

CANCER CONTROL 2022 SURVEY

How have the current global difficulties affected your institution's support for cancer care projects in poorer-resourced settings?

City Cancer Challenge (C/Can)

"C/Can was built on the principle of locally-driven action to ensure sustainable local change. Therefore, COVID-19 did not hit our operations and helped shift the focus to comprehensive health system preparedness. However, travel restrictions in Asia delayed the onboarding of new cities. The reallocation of government funding to Ukraine required that we substitute ODA with private sector funding. We observe a disconnect between global conversations and the local countries' priorities."



The Commonwealth of Nations

"The COVID-19 pandemic has presented major health care challenges in the Commonwealth, including financial and access-related struggles across the cancer care spectrum and particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Immediate priorities for research and interruptions have hampered our global efforts in further advancements for cancer treatments. There is urgent need to get back on track through developing stronger investment, resource mobilization and enabling access to medicines for cancer projects, particularly in poorer resourced countries.

Our work with the Lancet Commission to develop a stronger investment case, and our work with the Commonwealth's International Taskforce for Cervical Cancer Elimination, are key initiatives to help us address these issues in the equitable provision of cancer care. From an advocacy perspective, we are pleased to have the support of Commonwealth First Spouses of Heads of Government, to champion efforts towards elimination of cervical cancer.

Moreover, the establishment of evidence-based policies for sustainable and equitable cancer care and control are more vital than ever to support our Commonwealth commitment to addressing NCDs and elimination of cervical cancer, considering the resource limitations for cancer care programmes in LMICs. The only way to overcome the growing burden of cancer in the developing world is working in partnership and act as one global society."

Professor Ruth Kattumuri, Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat



European Society of Medical Oncology (ESMO)

"ESMO harnessed modern technology to create digital



platforms for educational events, which allowed health professionals to continue attending and accessing content on demand. In 2020, ESMO offered free access to all of its members for its first ever virtual congress. Virtual access also allowed more participation from cancer professionals from low- and middle-income countries. ESMO plans to offer virtual access to its meetings so that everyone everywhere has the possibility to attend, especially members from countries with less resources."

Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research (GFMER)

Gaps in health systems became evident globally during the COVID-19 pandemic affecting cancer services hugely despite existing national policies on noncommunicable diseases and essential health services. Empowering communities to demand investments in cancer management in national and district health plans is crucial. GFMER provided free short online public health education on challenges in low- and middle income countries, causing one death due to cancer every five seconds, and guiding implementation of evidence-based policy decisions at the grassroots level."

Meena N Cherian and Jyotsna Agarwal



GFMER

Global Power of Nursing (GPON)

"The Global Power of Oncology Nursing (GPON) was established during International Year of Nursing in 2020 as part of London Global Cancer Week.



GPON brings the voice of nurses caring for patients at risk or with cancer, especially in settings with poor treatment access, and focuses attention on their challenges and solutions worldwide. Current global difficulties have made GPON shout even louder to support nurses, addressing threats to their wellbeing, hitherto not prioritized by governments."

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)



“The current global difficulties, starting with the pandemic and currently with political tensions, have limited the ability of expert missions to travel to countries seeking expert missions for cancer control review. To this end, partners have sought ways using online convening to continue to work with available experts on the ground and international experts to provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening the cancer control system.”

International Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOP)



“Many SIOP members are engaged as international, regional and national volunteer experts in childhood cancer projects relying on financial support from high-income countries. COVID-19, new conflicts and economic crises have:

- ➔ diverted local and international NGO funding towards direct family support (e.g., travel and subsistence treatment costs);
- ➔ decreased staff in place and those available for specialist training opportunities;
- ➔ reduced funding for quality improvement and research projects;
- ➔ impacted time and travel for peer-to-peer support in local contexts;
- ➔ increased the burden of disease through late presentation with more advanced tumours.”

NIH NCI Center for Global Health



“The last two years have seen a recommitment by the NCI as a research institute to addressing cancer inequities in the United States and globally. This includes major new programmes designed to tackle key scientific gaps that impede cancer control efforts for people living in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), increased support for early career cancer researchers in LMICs, and expanded efforts to promote cancer control in LMICs informed by current scientific understanding.”

PATH



“When the COVID-19 pandemic began, the massive need for prevention, treatment, and vaccination meant that funding and focus shifted away from other important health areas, including cancer care. This had a significant impact on PATH’s ongoing efforts to detect, treat, and prevent breast cancer and cervical cancer. Today, countries are far behind meeting their cervical cancer elimination goals. However, the recent, renewed move toward integrated health care could provide new opportunities for person-centred care, which could strengthen early detection for cancer and increase access to oncology medicines.”

Roche



“During the pandemic, we have been doubling our efforts to ensure patients continue receiving the care they need. In the last 12 months alone, we opened three new cancer centres in Ghana and established the first national public access programme for cancer medicines in Kenya. We are exploring the potential of digital technologies which can significantly improve health outcomes, especially in remote areas. With the looming backlog of missed screenings, it is our priority to partner with stakeholders across sectors to create more resilient health systems and put cancer and other NCDs as a top priority of the UHC agenda.”

Two Worlds Cancer Collaboration (TWCC)



“Support for cancer care in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) has increased despite current global difficulties. Education, skills development, training and mentorship have transferred to virtual, internet-based formats, supporting palliative care, humanitarian aid and cancer control for adults and children, using Zoom, Project ECHO and WhatsApp technologies. Institutional and volunteer participation has increased in scope and scale. Funding has been reallocated to accommodate new activities and technologies, and is actively being expanded to increase commitment and collaboration with partners in LMICs.”

Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)



“UICC extended grants for membership fees to offset the difficulties in fundraising due to COVID-19. It reached out to members to hear their experiences and respond to their needs, and developed Virtual Dialogues, Master courses, virtual Fellowships and other online learning and exchange opportunities to support organizations on the ground. UICC also pursued advocacy at the highest levels to ensure that cancer was not forgotten in the pandemic and that our members’ voices were heard.”

World Ovarian Cancer Coalition



“We are working conscientiously to ensure that our collaborative projects in 24 low- and middle-income countries achieve their goals to improve survival and quality of life for women with ovarian cancer. In these challenging times, success can only be achieved through collaboration with those who share key goals. Understanding local context, contributing to national and global debates, setting clear priorities, and delivering simplified – yet compelling – messages, will improve visibility of the issues in those settings.”