

## **UCL chosen as host for the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases Secretariat**

The Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD) today announced that UCL will host the organisation's secretariat, working to curb chronic diseases such as stroke, diabetes, chronic lung disease and heart disease throughout the world.

The GACD brings together six of the world's foremost health agencies, collectively managing an estimated 80% of all public health research funding worldwide, to collaborate in the critical battle against chronic, non-communicable (not infectious) diseases.

These diseases cause the greatest share of death and disability worldwide, accounting for over 60% of deaths - with nearly four-fifths of those fatalities being citizens of low and middle income countries. Unless action is taken, 388 million people worldwide will die of one or more such diseases within the next decade, as NCD deaths are projected to increase by 15% globally between 2010 and 2020.

It is also estimated that China, India and the U.K. will lose an estimated \$558 billion, \$237 billion and \$33 billion respectively in foregone national income over the next decade due to heart disease, stroke and diabetes – unless serious action is urgently taken.

The Alliance coordinates research activities that will address on a global scale the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases. UCL was chosen to host the secretariat and awarded \$640,000 following an international competition, due to its stature in global health issues and the strength of its proposal.

The Secretariat will be led by an Executive Director - this position will be advertised shortly – who will play a key role in GACD as it expands its membership and extends its research priorities. The Secretariat's staff will be managed by the joint directors of UCL's Institute for Global Health, Professors Anthony Costello and Anne Johnson, working in collaboration with the Alliance members and chair, Professor Abdallah S Daar.

### **Quotes:**

#### **John Tooke, Vice Provost (Health), UCL**

'Hosting the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases is of great importance for UCL. When one considers the burden of disease globally it is staggering the lack of attention that many chronic diseases have received. UCL is committed to bringing its expertise to bear on the challenges of global health, and we hope that working with the Alliance we can help to focus worldwide attention, resources and research on chronic diseases, guiding priorities for the future.'

#### **Abdallah Daar, McLaughlin-Rotman Centre for Global Health, based at the University of Toronto and the University Health Network:**

"The Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases is delighted that our secretariat is based at such a prestigious institution as the Institute for Global Health at UCL. I look forward to working closely with colleagues at UCL to implement the mission of GACD, to enlarge its membership, and to reduce the scourge of chronic non-communicable diseases worldwide"

## Notes to editors:

### 1) About GACD

The Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (Alliance) was created to support clear priorities for a coordinated research effort that will address this growing health crisis, now reaching world epidemic proportions. Experts estimate that, unless action is stepped up, 388 million people worldwide will die of one or more such diseases within the next decade.

Work of the Alliance focuses in particular on the needs of low and middle income countries, and on those of low income populations of more developed countries.

The Alliance's charter members are:

- [Australia National Health and Medical Research Council](#);
  - [Canadian Institutes of Health Research](#);
  - Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences;
  - [The Indian Council of Medical Research](#)
  - [The Medical Research Council of South Africa](#);
  - [The U.K. Medical Research Council](#); and
  - The U.S. National Institutes of Health, specifically its [National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute](#) (NHLBI), [National Institute of Mental Health](#) and the [Fogarty International Center](#).
- Research agencies from other countries and private funders will be invited to join in a second wave.

The Alliance's first joint request for applications have just been issued by the [Canadian Institutes of Health Research](#) (CIHR), the [UK Medical Research Council](#) (UK-MRC), the [National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute](#) (NHLBI), and the [National Health and Medical Research Council](#) (NHMRC) of Australia, calling for implementation research on hypertension, with a combined value of US\$25 million available.

[www.ga-cd.org](http://www.ga-cd.org)

### 2) About UCL (University College London)

Founded in 1826, UCL was the first English university established after Oxford and Cambridge, the first to admit students regardless of race, class, religion or gender, and the first to provide systematic teaching of law, architecture and medicine. UCL is among the world's top universities, as reflected by performance in a range of international rankings and tables. UCL currently has over 13,000 undergraduate and 9,000 postgraduate students. Its annual income is over £700 million.

UCL's research strategy defines Grand Challenges: those areas in which we are facilitating cross-disciplinary interaction – within and beyond UCL – and applying our collective strengths, insights and creativity to overcome problems of global significance. Our initial grand challenges are global health, sustainable cities, intercultural interaction, and human wellbeing.

[www.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.ucl.ac.uk)

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