

AReduction of Unhealthy Dietary Patterns Causing Non-Communicable Diseases: A Health Promotion Intervention in Karuwalagashinna Village Anuradhapura District, Sri Lanka

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Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) cause more than three quarter of all deaths in Sri Lanka. Unhealthy dietary patterns, smoking, physical inactivity and alcohol consumption are the key risk factors of NCDs. Among them, unhealthy dietary patterns play a major role in developing NCDs. A Health promotion intervention was designed to address unhealthy dietary patterns of mothers and children in Karuwalagashinna village in Anuradhapura district, Sri Lanka with the aim to reduce their NCDs risk. The sample size was 33 families. Determinants affecting NCDs were discussed with mothers and children separately. They identified that high consumption of sugar, salt and coconut oil as the major three underlying unhealthy dietary factors affecting NCDs and planned interventions to address these three main determinants. The intervention “SuwaPotha” (healthy book) is a book which is used to mark the amount of sugar, salt and oil consumption per month. Through suwapotha they determined the monthly consumption amount of these three dietary constituents and hence understood the amount that they could reduce. With the intervention, 45.4% of families reduced their sugar consumption while 15.1% and 21.2% of families reduced their salt and oil intake compared to the previous months. Participation of all mothers and children in this study showed that their knowledge on the risk factors of NCDs, have improved. It can be concluded that the health promotion approach is effective and vital to empower people in reducing their unhealthy dietary patterns.

Keywords: Non-communicable diseases, unhealthy dietary patterns, smoking, physical inactivity and alcohol consumption