

**Editorial****Cardiovascular Diseases in the Pakistan****Mohsin Masud Jan**

Editor

Pakistan Demographic Survey finds heart problems claimed 21.19 per cent or 317,850 people died due to heart attacks, heart failures and strokes in 2020. Interestingly, however, the Pakistan Demographic Survey 2020 at the same time says it is uncertain about the cause of death of 21.40 percent of people.

According to the key findings of Pakistan Demographic Survey 2020, which was released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics a couple of days back, Pakistan's Crude Death Rate (CDR) has come down slightly to 6.7 per 1,000 persons. At this rate, around 1.5 million people died in 2020 according to the latest census. Pakistan's population is 224.1 million.

Officials at the National Health Services, Regulations and Control (NHS,R&C) and Health Services Academy (HSA), Islamabad, confirmed that at the 6.7 Crude Death Rate, around 1.5 million deaths occurred in the country in 2020, while Cardiovascular Disease (CVD), including heart diseases and strokes combined, caused most of the deaths in Pakistan.

According to the findings of the Pakistan Demographic Survey, cardiac diseases including heart attacks and heart failure alone were responsible for 14.74 or 221,100 deaths while strokes resulted in 6.45 per cent or 96,750 deaths.

Without elaborating on the causes, the demographic survey declares fever as the second leading cause of death in Pakistan, where around 9.28 per cent or 139,200 deaths were caused by fevers.

The demographic survey further reveals that diabetes was the third leading cause of the death in Pakistan where 5.63 per cent or 84,450 people died due to diabetic complications, while around 5.50 per cent of total deaths or 82,500 people died due to different types of cancers.

Respiratory illnesses including asthma were responsible for the deaths of 7.49 per cent of all the deaths in the country, which means that 112,350 million people died due to upper and lower respiratory tract infections and

illnesses. These deaths, however, do not include Covid-19 related deaths.

Severe diarrhoea because of acute gastroenteritis was responsible for more than 3.15 per cent or 47,550 deaths, the demographic survey said, while Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) caused deaths of 2.77 per cent or 41,550 deaths in the country in 2020.

Post Natal Complications or deaths from 29th day of birth to the remaining 11 months of the first year resulted in 2.17 or 32,550 deaths, the demographic survey states while viral hepatitis including Hepatitis B and C caused 1.96 per cent or 29,400 deaths in 2020.

Traffic accidents caused 1.13 per cent or 16,950 deaths while other injuries resulted in 1.06 per cent or 15,900 deaths. Covid-19 resulted in 1.01 per cent of the total deaths in Pakistan in 2020, which means that around 15,150 people died due to the pandemic in its first year.

According to the demographic survey, around 0.55 per cent of the total deaths or 8,250 people were killed in the country in 2020, while 0.25 per cent or 3,750 people committed suicide in 2020. The demographic survey also found that around 0.16 per cent or 2,400 people also died due to surgical complications and medical errors of the health professionals.

Interestingly, the causes of 21.40 per cent of deaths or of 321,000 people were not known, the demographic survey said. Previously, Covid was the leading cause of death in the country according to the figures released by the "World Health Organization (WHO).

The "WHO believes that around 29 per cent of the total deaths occurred due to cardiovascular disease in Pakistan which includes both heart diseases and strokes. It means that now non-communicable diseases which are preventable are now taking more lives than infectious diseases including hepatitis, dengue, Covid-19, pneumonia and other infections. There must be an excellent cardiac center in the big cities of whole country but at least one cardiac center should be provided at least divisional level of the country by the Government.