is banned have shown more uptake of nicotine products due to more exposure of these advertisements via digital platforms.

It is surprising to know that e-cigarettes are available in 16,000 different flavors and the flavors keep youth hooked. The designs are formulated so that e-cigarettes can be kept hidden by integrating them in the hoodie, giving it the shape of lipstick or a watch, etc.

A study revealed that the use of one social media platform daily increases the risk of e-cigarette usage by 3.8% among middle-aged students and 6.1% among high school students.

The Nicotine and Tobacco industry is using marketing strategies for brand recognition, and brand popularity through CSR activities, sponsoring education, and sponsoring offline and online festivals and



events to reach a wider audience and create a positive image of their brand. They use several sales tactics of offering products at cheaper prices and offering free samples. With misleading messages, the industry is trying to mislead the policymakers. Some of such messages are:

- We are sustainable
- We are reducing the harms caused by Cigarettes
- Creating smoke – free future
- Adult smokers who want to quit cigarettes can use e-cigarettes, nicotine pouches, and heated tobacco products

These industries are funded and disseminating pseudoscience and discrediting the scientific findings on the harms caused by tobacco. This all is being done to distract the policy makers and the regulations on their products are avoided. Effective implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control is the only way forward to curb this growing public health challenge before it



takes up the entire youth under its trap.

Each year, World No Tobacco Day focuses on a specific theme, providing a framework for awareness campaigns and policy initiatives. Themes have included the dangers of secondhand smoke, the impact of tobacco on cardiovascular health, and the role of tobacco control in sustainable development. These themes help to shed light on various aspects of tobacco-related harm, from environmental impacts to economic costs, and mobilize action across multiple sectors of society. By concentrating efforts on a single aspect each year, the initiative ensures a comprehensive and in-depth approach to tobacco control. The theme for 2024 World No Tobacco Day is “Protecting children from tobacco industry interference”

The impact of World No Tobacco Day can be clearly seen from numerous public health campaigns and policy changes it has brought about worldwide. Public health organizations and supporters utilize this day to educate the general public about the dangers of tobacco use, providing support for quitting, and highlighting the hazards of tobacco consumption. These efforts collectively contribute to reducing the prevalence of smoking and other forms of tobacco use globally.

Despite significant progress, the fight against tobacco is far from over. Tobacco use remains one of the leading causes of preventable death, responsible for over 8 million deaths each year. World No Tobacco Day continues to play a crucial role in the global fight against tobacco, reminding the public and policymakers alike of the ongoing challenges and the urgent need for continued action. By fostering international cooperation and encouraging the implementation of evidence-based strategies, World No Tobacco Day helps to pave the way for a healthier, tobacco-free future for all.

This event was specifically integrated with the experiential learning program of “Certificate in Fundamentals of Operational Research in Public Health – Batch 1 students of Sudha Rustagi College of Dental Sciences & Research to achieve the below mentioned objectives.

Objectives

- Spread awareness about the harmful effects of consuming tobacco.
- Providing a platform for sharing accurate, reliable information about diseases associated with tobacco consumption.
- Help students to develop essential skills such as problem identification, content creation, effective message delivery, and community engagement.



Experience Digest



Sakshi
Nutrition Researcher, FHTS

"In January 2023, I became a member of the Foundation of Healthcare Technologies Society (FHTS). My path has been life-changing, from beginning as an intern to moving on to full-time employment. I started out in a clinical environment, and I aspired to transition into public health. Discovering FHTS on LinkedIn encouraged me to apply for and finish a one-month internship, which subsequently opened the door to a full-time position. Working at FHTS as a nutrition researcher has given me a wide range of experience in different areas of public health. As part of my work, I have gathered data, conducted data analysis, and offered interventions. My ability to make the most of my knowledge and experience has been enabled by the organization, which has

greatly aided in my professional development. I've had a variety of roles at FHTS, from organizing nutrition-related events to moderating and speaking at different forums. My confidence has increased dramatically as a result of these encounters. To further develop my abilities, I have also got the chance to provide lectures for our academic core. A key highlight of my time at FHTS has been leading the SHINE initiative, which focuses on

Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL), has been a major pleasure of my time at FHTS. The goal of this program is to teach people self-management techniques so they can take control of their health. When I think back on my journey, I see how important FHTS's consistent belief in me has been to my success. Their encouragement and faith in my abilities have helped me achieve things I once believed were unachievable.

