

**WORLD
CANCER
DAY 2016**

WE CAN



**IMPROVE ACCESS
TO CANCER CARE**



ON 4 FEB

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WE CAN — IMPROVE ACCESS TO CANCER CARE



Closing the gap in access to affordable, quality cancer care is an imperative for maximising outcomes and quality of life for all people living with cancer, including children and adolescents.

Access to effective, quality cancer care should be embedded within a country's National Cancer Control Plan (NCCP). NCCPs should cover access to each of the critical components of a multidisciplinary approach encompassing supportive and palliative care, high-quality cancer medicines and effective cancer treatment modalities^{1,2}. This includes radiotherapy, which is recognised as an essential tool in the cure and palliation of cancer and is indicated in more than half of new cancer patients³. Additionally, resource-sensitive clinical guidelines can be used to assist with the planning and delivery of early detection and treatment^{4,5}. Addressing barriers to equitable access to quality cancer services should include the alleviation of cultural and structural issues e.g. transportation, as well as policies and programmes to improve the availability of a skilled cancer workforce.

Of equal importance is to address affordability of care to protect individuals and families from financial hardship as a consequence of out-of-pocket expenses. The provision of universal health coverage (UHC) and other social protection measures can play an important role in closing the unacceptable gaps in access to cancer services that occur in most low-resource settings.

WE CAN ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVED ACCESS TO CANCER TREATMENT AND SERVICES ACROSS THE CARE CONTINUUM. ALL PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO BENEFIT FROM THESE INTERVENTIONS ON EQUAL TERMS, REGARDLESS OF GEOGRAPHY AND WITHOUT SUFFERING ECONOMIC HARDSHIP AS A CONSEQUENCE.

1. International Cancer Control Partnership. Cancer Plans. <http://www.iccp-portal.org/cancer-plans>
2. Hogerzeil HV, Liberman J, Wirtz VJ, et al. (2013). Promotion of access to essential medicines for non-communicable diseases: practical implications of the UN political declaration. *Lancet*, 381, 680-9.
3. Delaney G, Jacob S, Featherstone C, Barton M. (2005). The role of radiotherapy in cancer treatment: estimating optimal utilization from a review of evidence-based clinical guidelines. *Cancer* 104, 1129-37.
4. WHO. (2013). WHO guidelines for screening and treatment of precancerous lesions for cervical cancer prevention. Geneva: World Health Organization.
5. Yip CH, Smith RA, Anderson BO, et al. (2008). Guideline Implementation for Breast Healthcare in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Early Detection Resource Allocation. *Cancer* 113, 2244-56