Preventative Healthcare in Post-Soviet Armenia: Providing Education and Screenings to Expand Awareness of Noncommunicable Diseases
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BACKGROUND
- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for over 75% of annual deaths globally
- Cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and respiratory disease are the most prominent NCDs which, while typically unique to the developed world, are growing in prominence in post-soviet nations
- In Armenia, mortality from preventable NCDs is over 90%
- Global Health Armenia (GHA) conducted a collaborative multidisciplinary project providing education in NCD prevention and free health screenings, along with encouraging participants to follow up with their community physicians

METHODS
- GHA collaborated with local organizations, Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) and the Armenian Ministry of Health (Figure 3)
- Medical and Global Health students from YSMU served with GHA students as interpreters to provide health screenings and health educational services to the Armenian community
- Outreach events were conducted in Gyumri, Yerevan, Ararat, Talin and Martuni, achieving both urban and rural contact (Figure 1)

RESULTS
- Health screenings (BMI, blood pressure, glucose, and cholesterol) were performed to assess risk factors for chronic disease
- Screening sessions included results-based NCD risk-reduction counseling using approved educational materials (Figure 2)
- Additional counseling in nutrition and breast cancer awareness was also provided (Figure 4)
- Over 600 participants attended outreach events and had their BMI, blood pressure, heart rate and glucose measured
- Over 160 cholesterol measurements (LDL, HDL and total) were taken
- 800 educational handouts were provided to participants and local providers to share with the community

CONCLUSION
- Support and collaboration from the MOH and YSMU enabled the development of a program that was well-received by local healthcare providers and the Armenian populace
- Due to the positive response from participants we hope to build upon this foundation to continue improving access to health resources, as well as establishing better screening practices by local providers

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REFERENCES