SUMMER INSTITUTE
Understanding Commercial Determinants of Health

Brief description
This course introduces and discusses the concept of commercial determinants of health and provides a conceptual framework for its understanding.

Summary
The growing burden of non-communicable diseases and injuries (NCDIs) is a key global health challenge. In 2017, 45.5 million people died globally from NCDIs; more than 75% of this burden occurred in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) (IHME, 2018). The complex and multifactorial etiology of NCDIs is influenced by a wide range of individual, social, environmental, political, cultural, economic and commercial determinants (Knai et al., 2018). While public health analysis has always looked at the power of big corporations, now when the world is four years post agreement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is critically important for global public health community to acknowledge threats to health from corporate sector, discuss them in more systematic way and prepare to confront the challenges through multi-sectoral action.

If you are interested in global health, concerned about the rapidly growing burden of NCDIs especially in LMICs setting and are curious to learn about the new concept of commercial determinants of health (CDH), this course will allow you to explore the concept, appreciate how commercial determinants impact global health, analyze them by applying conceptual frameworks and discuss effective approaches for addressing them. The goal of this course is to explore the relatively new concept of commercial determinants of health, their drivers and channels and focus on conceptual understanding and frameworks for commercial determinants as key to improving public health.

The course will review and discuss three specific commercial products/industries to demonstrate the application of the framework as a challenge to achieving SDGs. It will focus on risks like alcohol, consumption of processed food and beverages and speed to show case how industry promotes products that are fundamentally harmful to health. It will also provide an explanatory narrative around how such commercial interests take advantage of multi-sectoral action for health.
Learning objectives
Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:
1) Define the concept of commercial determinants of health and analyze dynamics of common drivers, channels and outcomes that constitute commercial determinants of health
2) Describe the role of commercial determinants of health in global and national health burden, analyze the construction of their risks and assess the issues in measuring their influence
3) Define the tactics that industries use to influence health policy and synthesize their strategies that undermine effective health programs
4) Examine conceptual frameworks to analyze commercial determinants of health and apply public health approach for addressing them at national and global levels
5) Describe different commercial determinants of health (e.g. guns, alcohol, tobacco, sugar) and compare them with each other
6) Explore ethical and social issues related to commercial determinants of health and inquire what public health can do to counter effects of commercial determinants of health

Required texts
There is no required textbook for this course. There will be articles for each session as readings. Readings will be available electronically and should be completed prior coming to class sessions.

Methods of assessment
Your conceptual understanding and practical knowledge will be assessed through participation in class discussions, online forum, structured academic controversy and final paper submission.
Dr. Paichadze is Assistant Research Professor in the Department of Global Health at the Milken Institute School of Public Health, the George Washington University. Her research focuses on non-communicable diseases (NCDs), injury prevention, digital health and research capacity development in low- and middle-income countries. Her research interests include utilizing mobile technologies for optimizing data systems on NCDs and associated risk factors, using the data for defining gaps in the management of chronic conditions and understanding the impact of commercial determinants on health outcomes. She is interested in applying digital behavior change approaches to mitigate the burden of NCD risk factors among adolescents and youth and metabolic and physiological changes in older adults. Dr. Paichadze holds a Master of Public Health degree from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, where she also completed her postdoctoral fellowship and a medical degree from Tbilisi State University, in Tbilisi, Georgia.
Dr. Adnan Hyder is Senior Associate Dean for Research and Professor of Global Health at the Milken Institute School of Public Health of George Washington University. Previously, Dr. Hyder served as the Associate Chair of the Department of International Health and Director of the Health Systems Program at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He was also previously Associate Director for Global Programs at the Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics and founding Director of the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit.

For over 20 years, Dr. Hyder has worked to improve global health in low- and middle-income countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East; and pioneered empirical work around health systems, ethics, and injury prevention in the developing world. Dr. Hyder has co-authored over 300 scientific peer-reviewed papers and numerous world reports on road safety, child injuries, and health systems. Dr. Hyder received his M.D. from the Aga Khan University, Pakistan and obtained his MPH and Ph.D. in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University, USA.