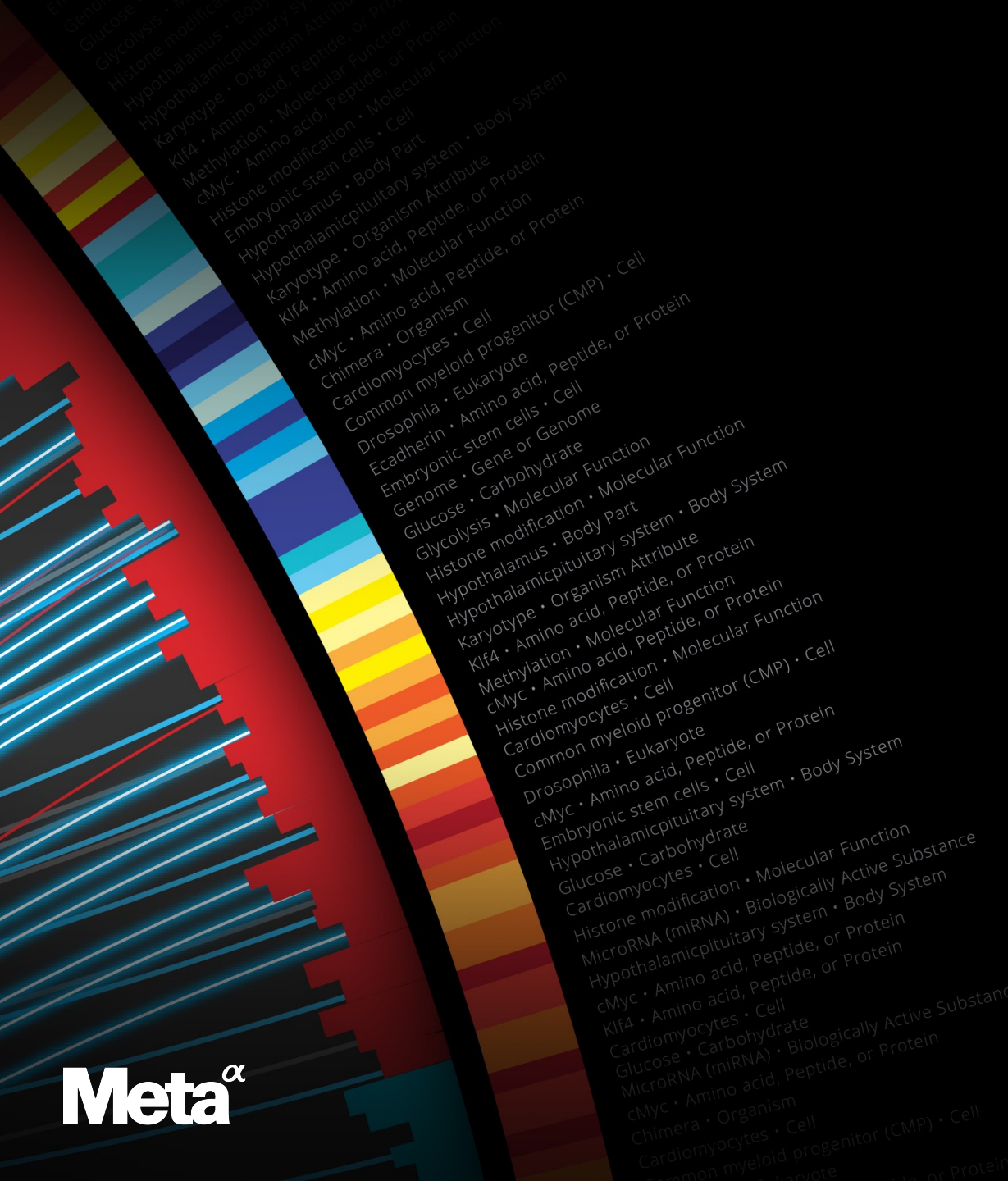


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Page 1

Abstract

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NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION: PREVALENCE, RISK FACTORS AND COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTION

WAH-YUN LOW, Yew-Kong Lee and ALEXANDER LOURDES SAMY

University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Faculty of Medicine

Abstract

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) rank as the major cause of death and disability worldwide. The most common NCDs are cardiovascular diseases (CVD), **Diabetes** and chronic respiratory diseases. With the rapid increase in NCD-related deaths in Asia Pacific countries, NCDs are one of the major causes of deaths and disease burden in the region. **NCD** impedes achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). People in the low socioeconomic group are most affected by NCDs as they have poor access to policies, legislation, regulation and healthcare services meant to control NCDs. This results in loss of productivity by a decreasing labor force with implications at the macroeconomic level. The 3 major NCDs in the Asia Pacific region are a decreasing labor force, with implications at the macroeconomic level. The 3 major NCDs in the Asia Pacific region are a decreasing labor force, with implications at the macroeconomic level. The 3 major NCDs in the Asia Pacific region are a decreasing labor force, with implications at the macroeconomic level. **CVD** and diabetes due to the increasing level of disability adjusted life years (DALY) of heart and cerebrovascular diseases, respectively, are the leading causes of disability-adjusted life years and disability. The strategies to combat NCDs in the Asia Pacific region are as follows: population-based dietary salt reduction, health education, psychological interventions, i.e., cognitive behavioral therapy and motivational-interviewing, taxation and bans on tobacco-related advertisements, implementing smoke-free zones and surveillance by the World Health Organization. Control measures must focus on prevention and strengthening inter-sectoral collaboration.

Key words:

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), Urbanization, Hypertension, Obesity, Community-based prevention, Inter-sectoral collaboration

INTRODUCTION

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are the pivotal cause of disease burden and mortality in the Asia Pacific region, claiming 55% of total life in the South East Asia region each year and 75% in the Western Pacific region [1,2]. The Asia Pacific region is experiencing a rapid increase in NCD-related deaths; the World Health Organization estimates that the highest worldwide increment in total

mortality in a 10-year time frame (2005–2015) will be observed in the South-East Asia and Western Pacific regions with 21% increase in the South-East Asia region [3] and 12.3 million deaths in the Western Pacific region [2]. This increase in NCDs presents a major barrier to global development, specifically to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals [4] in low-and-middle-income countries.

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