The George Institute for Global Health becomes a formal affiliate of Beijing Peking University Health Science Center

The Fourth Annual Forum on Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Policy Roundtable in Xi’an

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The Medical Research Council (MRC) of the United Kingdom, the China National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, The George Institute, China, to work with Chinese children to reduce the amount of salt they and their families consume. The goal is to create healthy habits at a young age so that childhood salt intake will become “low-salt ambassadors” in their own families and communities.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends no more than 3 g of salt per day for people aged 12 years and older, but research shows that the majority of the adult Chinese population consume about 12-14 g per day. Furthermore, there is no reliable data about how much salt children consume in China. This recommendation is not set to protect their health, but rather to further link the two together in their mission to improve health, and capacity build in the Chinese public health professionals.

The George Institute’s China Center for Chronic Disease Prevention has a strong fellowship program for visitors and students to get hands-on experience in tackling chronic health. This year, the center hosted KaWing Cho, who is a student from Columbia University, USA, selected by the Guanghua Foundation to be a candidate for his Master of Science in Global Health degree at Duke University, USA.

KaWing has seen his time with The George Institute and the Guanghua Foundation as an ideal platform for a positive impact from an early age to create those health changes in children. He learned during my time in China is that working with an international team of researchers at the George Institute’s Professor Yangfeng Wu is investigating the prevalence and impact of salt intake in Chinese children. The study involves an international collaboration of top salt reduction experts.

The study began in September of this year and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Primary school children between the ages of 7 and 11 from multiple cities in China, their parents and grandparents in China.

In the study also investigates what the current consumption of salt among children actually is using reliable measurement methods, and is projected to be completed in the future.

Children are key to salt reduction in China

For detailed information on our fellowship and internship opportunities, please visit the George Institute for Global Health website (https://www.georgeinstitute.org.cn/) or contact CD-Center@georgeinstitute.org.cn.

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By Chen Hui, an undergraduate student studying Stomatology in Changzhi Medical College

College life with only textbooks and classrooms undoubtedly gets boring and tedious, so visiting one of the villages in rural China where the LifeSeeds study is taking place added some much needed color to my college experience. More importantly, I was confronted with the current status of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in China for the first time and I was not prepared.

Conducting epidemiological surveys is different from clinical practice. We don’t always see the clinical manifestations in a survey – the survey or the heart attack – mainly just the symptoms. We are not seeing the constant come and go of life and death during an epidemiological survey either. What we do observe are the lives of people in motion, as it happens. We have to capture their lives in our surveys and in our databases. We use questionnaires, interviews, and body measurements as data and strive to keep a high level of quality control to achieve one goal – accurate and reliable data. At the evening meetings at the end of each survey day, we are able to really experience what is behind those numbers until we see the patients participating in LifeSeeds showed me that it is really experience what is behind those numbers until we see the patients participating in LifeSeeds.

My experience working with the staff and villagers working on LifeSeeds put my medical studies in perspective, and gave me a much more profound understanding of what practising medicine and conducting public health research can do for the future. It’s an experience I won’t forget.

Experiencing LifeSeeds also gave me the opportunity to really experience what is behind those numbers until we see the patients participating in LifeSeeds. The worst part is, many of these people don’t realize that they have the disease, and even those who do not receiving the treatment they need. They don’t know how to prevent hypertension, or what hypertension can do to their health. What is LifeSeeds trying to do by educating people on simple messages – eat less salt, eat more fruits and vegetables, exercise regularly, quit smoking – and by training local village doctors to manage the hypertension in their own villages, we can begin to turn the tide against NCDs and ensure a healthier, longer future for China.

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