

The World Cancer Declaration

A call to action from the global cancer community¹

We the global cancer community call on governments, international governmental organizations, the international donor community, development agencies, professional organizations, the private sector and all civil society to take immediate steps to slow and ultimately reverse the growth in deaths from cancer, by committing to the targets set out below and providing resources and political backing for the priority actions needed to achieve them.

Targets

By 2020:

- Sustainable delivery systems will be in place to ensure that effective cancer control programmes are available in all countries
- The measurement of the global cancer burden and the impact of cancer control interventions will have improved significantly
- Global tobacco consumption, obesity and alcohol intake levels will have fallen significantly
- Populations in the areas affected by HPV and HBV will be covered by universal vaccination programmes
- Public attitudes towards cancer will improve and damaging myths and misconceptions about the disease will be dispelled
- Many more cancers will be diagnosed when still localized through the provision of screening and early detection programmes and high levels of public and professional awareness about important cancer warning signs
- Access to accurate cancer diagnosis, appropriate cancer treatments, supportive care, rehabilitation services and palliative care will have improved for all patients worldwide
- Effective pain control measures will be available universally to all cancer patients in pain
- The number of training opportunities available for health professionals in different aspects of cancer control will have improved significantly
- Emigration of health workers with specialist training in cancer control will have reduced dramatically
- There will be major improvements in cancer survival rates in all countries

¹ At the World Cancer Congress in Washington DC in July 2006 the global cancer community united behind a call for urgent action to deal with the worldwide cancer crisis by launching the first World Cancer Declaration, which outlines the steps needed to begin to reverse the global cancer crisis by 2020. The declaration is a tool to help cancer advocates bring the growing cancer crisis to the attention of health policymakers at national, regional and global levels. It represents a consensus between foundations, national and international non-governmental and governmental organizations, professional bodies, the private sector, academia and civil society from all continents that are committed to the vision of eliminating cancer as a major threat for future generations. The World Cancer Declaration builds on Charter of Paris (February 2000), which was the first effort to mobilize the global cancer community to address the growing cancer crisis worldwide.

Priority actions

These targets are ambitious. During the past few years, however, there is growing evidence that concerted action can make a difference in a short time. We believe, therefore, that the targets can be achieved provided a number of priority actions are implemented.

Health policy

- Place cancer on the development agenda. Increase the political priority given to cancer by demonstrating that a country's investment in dealing with its growing cancer problem is an investment in the economic and social well-being of the country. Organizations concerned with cancer control should work with the global donor community, development agencies, the private sector and all civil society to invest in cancer control
- Mobilize stakeholders to ensure that strategies to control cancer globally are targeted at those who are most in need. Involve all major stakeholder groups in the development, or updating, of national cancer control policies
- Implement strategies that have been proven to bridge existing cancer surveillance gaps
- Increase efforts to involve cancer patients in cancer control planning at a local and national level

Cancer prevention and early detection

- Increase efforts to reduce tobacco consumption by encouraging governments to fully implement and enforce the FCTC
- Raise awareness about the need for culturally sensitive cancer risk reduction campaigns, along with public and professional education about cancer warning signs. Push governments to implement policies that will support risk-reducing strategies at a community level and enable individuals to make more informed consumption choices and adopt healthier behaviour
- Encourage governments to implement measures to reduce people's exposure to environmental and occupational carcinogens
- Undertake actions to ensure that vaccines and other strategies that are shown to prevent cancer-causing infections are made more widely available
- Advocate for the provision of affordable screening programmes for which there is evidence of efficacy in the population in question. Undertake pilot projects that are designed to evaluate the feasibility and efficacy in populations in which the screening technology has not yet been tested

Cancer treatment

- Promote the development and use of cancer treatment guidelines that are relevant to local needs and resources. Ensure that sufficient treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care facilities and well-trained staff are available to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of patients with cancer
- Take steps to tackle the many barriers to optimal pain control. Work with governments to address the over-regulation of pain medicines. Cooperate with international organizations, including the International Narcotics Control Board and the World Health Organization, to ensure that global implementation of the UN's international drug control conventions do not unduly interfere with legitimate efforts to advance access to pain medicines for cancer patients in pain
- Work with the pharmaceutical industry to increase access to cancer medicines that are affordable and of assured quality
- Increase the number of health professionals with expertise in all aspects of cancer control by providing specialist training opportunities and fellowships to enable professionals to study in specialist settings
- Raise awareness about the impact of health worker emigration on the ability of countries to provide adequate levels of cancer care and work collectively to address global and national health workforce shortages and the resultant deepening of inequity

Cancer research

- Increase investment in independent basic and applied cancer research and accelerate the translation of research findings into clinical and public health practice
- Encourage cancer research organizations in different countries to collaborate, share data and define complementary research objectives to optimize the use of the limited funds available for cancer research and reduce duplication of effort

Progressing towards the 2020 targets

- Through its member organizations, now more than 300 in over 100 countries, the International Union against Cancer (UICC) will promote partnerships and international collaboration aimed at accelerating progress towards achieving the 2020 targets
- Given the huge variability in cancer burden and service provision throughout the world, UICC will encourage members to use the World Cancer Declaration as a template to develop regional or national cancer declarations that can better reflect local needs and priorities and allow for more accurate quantification of targets where data exists
- UICC will take responsibility for preparing a report every two years on the progress made towards achieving the 2020 targets. These reports will be presented at the biennial World Cancer Congress