

# My Child Matters: An initiative of the Sanofi Espoir Foundation



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The Sanofi Espoir Foundation was created in October 2010 to consolidate more than 20 years of commitment to national and international solidarity.

To fulfill its mission of reducing inequalities in health, the Sanofi Espoir Foundation focuses its activities on the child (childhood cancer in low- and middle-income countries) as well as on the mother-child unit (maternal and neonatal health because inequalities start even before birth) and on the family-child unit (especially in situations of very great vulnerability: conflicts, population displacements, precariousness).

The Foundation naturally responds to humanitarian emergencies, but focuses primarily on long-term partnerships to act on such recurrent issues as education and prevention, training and access to care.

Its action is based on the vision that a three-pronged demographic, climatic and epidemiological transition is changing the framework of humanitarian aid (emergency interventions), social action (reintegrating lost individuals into their society and, above all caring for them) and human development (the structured approach to education, health and social protection). It is also driving the Foundation to initiate changes of its own: strengthening its approach by using new technologies such as development tools (e.g. e-Health) and cultivating a global, transnational and horizontal approach to combat global phenomena that are highly interdependent and interconnected.

The Sanofi Espoir Foundation provides:

- ⇒ Financial support, for health projects developed by humanitarian associations or NGOs that are Foundation partners.
- ⇒ Donation of health products, framed by a charter based on

the guiding principles of the World Health Organization, as part of the response to health crises.

- ⇒ Contribution of expertise – provision of internal Sanofi Group experts or external synergies to aid projects and partners supported by the Foundation.
- ⇒ Human resource input – involvement of Group employees in actions supporting the Foundation's partners.

## The origin and purpose of the My Child Matters programme

The Sanofi Espoir Foundation, which is involved in the development of specific health programmes in emerging countries, conceived in 2005 a unique international initiative, the My Child Matters programme, which is entirely devoted to helping children with cancer in low- and middle-income countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania and Europe to benefit from early diagnosis and access to care according to the international standards.

## Why paediatric oncology?

The incidence of paediatric cancers is estimated at 300,000 new cases each year. Focusing on paediatric oncology in low- and middle-income countries could appear as a paradox in countries where basic health services such as primary care are still unaffordable for the majority of the citizens. Nevertheless, structuring services devoted to children affected with cancer means conceiving a comprehensive holistic system able to reply to complex healthcare needs which are the result of clinical (diagnosis, treatment, pain control, end of life) to psychosocial

(schooling, family socio-professional environment, etc.) characteristics/parameters. Structuring a paediatric oncology offer is therefore a pedagogic exercise leading to a healthcare model that can be adapted and modulated in other fields because the services are structured on the basis of patient needs on not on their organizing principles.

### What can My Child Matters do?

My Child Matters aims to accompany and support teams willing to build up a paediatric oncology strategy and implementation programmes in low- and middle-income countries all over the world. Through a call for proposals process, the support provided translates into expertise on the projects submitted, ad hoc training in leadership and project management for the candidates, sharing knowledge on global initiatives, favouring communication actions such as participation in congresses and scientific publications.

In each country that benefited from its support, My Child Matters is considered as the first milestone of a structuring approach in the paediatric oncology environment.

### Who is My Child Matters?

A dedicated team (Medical Director and Programme Manager) pilot this action. Several partners are also involved, in particular SIOP (International Society of Pediatric Oncology), the City Cancer Challenge, the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital AMCC (International Alliance Against Cancer), GFAOP (Franco-African Pediatric Oncology Group), and other international organizations involved in fighting childhood cancers.

An Expert Committee has an advisory board role. It comprises international experts in the field of paediatric oncology. During the call for the proposal evaluation process it is convened to propose strategic recommendations, to assess the progress of each on-going project and validate the funding release for the next year.

A mentor is assigned to each project awarded: he/she accompanies each leader in order to achieve the successful implementation of their objectives.

### Where is My Child Matters in 2019?

To date 58 projects in 42 countries have been supported. In several countries the impacts of this initiative has been proved and are the subject of publications in prestigious journals such as *Lancet Oncology* (1). Of the 26,861 children per year who develop cancer in the ten index countries with My Child Matters projects, that were evaluated in 2006, an estimated additional

Figure 1: The My Child Matters network and its successes



Figure 2: My Child Matters project leaders and mentors from all over the world. Paris, March 2019



1,343 children can now expect an increase in survival outcomes. In Paraguay, the projects supported by My Child Matters have reduced the drop-out rate to zero (2).

