



In Vietnam, 25 percent of adults have hypertension, but less than half are aware of their condition. PATH

Hypertension In Vietnam

The economy of Vietnam is growing, but so are the number of citizens with chronic noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), such as high blood pressure (also known as hypertension).

Hypertension alone currently leads to 21 percent of all deaths per year in Vietnam. Around 25 percent of adults in Vietnam have this condition, but less than half of those affected know they have it.¹

Of those that know they have hypertension, only 13 percent are effectively controlling their blood pressure.²

The government of Vietnam has committed to a National NCD Prevention and Management Strategy and aims to contain the proportion of adults with hypertension to less than 30 percent by 2025.³ However, the current health system is set up to react to acute conditions and infectious diseases. It does not yet have the capacity or experience to support the effective early detection, diagnosis, and people-centered management of hypertension needed to achieve this goal.

A New Model For Hypertension Control

PATH is collaborating with the Novartis Foundation and the Ho Chi Minh City Provincial Health Department and Preventive Medicine Center to introduce Communities for Healthy Hearts: a cutting-edge health care delivery model that engages health leaders, the community, the public health system, and the private sector in improving hypertension awareness, management, and control in Vietnam.

“The number of patients who have been examined and are being monitored by the Ward 9 health station has significantly increased: more than 6,000 people in this area have now had their blood pressure checked. I see this model is very effective.”

Dr. Nguyen Thanh Dien
Head of the Ward 9 Commune Health Station in District 8,
Ho Chi Minh City

THE THREE-YEAR PROGRAM AIMS TO IMPROVE BLOOD PRESSURE CONTROL AMONG ADULTS BY:

- 1. Increasing awareness** of hypertension and demand for blood pressure screening.
- 2. Increasing quality and availability of people-centered services** for prevention, detection, treatment, and management of hypertension.
- 3. Reducing loss to follow-up** by promoting client-health provider contact and empowering people with hypertension to self-manage their condition.
- 4. Enabling country-level decision-makers** to translate the evidence and models from Communities for Healthy Hearts into policy, to improve blood pressure control across Vietnam.

The model is being piloted in four districts of Ho Chi Minh City-Go Vap, Thu Duc, District 8, and District 12-which have a combined population of approximately two million people, including around 700,000 people aged 40 years and above and therefore at higher risk of hypertension.

Our Approach

Increasing awareness of hypertension and demand for blood pressure screening:

Communities for Healthy Hearts uses a diverse communication campaign that employs traditional media, online channels, and community events, to create a sense of urgency around hypertension and its complications. Key messages aim to raise awareness of hypertension, encourage healthy lifestyle choices, and promote the importance of regular screening.

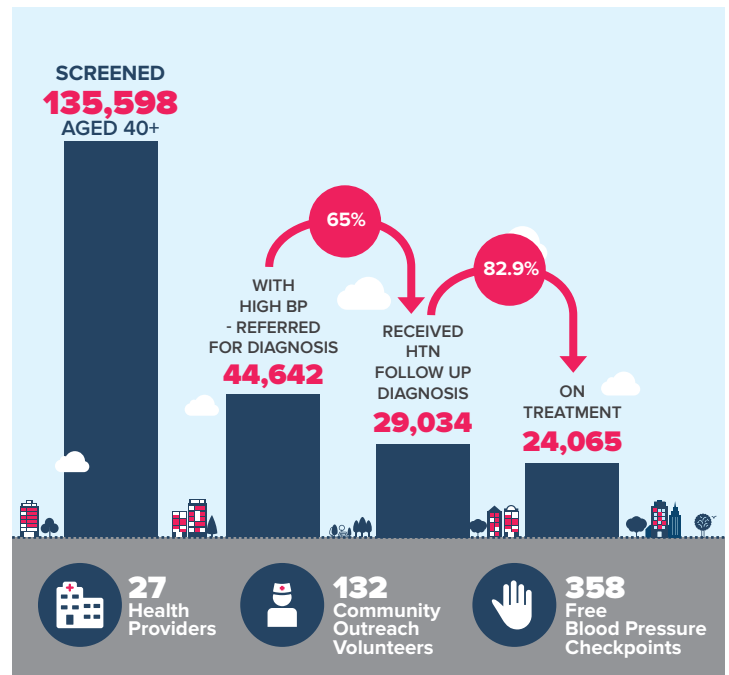
Increasing quality and availability of people-centered hypertension services:

Checking blood pressure regularly is key to preventing and detecting hypertension. Communities for Healthy Hearts has brought screening and referral services closer to home by working with community outreach volunteers, local businesses, and social enterprises to establish over 490 free checkpoints in non-traditional yet convenient locations, such as community leaders' homes, local markets and tea shops. Between September 2016 and June 2018, 135,598 people aged 40 and above were screened for hypertension by Communities for Healthy Heart volunteers. 44,642 people (32.9 percent) had high blood pressure and were referred to a public or private health facility for diagnosis, treatment, and management (if required).

Communities for Healthy Hearts has established a network connecting over 70 public and private facilities, each committed to offering standardized hypertension services and case management. Quality and consistency of care is reinforced by ongoing training, supportive supervision, and a peer clinician support group. So far, 54.5 percent of people with elevated blood pressure at screening (and 82.6 percent of those diagnosed) are now on treatment—much higher than the national rate of diagnosis and treatment (13 percent).⁴

Reducing loss to follow-up and empowering people with hypertension to self-care:

Effective case management is crucial for controlling hypertension. Under Communities for Healthy Hearts, community volunteers and primary healthcare workers are trained to provide people-centered long-term support. This is made easier and more efficient by Communities for Healthy Hearts' eHTN.Tracker, the first digital patient tracker for NCD management in Vietnam. The tracker enables health care workers at all levels to follow patients throughout their hypertension journey, and also links to an SMS reminder service that supports patients to adhere to treatment and live healthier lives.



The Communities for Healthy Hearts service delivery cascade, September 2016-July 2018. PATH

Enabling country-level decision-makers to improve blood pressure control across Vietnam:

Communities for Healthy Hearts is a pilot program, testing innovative approaches to hypertension for eventual replication and scale-up in Vietnam. To ensure local buy-in and understanding of the models, Communities for Healthy Hearts has worked side-by-side with the local health authorities, every step of the way. Project data and the eHTN.Tracker provide policy makers with ongoing evidence of successful approaches and the hypertension burden in Ho Chi Minh City. Communities for Healthy Hearts is also ensuring that hypertension and NCDs become a national priority, successfully advocating for the establishment of a National Technical Working Group for NCDs at the Ministry of Health.

In 2018 the Communities for Healthy Hearts model will be evaluated for effectiveness, scalability, and sustainability. The results will be provided to the Ministry of Health for their consideration in building and financing a comprehensive NCD program in Vietnam.

1. Son PT, Quang N, Viet NL, et al. "Prevalence, awareness, treatment and control of hypertension in Vietnam – results from a national survey." *Journal of Human Hypertension*. 2012;26(4):268–280
2. Vietnam Ministry of Health (MOH). *National Survey on the Risk Factors of Non-communicable Diseases (STEPS)*. Hanoi, Vietnam: MOH; 2016.
3. Vietnam MOH. *National Strategy on Prevention and Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Asthma, and Other Non-communicable Diseases Period 2015-2025*. Hanoi, Vietnam: MOH; 2015
4. Vietnam MOH. *STEPS*. Hanoi, Vietnam: MOH; 2016.