



## **MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

### *Ministry of Health Marks World Hypertension Day with Free Blood Pressure Screenings*

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*Almost one in four Kenyans is living with high blood pressure – one of the main risk factors for developing cardiovascular disease (CVD)*

**NAIROBI, Kenya, May 17 2017**– The Ministry of Health in conjunction with the Kenya Cardiac Society (KCS) and other stakeholders commemorated World Hypertension Day at a high profile event held at the Uhuru Park today. This event forms part of the recently launched month-long campaign - PIMA PRESSURE - that aims to encourage Kenyans to have their blood pressure measured.

The 2017 edition of the World Hypertension Day was observed by a procession from Kencom to Uhuru Park and culminated with formal statements by representatives of the Ministry of Health, the Nairobi County Government, Healthy Heart Africa, AMREF Africa, The Red Cross, MSF and the University of Nairobi. At the event, various screening points were set up and provided free screenings to members of the public.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Pacifica Onyacha, Head of Directorate of Health Standards, Quality Assurance and Regulations at the Ministry of Health said “Sadly more than half of Kenyans have never had their blood pressure measured. Only by having your blood pressure checked regularly can you avoid developing serious health problems in the future. It is for this reason that we mark World Hypertension Day with the recognition that we need to take urgent action to raise awareness of the risk factors for developing cardiovascular disease if we are to address this serious health threat.”

In addition to the World Hypertension Day activities, the Ministry is implementing free screenings in various counties at health facilities and institutions throughout May as part of the Pima Pressure

campaign, which is part of the May Measurement Month. During the month of May alone, The Ministry plans to screen at least 200,000 people and will provide cardiovascular health education at the national and community level.

### **Notes to Editors**

- May Measurement Month (MMM) is a worldwide screening initiative aimed at highlighting the need for increased blood pressure awareness among the people in the month of May. The month of May features heightened advocacy for Cardiovascular Diseases and this year we have 2 major activities planned to raise awareness and educate the public about CVD. These are MMM and World Hypertension Day.
- Globally, the initiative is spearheaded by the International Society for Hypertension (ISH) and the World Hypertension League (WHL).

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