Selected Onsite Interns for Paid Internship



The experience I just had was incredibly insightful and provided me with a wealth of knowledge. I was exposed to new ideas, perspectives, and information that expanded my understanding of the topic at hand. The depth and breadth of the content allowed me to connect dots I hadn't previously considered, sparking fresh insights and igniting a desire for further exploration. The learning process was engaging and stimulating, leaving a lasting impact on my thoughts and beliefs. I now



possess a richer comprehension of the subject matter, enabling me to analyze situations with greater clarity and make more informed decisions. Moreover, the lessons learned have equipped me with valuable skills and tools that I can readily apply in various contexts. This experience was transformative, both personally and professionally. I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated and look forward to integrating these newfound learnings into my future endeavours says *Chandan*



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v-INSPIRE PUBLIC HEALTH Virtual-Interactive Novel Support Program for Innovation, Research and Entrepreneurship in Public Health

Launch of v-INSPIRE Connect Alumni Talk

v-INSPIRE PUBLIC HEALTH

V-INSPIRE ALUMNI TALK

Date: April 27, 2024
Time: 7PM-8PM IST

Title : India's way to Achieve Universal Health Coverage through Primary Healthcare



Scan to register



Silka Biswal, MPH

v-INSPIRE Intern 2020
v-INSPIRE Fellow 2021

Project Manager at Access Health International



v-INSPIRE PUBLIC HEALTH

V-INSPIRE ALUMNI TALK

Date: May 18, 2024
Time: 7PM-8PM IST

Title : Catalyzing Academic and Industry Research with powerful stakeholder management.



Scan to register



Dr. Ridima Kamal BDS, MPH


v-INSPIRE Intern 2020
v-INSPIRE Fellow 2021

Chief Manager - Partnerships and Collaborations.
Aarogya Seva- Global Health Volunteer Alliance




Recording

Workshop on Enhancing your research with Kobo Toolbox: An Introduction for Beginners



SPEAKER – Ashruti Bhatt
Public Health Researcher, Ph.D Fellow

Foundation of Healthcare Technologists Society
(121, 122, 123 Semdatt Chamber-2, Bhikaiji Cama place, New Delhi-110066)




A workshop on Introduction to Kobo Toolbox: June 8, 2024



What the winners of Healthy Recipe Contest chose as a take away reward!



S. Avanthika Nagalakshmi

Winner, Healthy Recipe Contest held on Feb 28, 2024

WE BELIEVE IN CONTINUUM OF LEARNING

She has chosen Recipe creation with the Nutrition Researchers at FHTS as a takeaway of winning the contest

She created a Healthy Recipe for Urban Poor Population - A flavourful Green Pulao



Vasundhra Chand

Winner, Healthy Recipe Contest held on Feb 28, 2024

WE BELIEVE IN CONTINUUM OF LEARNING

She has chosen participating as a organizing member of the next event by FHTS as a takeaway of winning the contest

She did a webinar on Nutrition Education and Public Health Strategies on May 4, 2024

Syeda Warda Zaheer

Winner, Healthy Recipe Contest held on Feb 28, 2024

WE BELIEVE IN CONTINUUM OF LEARNING

She has chosen to join v-INSPIRE Program for 2 months as an online intern at FHTS as a takeaway of winning the contest.

She is pursuing her online internship as Public Health Intern at FHTS



Meaningful collaborations! Committed and dedicated towards student centeredness

Observed World no Tobacco Day by engaging students of Certificate in Fundamentals of Operational Research, a course offered by FHTS for the students of Sudha Rustagi College of Dental Sciences. Students were involved either as organizers or participants as a part of mandate experiential learning component of the course. The event was successfully conducted at the college campus

Dipesh Kumar
info@impressivetimes.com

FARIDABAD : Sudha-Rustagi College of Dental Sciences and Research in collaboration with the Foundation of Healthcare Technologies Society (FHTS) as part of the experiential program for Batch 1 of the Certificate in Fundamentals of Operational Research in Public Health. This certificate program, offered by FHTS, aims to equip students with hands-on research experience in public health. The event highlighted FHTS's mission to improve population health through technological interventions, featuring Dr. Ashish



 **. HEARTFELT THANKS WERE EXTENDED TO PRINCIPAL DR. CM MARYA, DR. ASHISH JOSHI, FOUNDER OF FHTS AND DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS, AS WELL AS THE FACULTY AND ALL PARTICIPANTS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND ENTHUSIASM IN PROMOTING A TOBACCO-FREE WORLD.**

Joshi's SMAART frame-

work. Part of this was recently celebrated World No Tobacco Day, Students actively participated in the award-winning Swasthya-Pahal health initiative by Dr. Joshi, focusing on self-management of non-communicable diseases. The day included interactive role-play sessions, a creative poster contest, and a quiz competition. Heartfelt thanks were extended to Principal Dr. CM Marya, Dr. Ashish Joshi, Founder of FHTS and Dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Memphis, as well as the faculty and all participants for their support and enthusiasm in promoting a tobacco-free world.