

Atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease in Taiwan: a public health priority



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EUROPEAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TAIWAN
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《Highlights from the Report》

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a leading cause of death and disability, accounting for almost one third of all deaths worldwide. Atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD) is a major contributor to the burden of CVD, accounting for an estimated 85 percent of cases globally. Yet when identified early, up to 90 percent of CVD deaths are preventable.

ASCVD is an important public health priority in Taiwan, with **40 percent people at risk** of developing this life-threatening disease. The four modifiable risk factors are all highly prevalent in Taiwan, including **hyperlipidemia** (44-58%)*, **hypertension**(25%), **diabetes**(10%) and **smoking**(13%).

Among the four risk factors, **hyperlipidemia is Taiwan's fastest growing threat**. Unlike hypertension or hyperglycemia, which are often accompanied by pain or discomfort, patients with **hyperlipidemia can be asymptomatic**, they do not feel unwell until the condition reaches severe stages. It is easy to treat however significantly undertreated, as many citizens do not recognize it as a serious condition and the adherence to best practice treatments is low. The Report set out six population health recommendations to reduce the burden of ASCVD, they are:

1. Develop a targeted **public health awareness campaign** that emphasize the importance of early detection and ongoing treatment of ASCVD risk factors.
2. Increase **screening of ASCVD risk factors** in young people to enable activation of primary prevention strategies, in line with clinical guidelines.
3. Develop a strategy for **continuous upskilling of primary care physicians** on ASCVD to improve compliance with clinical guidelines.
4. Develop a **framework for follow-up care** that empowers primary care physicians in the ongoing monitoring and management of patients with ASCVD.
5. Partner with cardiac specialists and medical societies to develop **patient education resources** on ASCVD prevention and treatment.
6. **Expand patient access** to therapies in line with clinical guidelines and global best practice.

These recommendations will lead to an estimated 19,115 lives saved and 229,385 non-fatal CVD events avoided in the first five years. There is an opportunity for policy makers to commit to this multifaceted program to reduce the impact of CVD and improve the health of the next generation.

*Note: The prevalence numbers are referenced from research papers, while Nutrition and Health Survey by Health Promotion Administration 2017-2020 result shows dyslipidemia prevalence around 26%.

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《Call for action: Do you know your cholesterol number?》