But being successful does not mean that we should stop thinking about how to improve the support provided by this programme for the benefit of children affected with cancer. For example, following the last call for proposals, 24 projects have been selected for being potentially accompanied. Among them, several came from teams which have been already supported thus suggesting the possibility of developing a sustainability strategy by the Foundation for the local teams. Furthermore, thanks also to this programme, the standards of care in the selected countries have tended to improve. This is witnessed by the increased quality in terms of the scientific profile of the submitted projects. Nevertheless, this process gives rise to a more competitive call probably generating a gap between low- and middle-income countries. Should we therefore conceive an *ad hoc* strategy addressed to low-income countries?

Another issue is also to capitalize the experience achieved by favouring the exchanges within the My Child Matters community and the emergence of an international network to share knowledge, skills as well as tools. ■

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29726390>
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25929610>

# My Child Matters Nursing Awards 2015-2018

**Sanofi Espoir Foundation with acknowledgements to Julia Challinor and Christina Baggott,  
International Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOP) Nursing Group**

**B**uilding on the successful “My Child Matters” funding program for children and adolescents with cancer in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) initiative launched in 2006, the Sanofi Espoir Foundation announced at the 2015 International Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOP) summit in Toronto a new initiative for “My Child Matters” funding for nurses in these settings in collaboration with SIOP. Applicants were requested to develop and highlight innovative approaches to nursing service and practice, to improve the care and quality-of-life of children with cancer by focusing on education, professional practice or research. Applications were accepted in French, Spanish and English and reviewers with expertise in these settings and fluent in these three languages were identified from the SIOP nursing network.

As one of the few supporters of paediatric oncology nursing care in LMICs, the Sanofi Espoir Foundation, in partnership with SIOP, has shown leadership in the improvement of nursing care for the 80% of children and adolescents with cancer who live in resource-poor areas around the world. The nurses who received the funding have highlighted the wide range of nursing practice areas for improvement and demonstrated that positive change is possible in the quality of life of the patients and families they attend.

➔ **2015 – 10 Award winners.** They were announced at the SIOP Annual Conference in Cape Town and a second round of awards launched.

In the first call for applications 38 were received from 25 LMICs. Led by the SIOP Nursing Committee Chair, the applications were reviewed by a paediatric oncologist and expert paediatric oncology nurses who lived in LMICs or had experience working in those settings. The top scoring projects were selected for funding and included nurses from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Cameroon, Pakistan, India, Ghana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, China, Mexico, GFAOP (consortium of 18 Francophone African countries) and Burkina Faso.

➔ **2016 – 10 Award winners.** Presentation of two completed My Child Matters Nursing Awards on the projects’ success and impact were given during SIOP Annual Conference in Dublin and the third round of Awards were to be given for a two-year period instead of only one-year.

Figure 3: Map of countries that have received nursing funding through “My Child Matters Nurses Awards” since 2015.



A total of 27 eligible applications were received from 19 countries, all were reviewed and top scoring abstracts from Mexico, Colombia, India, Ghana, Iraq, GFAOP, Central African Republic, Pakistan and Indonesia were awarded funding as follows.

➔ **2017** Presentation of two completed My Child Matters Nursing Awards on projects’ success and impact during SIOP Annual Conference in Washington, DC and launch of the third round of Awards.

➔ **2018 – 5 Award winners for two-year projects.** Announcement at the SIOP Annual Conference in Kyoto and presentations by two 2016 awardees on the projects’ success and impact.

63 applications were received from 33 countries, so a decision was made to exclude upper-middle-income countries from eligibility. The review committee selected the following highest scoring projects to receive the Sanofi Espoir Foundation awards from Zimbabwe, Vietnam, El Salvador, Tanzania and Cambodia.

➔ **2019** The Sanofi Espoir Foundation will launch the fourth round of Nurses Awards at SIOP Annual Conference in Lyon, France in October this year. If you are interested in submitting your project, make use the contact details below

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