

WORLD CANCER DAY

World Cancer Day is the one initiative under which the entire world can unite in the fight against the global cancer epidemic. **It takes place every year on 4 February.** World Cancer Day aims to save millions of preventable deaths each year by raising awareness and education about cancer, and pressing governments and individuals across the world to take action against the disease.

WORLD CANCER DAY 2013

This year's World Cancer Day campaign will focus on Target 5 of the World Cancer Declaration: *Dispel damaging myths and misconceptions about cancer*, under the tagline "*Cancer - Did you know?*". World Cancer Day is a chance to raise our collective voices in the name of improving general knowledge around cancer and dismissing misconceptions about the disease. From a global level, we will be focusing our messaging on the four myths below. In addition to being in-line with our global advocacy goals, we believe these overarching myths leave a lot of flexibility for members, partners and supporters to adapt and expand on for their own needs.

- **Myth 1: Cancer is just a health issue**

Truth: Cancer is not just a health issue. It has wide-reaching social, economic, development, and human rights implications.

Fact: Cancer constitutes a major challenge to development, undermining social and economic advances throughout the world.

- **Myth 2: Cancer is a disease of the wealthy, elderly and developed countries**

Truth: Cancer does not discriminate. It is a global epidemic, affecting all ages, with low- and middle-income countries bearing a disproportionate burden.

Fact: Cancer is a global issue and becoming an increasing public health problem in developing countries.

- **Myth 3: Cancer is a death sentence**

Truth: Many cancers that were once considered a death sentence can now be cured and for many more people their cancer can now be treated effectively.

Fact: Advances in understanding risk and prevention, early detection and treatment have revolutionised the management of cancer leading to improved outcomes for patients.

- **Myth 4: Cancer is my fate**

Truth: With the right strategies, more than one in every three cancers can be prevented.

Fact: Prevention is the most cost-effective and sustainable way of reducing the global cancer burden in the long-term.

WHY WORLD CANCER DAY IS IMPORTANT

Put simply, because the global cancer epidemic is huge and is set to rise. Every year, nearly 8 million people die of cancer and many of these deaths can be avoided with increased governmental support and funding for prevention, detection and treatment programmes. Unless urgent action is taken to raise awareness about cancer and develop practical strategies to address the disease, millions of people will continue to die. Significantly, the number of cancer cases and related deaths worldwide is estimated to double over the next 20-40 years, with the greatest increase in low- and middle-income countries - those which are least equipped to cope with the social and economic impact of the disease. However, one in every three cancer cases could be prevented and World Cancer Day is the ideal opportunity to spread the word in order to help these numbers decrease for the future generations.

A CAMPAIGN DIRECTLY ALIGNED WITH GLOBAL ADVOCACY

In 2008, UICC developed the World Cancer Declaration as a tool to help bring the growing cancer crisis to the attention of government leaders and health policymakers. The 11 Declaration targets, designed to significantly reduce the global cancer burden by 2020, have served as the basis for UICC recommendations to the World Health Organization (WHO). The Declaration, with more than half a million signatories, has also been instrumental in generating political will for cancer control targets both at UN and grassroots levels. In close collaboration with the NCD Alliance, UICC played a key role recently in securing WHO's global health target of a 25% reduction in premature deaths from NCDs by 2025 (known as "25 by 25"), at the World Health Assembly in May 2012 - demonstrating the important role advocacy plays in the global fight against cancer.

WHO IS BEHIND THE DAY?

World Cancer Day is an initiative of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), a leading international non-governmental organisation dedicated to the prevention and control of cancer worldwide. Founded in 1933 and based in Geneva, UICC's growing membership of over 765 organisations across 155 countries, features the world's major cancer societies, ministries of health, research institutes, treatment centres and patient groups. Additionally, the organisation is a founding member of the NCD Alliance, a global civil society network that now represents almost 3,000 organisations in 170 countries.



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