Promoting hearing care: WHO principles and strategies

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WHO’s Vision

A world in which no person experiences hearing loss due to preventable causes and those with unavoidable hearing loss can achieve their full potential through rehabilitation, education and empowerment.

Hearing loss and its causes: some facts

- 360 million persons in the world live with disabling hearing loss.
- Up to 330 million people in the world suffer with chronic otitis media (ear discharge).
- Upto 5 per 1000 children may be born deaf.

Hearing loss and its causes: some facts

- 1.1 billion Young persons (12-35 years) are at risk of hearing loss due to recreational noise exposure.
- About one-third Of people above 65 years develop disabling hearing loss.

Diverse challenges faced

- Developing countries: rural areas
- Middle ear infections

Timely and appropriate interventions help >50% can be prevented
Challenges faced

Developed countries/urban areas
- Noise, Presbyacusis, Glue ear...

Urban Slums
- Middle ear infections, Noise, trauma......

Human Resources

Hearing loss prevalence vs availability of ENT specialists

Prevalence of disabling hearing loss in children (WHO, 2012)

ENT specialists per million population (WHO, 2013)

Hearing loss prevalence vs availability of audiologists

Prevalence of disabling hearing loss in children (WHO, 2012)

Audiologists per million population (WHO, 2013)

Only 40% of MS reported over 1 audiologist per million population (WHO, 2013)

Equipment and infrastructure

Government-led action

Prevalence of disabling hearing loss in children (WHO, 2012)

Hearing loss prevalence vs national programmes
"We see many deaf people in ….. the main reason is the early identification of hearing loss is not happening in….. like other developed nations. Many prescribe vitamin tablet for sensorineural hearing loss."

"Good luck, but the problem of childhood hearing loss is not relevant for …….."

**Variable viewpoints**

With regard to the child-focus on 3 March 2016, I will try to work on it, but our board think children are very well helped in ….. (a developed country).

We see many deaf people in ….. The main reason is the early identification of hearing loss is not happening in ….. like other developed nations. Many prescribe vitamin tablet for sensorineural hearing loss.

**WHO programme for prevention of deafness and hearing loss: purpose?**

Community-based sustainable hearing care integrated within the primary health care systems of countries, so that all persons enjoy their human rights and can achieve their full potential…..

**Approach……bi-directional**

Undertake advocacy to raise awareness about hearing loss and hearing care at all levels.

Which leads to effective public health strategies for hearing health at the grassroots level.

**Political advocacy**

World Health Assembly Resolution 1995: WHA 48.9

**Global data**

**Media and communication**
Global initiatives and campaigns

World Hearing Day: 3 March

Make Listening Safe initiative

- Advocacy
- Safe listening devices
- Apps for safe listening
- Standardized screening protocol for recreational NIHL
- Safe listening concerts

http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/activities/MLS/en/

Technical Support for public health strategies:

- Development of evidence-based technical material
- Newborn and infant hearing screening
- Conduct of research
- Training
- Planning

Public health strategies:

- Technical support
  - For development, implementation and monitoring of strategies:
    - Regional meetings
    - Country visits
    - Online support

Partnerships

- With organizations and academic institutions
  - For development of evidence-based resources
  - Conduct of research
  - Training
  - Planning

Alone we are

Together we are

Steven Anderson
Collaborative effort

- Individuals
- Professional groups
- Academicians
- Policy makers
- Civil groups

To focus on:
- Advocacy with governments, NGOs, WHO.
- Public health initiatives for hearing care
- Organize campaigns/drives/initiatives

Support and promote global initiatives

- World Hearing Day: 3 March
- 3 March 2016: Childhood hearing loss: act now; here’s how!

Many more possibilities......suggestions welcome.
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"The best way to predict your future is to create it."
Abraham Lincoln

Thank you