A National Salt Reduction Program for India
August 2014

Facts

• Habitual excess salt consumption is a main determinant of the disease burden ascribed to high blood pressure leading to many serious but avoidable complications, premature mortality and significant healthcare costs.

• In addition to salt’s negative effects on blood pressure and vascular risk, a range of other serious health problems are also implicated including gastric cancer and osteoporosis.

Background:

• The overall goal of this 3-year project is to develop the knowledge base required to formulate a national salt reduction program for India.

• The program will develop a comprehensive policy response and action plan for the Indian government, covering stores, street vendors, chain restaurants, food manufacturers and consumers.

Aims:

• The research will comprise a stakeholder analysis involving government, industry, consumers and civil society organisations; a random population survey drawn from urban (slum and non-slum) and rural areas of North and South India; and a systematic evaluation of processed and restaurant foods.

Methods:

• High blood pressure is responsible for about 170,000 deaths in India each year.

• India currently has an estimated 140 million people living with hypertension, a figure which is projected to rise to 214 million by 2030.

• India’s enormous population is increasingly at risk of high blood pressure and hypertension.

• The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that all member states implement a salt reduction program. A 30% lowering in mean population salt intake by 2025 has been included as one of the targets of the ‘25 by 25’ United Nations-WHO initiative for the control of non-communicable diseases.

• This research will provide major inputs into the Indian government’s strategy to meet the WHO targets.

Impact:

• India’s enormous population is increasingly at risk of high blood pressure and hypertension.

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Supporters:

Global Alliance for Chronic Disease, GACD
National Health and Medical Research Council, (NHMRC) Australia

Contact
To find out more about A National Salt Reduction Program for India study and its principal investigators Prof. Bruce Neal or The George Institute for Global Health, please contact:

Kannan Krishnaswamy +91 11 4158 8091 or email kkrishnaswamy@georgeinstitute.org.in

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