



CONCORD

Global surveillance
of cancer survival

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Newsletter no 11

September 2015

CONCORD-2 article in *The Lancet*

The summary article was published in print and online in [The Lancet](#) on 15 March 2015.

The article is “Open Access gold” (licence CC-BY): that means you can download it free of charge. The 175-page [web-appendix](#) is also Open Access gold. For details of how to navigate the web-appendix, go [here](#).

The article has been downloaded more than 43,000 times so far, and has been cited in 26 recent publications.

Press interest has been world-wide, with coverage in over 170 press, radio, TV and wire-service outlets in 27 countries (details in Newsletter 10). Huge public interest has also been reflected in world-wide social media coverage: the Altmetric score is 693, which ranks this article #22 (in the top 0.1%) among over 15,000 articles tracked in *The Lancet* (average score 18). It ranks #738 (in the top 0.002%) among more than 4.2 million articles tracked in all journals (average score 5).

The *Lancet* also published an [invited commentary](#) from the US National Cancer Institute. Linda Harlan and Joan Warren noted that the global analyses of cancer survival provide an opportunity for lessons from countries with successful cancer control initiatives to be applied to other regions, and that the availability of better data “**provides a clearer picture of the effect of cancer control programmes on the ultimate goal of improving survival and reducing the effect of cancer on the social and economic development of countries.**”

The *Lancet* has also published comments on the validity of the results for [Goiânia, Brazil](#), and on the [overall utility](#) of cancer survival estimates in cancer control, along with our [reply](#).

CONCORD-2 results in cancer atlases

Some of the CONCORD-2 survival estimates are now accessible in interactive cancer atlases.

The American Cancer Society’s online Cancer Atlas was launched on 24 July 2015. The atlas contains maps and tables of five-year net survival estimates for cancers of the [stomach](#), [colon](#), [breast](#), [cervix](#) and [acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in children](#). It also



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PACT



THE WORLD BANK

contains a large number of maps and tables on cancer incidence, mortality and other metrics, short chapters on many of these topics, and an extensive glossary.

The Global Lung Cancer Coalition has also published an [interactive atlas](#) that includes lung cancer survival estimates from CONCORD-2, as well as data on incidence, mortality and other metrics.

In both these atlases, you can zoom or click on a country in any map to get more details.

Impact on global strategy for cancer control

“Cancer survival should not be left to chance” – world-wide campaign by the International Atomic Energy Agency’s Programme for Action on Cancer Therapy

In September 2015, IAEA’s Programme for Action on Cancer Therapy (PACT) deployed the inequalities in cancer survival identified in the CONCORD-2 study to launch an ambitious world-wide campaign ([#CancerCare4All](#)) to highlight the growing global divide in cancer survival. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the persistent inequalities in access to life-saving cancer services, and to reduce cancer-related deaths by a third over the next 15 years.

Since 2004, PACT has been installing radiotherapy machines in countries that have no radiotherapy service, and training local staff how to operate and maintain them. PACT also collaborates with WHO to help low- and middle-income countries develop their own comprehensive national cancer control programmes.

The new PACT campaign shows that UN agencies *will* use evidence on world-wide cancer survival patterns to inform global policy for cancer control. In turn, this supports the rationale for CONCORD: that [global surveillance of cancer survival will stimulate health policy and improve equity](#), because “unless these avoidable inequalities are measured, and reported on regularly, nothing will be done explicitly to reduce them.”

Impact on national strategies for cancer control

Poland: The CONCORD-2 results have already affected national cancer strategy in Poland. A press conference at the National Institute of Public Health-National Institute of Hygiene in Warsaw was the first time that national cancer survival data for Poland had been presented to the public. It aroused significant media interest. The fourth National Cancer Plan will now include monitoring of five-year survival as a key indicator. Prof Magdalena Bielska-Lasota and Prof Miroslaw Wysocki expect the CONCORD-2 results to lead to major legislative change in Polish health policy (see letter).

England: Some of the CONCORD-2 survival estimates published in the *Lancet* have been used to assess progress in cancer survival in England vs. Australia, Canada, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. An article has been published in the [British Journal of Cancer](#). This did not involve re-analysis of the raw data: that would have required permission from the registries concerned. The research was commissioned by the Independent Cancer Taskforce specifically to help underpin the latest [national cancer strategy for England](#).

Have the results from CONCORD-2 been used in the development of national strategies for cancer control in your country? We would like to be able to publish specific examples of the impact of international cancer survival comparisons on

public health strategy, in collaboration with you. Please write to us at concord@lshtm.ac.uk.

Forthcoming publications

A paper describing the Poisson regression methods developed by the Cancer Survival Group to create life tables for CONCORD-2, even when the raw data are sparse, is in review with *BMC Public Health*.

Other articles in preparation will describe:

- the quality control routines developed by the CONCORD Central Analytic Team to manage the data sets
- the range of over 12,000 life tables now available for survival analysis world-wide
- international variation in survival as a function of various macroeconomic indices

The CONCORD team is working with the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to produce a monograph on cancer survival by state, race/ethnicity and stage at diagnosis. The focus will be on public health and cancer control.

