



4th February 2022,

This World Cancer Day

CancerAware Nigeria is bridging the Cancer Care Gap in the country

This World Cancer Day 2022, **CancerAware Nigeria** calls on the Government of Nigeria to give the rising cancer incidence in the country the priority it requires, provide greater access to care for the populace and close the gap in cancer care.

“Close the care gap” is the theme of the new three-year campaign for World Cancer Day, one of the most important health awareness days in the year led by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) to promote greater equity in health care provision for all populations.

A statement from the Executive Director of CancerAware Nigeria, Tolulope Falowo reads in part, *‘The chances of surviving breast cancer can be above 90% if a woman is screened regularly and the cancer is detected in the early stages. However, in Nigeria, about 50% of women who develop breast cancer present with Stage 4 (metastatic) disease at diagnosis. This means that she only presents when the cancer has advanced enough and becomes difficult to treat. There is a huge disparity in the area of access to cancer care in Nigeria. Some of the factors responsible for this include;*

- *Socio-economic factors including poverty*
- *Ignorance*
- *Cultural beliefs*
- *Social norms and attitudes*
- *Limited knowledge and awareness of cancer that can lead to misinformation and misconceptions about cancer*
- *Difficulty in accessing prevention services, early detection and screening programmes, cancer and pain medicines, therapy and palliative care*
- *Inadequate referral systems*

- *Incorrect diagnosis*
- *Fear of diagnosis*
- *Ill-trained health workers*
- *Lack of national cancer screening programmes to help with prevention and early detection of common cancers.*
- *A dearth of well-equipped cancer treatment centres*
- *Inadequate funding resources available to help patients with the huge costs of cancer treatment.'*

'All hands must be on deck to reduce the incidence and fatalities from cancer in Nigeria. Cancer does not discriminate, it can happen to anyone. We must be aware of the risk factors for the common cancers. The awareness and information drive must reach every nook and cranny of the country. Also, it mustn't end at awareness, action must follow. We must take personal responsibility for our health.

Choosing healthy lifestyle habits, taking up regular cancer screening and annual general health checks, getting vaccinated against specific conditions, supporting cancer research, lobbying your elected officials to pass health care policies that will put cancer at the forefront of your country's healthcare discourse are just some of the ways you can help create a future without cancer.

The Government of Nigeria must invest in quality services that can help overcome health disparities and address inequities in health care provision and access for its people. Where you live should not determine if you live.'

To address the lack of information and knowledge around Metastatic Breast Cancer, **CancerAware Nigeria** and a group of oncology professionals in the country developed the **MobiPINK Metastatic Breast Cancer Project**. The project was supported by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) SPARC programme.

The goal of the project is to deliver better outcomes for both metastatic breast cancer patients and their caregivers by providing information and support for treatment navigation and care to them thereby improving the quality of life of patients in addition to providing resources and support for their caregivers in the course of the patient's treatment journey.

Since the programme kicked off in 2019, about 1000 patients and caregivers have benefited from it. **CancerAware** also launched the **Metastatic Breast Cancer Q & A Guide**, which answers pertinent questions around metastatic breast cancer.

Click [HERE](#) to download the Q & A Guide

ABOUT CANCERAWARE NIGERIA

CancerAware Nigeria is a health intervention charity with a focus on women's cancers specifically breast and gynaecological cancers. Their goal is to increase awareness about cancer, promote the prevention and early detection of these common cancers and offer support to those facing the disease.

Website: www.canceraware.org.ng

Email: talk@canceraware.org.ng

Twitter: [@CancerAwareNG](https://twitter.com/CancerAwareNG)

Instagram: [@canceraware_](https://www.instagram.com/canceraware_)

Tags:

CancerAware Nigeria

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

MobiPINK MBC Project

Tolulope Falowo

Tolu Falowo