

Novartis associates check their cholesterol levels, raise awareness on heart health

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- *In observance of Cholesterol Education Month this September, Novartis associates across Asia-Pacific, Middle East & Africa (APMA) Region are getting their cholesterol tested and engaging key stakeholders to promote awareness on heart health as part of the September Unblocked APMA Challenge.*
- *The Unblocked Movement is an initiative co-created with partners and supported by Novartis to bring patients, their loved ones, healthcare professionals and healthcare systems together in a shared mission to “unblock” barriers to heart health.*

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More than 18 million people die of cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) every year.¹ CVD is the leading cause of death globally. In fact, CVDs claim more lives than all cancers combined, and a staggering 34 people will have died from a heart attack or stroke in the last 60 seconds alone.¹ CVDs are responsible for a third of deaths in the Philippines.²

Atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD) is the underlying cause of 85% of heart attack and stroke related deaths, claiming 15 million lives every year.³ ASCVD is an umbrella term used to describe a variety of diseases that are caused by the build-up of fatty deposits or plaque in arteries. Many people do not experience any symptoms until the plaque in the arteries unexpectedly ruptures. This may lead to a heart attack or stroke.

Almost 40% of the adult population is at risk of ASCVD and are too often undiagnosed until a cardiovascular event, such as a heart attack or stroke, occurs.⁴ What most people do not know is that 80% of premature heart attacks and strokes are actually preventable.⁵ In APMA, every minute, more than five people die from CVD.⁶ Each of them is a parent, child, sibling, friend or colleague. The emotional impact of each life claimed is significant.

The Unblocked Movement is an initiative co-created with partners and supported by Novartis to bring patients, their loved ones, healthcare professionals and healthcare systems together in a shared mission to “unblock” barriers to heart health. The company’s goal is to drive a movement through building sustainable partnerships across the healthcare ecosystem to raise awareness, and spur action and behavioral change toward achieving better heart health.

“At Novartis, we are working towards a generational decline in death due to CVD in the decades to come. We envision a world where ASCVD is eliminated so patients can live longer and healthier lives, and families are not prematurely robbed of their loved ones. To turn our vision into a reality, we are making a lasting commitment to pioneering groundbreaking treatments, forging productive partnerships with healthcare systems, and finding innovative approaches to tackle major ASCVD risk factors for the larger population,” said Mr. Joel Chong, Country President, Novartis Healthcare Philippines.

By working with patients, healthcare professionals (HCPs), healthcare systems, and policymakers, the movement aims to “unblock” the barriers that impede CVD patients from improving their health outcomes, starting with ASCVD. The Unblocked Movement is driven by a collective voice, cocreated and activated in individual countries with external stakeholders in the healthcare ecosystem to transform heart health across the local population.

“In support of Cholesterol Education Month and through the Unblocked Movement, let’s empower HCPs, business partners, patient groups, and health care systems, to drive action and conversations around heart health. We will spread the word on the importance of getting our cholesterol checked, make conscious choices, and prioritize health for ourselves and our families,” said Dr. Sheila Lim, Ad Interim Chief Medical Officer, Novartis Healthcare Philippines.

The Unblocked Movement has three pillars.

#LifeUnblocked: Unblocking a patient’s life potential with a healthier heart

Too often, patients normalize cholesterol and delay seeking medical help or postpone committing to dietary changes, exercise, and treatment. The Unblocked Movement aims to create awareness and mobilize patients to prioritize their heart health through collaboration with patient organizations advocating for heart patients or loved ones living with CVD. The Movement will work to overcome barriers of indifference, lack of urgency or information to transform heart health in communities throughout Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa.

#CareUnblocked: Unblocking timely medical care and treatment for heart health

Novartis is supporting cardiologists and other physicians in their efforts to treat CVD patients more effectively. Through the Unblocked Movement, the company aims to identify and address non-clinical barriers, supporting HCPs to increase their capacity to adopt clinical guidelines and ultimately, improve the quality of care to their CVD patients.

#NationUnblocked: Unblocking barriers to reduce the burden of CVD on the health of a nation

The Unblocked Movement aims to unblock heart health for a healthier society. By partnering with healthcare systems to make ASCVD a healthcare priority, Novartis can help reduce CVD-related deaths, and deliver better health outcomes for patients through effective ASCVD management and treatment.

References:

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