

Armenia

Contributors: EuropaDonna Armenia

WHO cancer country profile 2014		Link to profile			
Mortality (male)	Mortality (female)	Cancer plan	Cancer registry	HBV vaccination	HPV vaccination
4,500	3,600	Yes	Hospital-based	95%	No data
Breast screening	Cervical screening	Radiotherapy	Chemotherapy	Oral morphine	
Generally available at public primary healthcare level (clinical breast exam only)	Generally available at public primary healthcare level (Pap smear only)	Generally available in the public health system	Generally available in the public health system	No data	

WHO NCD progress monitor 2015										Link to monitor
Risk factor survey	NCD action plan	Tobacco taxation	Smoke-free policies	Tobacco health warnings	Alcohol availability regulations	Alcohol advertising bans	Alcohol pricing policies	Public awareness on diet/physical activity	NCD management guidelines	
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Progress against the World Cancer Declaration targets

In Armenia, the World Cancer Declaration targets are being actively addressed at the national and community level to combat cancer:

- Since 2015, Armenia has implemented mandatory screening for cervical cancer among women aged 30-60. At the same time, the country has coordinated education programmes to dispel harmful myths and misconceptions about cancer in order to encourage earlier diagnosis
- Periodic HPV vaccination programmes are run for high-risk groups, and efforts to reduce tobacco consumption, using measures set out in the WHO FCTC, are helping to reduce the population's exposure to preventable risk factors
- Simplified procedures for the prescription and provision of analgesics for effective pain control of cancer patients have been developed nationally to improve patient access
- Armenia has significantly enhanced the learning opportunities for medical personnel who wish to develop their understanding of cancer management. Efforts have also been made to engage cancer patients in cancer control planning at local and national level.



Key successes

In 2015, the cancer registry in Armenia was restructured and updated to comply with international standards. This significantly improved the usability of the data collected and will simplify future work on clinical cancer epidemiology.

In 2016, the construction of a modern diagnostic centre will be completed in Armenia. The centre will be able to produce isotopes for PET scanning as well as radioisotope research, more broadly it is hoped that national clinical research on breast and prostate cancers will begin in 2016. Armenia has developed a legal framework which provides a favourable but strict regulatory environment for conducting clinical research in oncology.

Finally, the government is consistently working to attract new charity organisations to carry out oncology projects.

Key challenges

Armenia does not have mandatory state-funded screening programmes or compulsory health insurance, and, as a result, the burden of treatment is often carried by the patient through out-of-pocket expenditure. Greater efforts should be targeted at designing a detailed national cancer control plan, which would be approved and adopted by parliament, in order to increase the percentage of state funds allocated to meet oncology needs within the country.



Author's achievements

EuropaDonna Armenia is actively engaged in health promotion activities relating to cancer prevention, as public awareness of the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of malignant tumours is a key challenge. Myths about the inability to cure cancer are particularly common, which can lead to patients refusing treatment. As a result, actions have been taken to improve public awareness about the benefits of early diagnosis through mass media, internet campaigns and lectures. The 'Ասուղջ-Կրծքաբեկ' / Breast Health' Facebook page¹ is one such example that disseminates weekly articles on breast health, screening, diagnosis and therapies to its 17,500 followers. The EuropaDonna website is also used to highlight health information, alongside advertising events for fundraising and raising awareness, such as concerts, bicycle rides and flashmobs. EuropaDonna has assisted with the translation into Armenian of numerous international professional clinical guidelines and protocols on prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of cancer patients, as well as facilitated their adaptation for a wider audience. The organisation has also established a charity fund to support low-income populations in need of expensive treatment.

Footnotes:

1. www.facebook.com/Ասուղջ-ԿրծքաբեկBreast-Health-735857959798237/