We recently wrote to all Working Group members with an update to the CONCORD publication policy (Annex 9 to the protocol). We provided more detail on the plan outlined in January 2015 (Newsletter no 10) to produce a range of publications on survival by stage, sub-site and morphologic group, as appropriate, for each of the 10 cancers we have studied so far.

Thank you for the many expressions of interest in active participation in those publications that you sent by the deadline of 18 September 2015. We will contact soon all those who responded.

CONCORD web-pages

We have updated our [web-site](#), where anyone can now access CONCORD publications and life tables, as well as a range of other analytic tools.

The password-protected pages contain documents that are accessible only to CONCORD Working Group members.

The [UICC web-site](#) will shortly include material on the CONCORD programme.

CONCORD life tables

We have published on-line a database of 12,480 life tables used or prepared for CONCORD-2, covering the period 1995-2010 for 279 registry jurisdictions. You can select the life table(s) you wish to download by continent, country (and/or region, state, province, oblast, territory, etc.), registry, race or ethnicity (selected countries), calendar year and sex.

You will need to [register](#) in order to access these life tables or other analytic tools developed by the Cancer Research UK Cancer Survival Group. We will then send you log-in details, and keep you updated with corrections or updates to the life tables or analytic tools.

When you have your log-in details and password, go to our home page [here](#), then navigate from **Tools for analysis > Tools > Life tables from the CONCORD-2 study**. Then follow the instructions to select and download the life tables you want.

When you download a life table(s), **we strongly recommend** that you download the corresponding life table report(s)! These contain a synopsis of the demographic methods used, with graphics of mortality rates by single year of age and sex, and tables of life expectancy (e_0) and the probability of death (${}_nq_x$) in various age ranges, by sex, between 1995 and 2009.

New personnel joining the CONCORD programme

Courtenay Howe joined the Cancer Survival Group in February 2015 as an Administrative Assistant, in support of the CONCORD Programme Manager, Natalia Sanz.

Dr Kenwin Liu joined us as the CONCORD Data Manager in May 2015.

We will soon be joined by two new Research Fellows and a doctoral student.

Scientific meetings and conferences

We continue to present findings from the CONCORD-2 study in conferences and workshops, in collaboration with colleagues in the Working Group (see Newsletter no 10):

1. British Gynaecological Cancer Society, 9 July 2015, Gateshead, UK
2. International Association of Cancer Registries, 8-10 October 2015, Mumbai, India
3. Association of European Cancer Leagues, 13 November 2015, Belfast, UK

UICC World Cancer Congress, 31 October – 3 November 2016, Paris, France

We have submitted to UICC a proposal to host a symposium on the impact of international cancer survival comparisons on national and global health policy. If our proposal is accepted, Freddie Bray, CONCORD Steering Committee member and Head of the Cancer Information Section at IARC, will chair the symposium. Sally Cowal, Senior Vice-President of Global Programs at the American Cancer Society, has kindly agreed to discuss the impact of providing cancer information for patients and their families to improving outcomes in low- and middle-income countries.

The decision will be announced by the Programme Committee for the conference by 31 October 2015.

Ethical approvals

We maintain a database of all our statutory and ethical approvals. We use it to generate warnings when we need to produce reports to institutional review boards, ethical committees or legal authorities, or to seek renewal of the approvals.

If we have missed a deadline, and the ethical approval for your registry should have been renewed, **please let us know!** Write to kenwin.liu@lshtm.ac.uk.

Teaching in cancer survival

The Cancer Survival Group's 10th annual short course "*Cancer survival: principles, methods and applications*" was held at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in June 2015, with 38 participants from 19 countries. Prof Paul Dickman (Stockholm), Prof Jacques Estève (Lyon) and Prof Maja Pohar Perme (Ljubljana) were among 21 faculty members from 14 countries.

We expect the 2016 course to be held from Monday 27 June to Friday 1 July 2016. These dates are not yet confirmed, but please keep them in your diary if you are planning to attend. Details of the 2015 course can be found on our web-page [here](#).

Funding of the CONCORD programme

The following agencies have committed funding or personnel to the CONCORD programme:

- Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (Toronto), 2013-14
- Cancer Focus Northern Ireland (Belfast), researcher seconded part-time 2013-14
- Cancer Institute New South Wales (Sydney), two researchers seconded part-time
- Cancer Research UK (London), 2013-16
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Atlanta), 2012-16
- Fondation de France (Paris), full-time post-doctoral researcher, 2014-2015
- Swiss Re (London), 2012-16
- Swiss Cancer Research foundation (Bern), 2013-16
- Swiss Cancer League (Bern), 2013-16
- University of Kentucky (Lexington KY), 2012-13

We have started to look for funding from 2017.

