SL Lessons on Reducing Tobacco and Alcohol Harm

Dr Diyanath Samarasinghe Former Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

One contributor to the significant reductions in tobacco and alcohol harm in Sri Lanka, over the last 25 years or so, is the active role of the public. Numerous groups have worked to understand, analyse and address the underlying causes of substance use problems and to address those that they can change. To engage and enthuse people to take the lead in this kind of initiative, professionals must acquire not only the skills but also the mindset needed. These are present to different degrees in each of us and can best be improved through collective efforts.