Personnel working on the CONCORD programme

Central Analytic Team

- Dr Claudia Allemani PhD, Senior Lecturer in Cancer Epidemiology
- Dr Audrey Bonaventure MD, Clinical Lecturer
- Helena Carreira MPH, Research Fellow
- Dr Michel Coleman MD, Professor of Epidemiology and Vital Statistics
- Rhea Harewood MSc, Research Fellow
- Courtenay Howe LLB, Administrative Assistant
- Dr Kenwin Liu PhD, Data Manager
- Natalia Sanz BA, Programme Manager
- Devon Spika MSc, Research Fellow

Visiting or seconded staff and students

- Dr Finian Bannon PhD (Queen's University, Belfast, UK), Visiting Research Fellow
- Dr John Butler MRCOG (Royal Marsden Hospital, London, UK), Visiting Consultant
- Melissa Matz MSc, doctoral student (LSHTM)
- Dr Matt Soeberg PhD (Cancer Institute NSW, Sydney, Australia), seconded part-time
- Hui You MSc (Cancer Institute NSW, Sydney, Australia), seconded part-time

Endorsements for the CONCORD programme

More than 30 agencies have funded or endorsed the CONCORD programme, or seconded scientific personnel to work with the team in London:

- Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer (AECC) (Madrid, Spain)
- Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL) (Brussels, Belgium)
- British Embassy in Algiers (Algeria)
- Canadian Association of Provincial Cancer Agencies (CAPCA) (Toronto, Canada)
- Canadian Council of Cancer Registries (Toronto, Canada)
- Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC) (Toronto, Canada)
- Cancer Focus Northern Ireland (Belfast, UK)
- Cancer Institute New South Wales (Sydney, Australia)
- Cancer Research UK (London, UK)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (Atlanta, USA)
- Children with Cancer UK (London, UK)
- Danish Cancer Society (Copenhagen, Denmark)
- European Cancer Organisation (ECCO) (Brussels, Belgium)
- European Institute for Women's Health (Dublin, Ireland)
- Fondation de France (Paris, France)
- Institut National du Cancer (INCa) (Paris, France)
- International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) (Lyon, France)
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (Vienna, Austria)
- International Network for Cancer Treatment and Research (INCTR) (Brussels, Belgium)
- Israel Centre for Disease Control (Tel-Hashomer, Israel)
- Jolanta Kwaśniewska's Foundation (Warsaw, Poland)
- Members of the European Parliament Against Cancer (MAC) (Brussels, Belgium)
- National Cancer Institute, Center for Global Health (NCI) (Washington DC, USA)
- National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Consumer Liaison Group (Leeds, UK)
- National Institute for Cancer Epidemiology and Registration (NICER) (Zürich, Switzerland)
- North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) (Chicago, USA)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Paris, France)
- Swiss Cancer League (Zürich, Switzerland)
- Swiss Cancer Research foundation (Bern, Switzerland)
- Swiss Re (London, UK)
- Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) (Geneva, Switzerland)
- WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO-EURO) (Copenhagen, Denmark)
- World Bank

How to navigate the CONCORD-2 web-appendix

The web-appendix provides more detailed tables, maps and graphics than could be presented in the Lancet article. It contains an index, and extensive tables of quality control data and the survival estimates, by cancer and by calendar period, for each of the 279 participating cancer registries. It contains 30 graphics and 28 regional maps.

The web-appendix is Open Access, so it can be freely downloaded and shared. You should cite the article as usual if you use the materials in articles, presentations, etc.

The index (page 2) includes **hyperlinks** to each web-table, web-graphic and map. Starting from the index page, **you can click on any heading to go to the title page for each web-table, web-graphic, map, or web-annex**. Each title page provides additional hyperlinks: click on a link to navigate to a particular cancer site (web-table 2, web-table 4 and web-

figures 2-4), or calendar period of diagnosis (web-table 3) or region in the world (web-figure 1). Each title page also includes detailed footnotes.

In short, you are just two clicks away from any component of the web-appendix!

The web-appendix includes:

- HAEMACARE groupings used for adult leukaemia and childhood ALL (web-table 1)
- Data quality indicators (web-table 2)
- Population coverage and number of patients included in the analyses (web-table 3)
- Five-year age-standardised net survival estimates by *cancer registry* (survival estimates in the article were presented only by country) (web-table 4)
- Regional maps of participating countries and regions (web-figures 1.1-1.28)

In the Lancet article, Figures 2-4 were for breast cancer: web-figures 2-4 provide the same graphics for each of the 10 other malignancies included in the study.

- Bar charts of five-year survival by continent, country and calendar period (web-figure 2)
- Trend graphics of five-year survival by continental region, country and calendar period (web-figure 3)
- Box-plots of the distribution of five-year survival among participating registries in each continent, for each calendar period (web-figure 4)
- Visual representation of the structure of the analyses (web-annex 1)
- Scatter-plot showing changes in life expectancy at birth between the first and last years of data for each registry, by sex, for all 67 countries and all 279 participating cancer registries (web-annex 2)