



Media release for immediate distribution

UICC launches its new Breast Cancer Programme at the start of Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Leveraging established programmes and convening platforms, UICC's Breast Cancer Programme aims to support and strengthen the community to reverse the rising incidence and mortality of breast cancer worldwide.

Tuesday 29 September, Geneva, Switzerland – As the cancer community marks Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October, the Union for International Cancer Control (**UICC**) is launching a new five-year programme aimed at accelerating progress in breast cancer control.

Despite advances in research, diagnosis and treatment, breast cancer continues to place a heavy burden on individuals, families and health care systems. Some 2.1 million new cases are recorded every year and in 2018, over 600,000 lives were lost to this disease. Yet, if detected early enough, breast cancer is curable.

“While the incidence of breast cancer is generally higher in more developed regions, the number of cases is rising in low- and middle-income countries and they are often diagnosed later, leading to more serious outcomes,” says HRH Princess Dina Mired of Jordan, President of UICC. “UICC’s Breast Cancer Programme is part of UICC’s broader commitment to women’s cancers and will strengthen the capacity of key breast cancer actors in order to reverse these trends. This not only promises to prevent thousands of premature deaths but also contributes to greater equity in cancer care.”

In line with its ambition to engage all actors from the breast cancer community, UICC’s Breast Cancer Programme is a multi-partnership initiative gathering leading organisations from the private sector, development agencies and NGOs. The Programme is supported by Pfizer, as a founding partner, with whom UICC has enjoyed a strong six-year partnership in addressing metastatic breast cancer, as well as Daiichi Sankyo, the Center for Global Health in the US National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health, the Breast Health Global Initiative, and is connected to the Breast Cancer Initiative 2.5.

The Breast Cancer Programme aims to achieve six main outcomes by 2025:

1. Accelerate the development of breast cancer leaders
2. Strengthen organisational capacities of breast cancer organisations, including patient groups
3. Support the development of the health workforce in breast cancer
4. Support national action on breast cancer in responding to key areas and needs in breast cancer control
5. Strengthen networks and collaborations in breast cancer at a national, regional and global level
6. Unite the voice of the breast cancer community, including patient groups, to advocate for more effective breast cancer control

“Key to reversing rising mortality due to breast cancer is our ability to work together to leverage and expand the will and resources that currently exist, supporting the creation of a common agenda to maximise impact,” says Dr Cary Adams, CEO of UICC. “In practical terms, with the necessary funding, our ambition for the UICC’s Breast Cancer Programme is to support 50,000 breast cancer patients, mentor 150 breast cancer organisations, train 170 organisations and 5,000 health professions in advocacy, communications, fundraising, monitoring and evaluation, and mobilise 1,500 cancer organisations.”

The Breast Cancer Programme will initiate several projects in its first year of implementation. It will lead a Project ECHO® course on breast cancer control, which will support 100 individuals over a period of six months to develop and implement evidence-informed and locally relevant breast cancer projects. It will provide tailored mentoring to five patient groups in the Middle-East region, as part of the extension of the Patient Group Mentoring Programme, and mentor two organisations focused on advocacy in the framework of the Cancer Advocates programme. It will also enable 10 healthcare professionals to benefit from a Technical Fellowship, one of UICC’s most established programmes. Finally, in 2021, the Programme will gather key breast cancer actors to discuss a framework for action to reduce the breast cancer burden.

As with other platforms developed by UICC, the Breast Cancer Programme has been adapted to respond to the new challenges faced by society and the cancer community with regard to the coronavirus pandemic. In October, a series of UICC Virtual Dialogues will be dedicated to breast cancer, including early cancer detection (understanding early cancer screening vs early cancer diagnosis in breast cancer) and tools for effective breast cancer control programmes. Other topics will be added in the course of the coming months.

“Since 2015, we’ve joined forces with UICC to support organisations around the world to overcome challenges in breast cancer care,” says Andy Schmeltz, Global President, Pfizer Oncology. “Today, as a founding partner of the new Breast Cancer Programme, we are proud to continue our commitment to the global breast cancer community to help improve the availability of services and expand national cancer control plans to ensure everyone has access to the care they need and deserve.”

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Additional quotes from partners of the Breast Cancer Programme

“The very real issue of health disparities and inequities has been brought to light as a result of the pandemic, but this issue is certainly not limited to COVID-19. It is more important than ever that global health care leaders come together and support all communities disproportionately impacted by certain diseases, like breast cancer. There are a number of factors that have the potential to impact breast cancer incidence around the world, including race and ethnicity or access to quality of care, and we are proud to partner with UICC on this incredibly important program that we hope will help address these disparities and accelerate progress in the control of breast cancer.”

- **Gissoo DeCotiis, Global Medical Affairs, Oncology Advocacy, Daiichi Sankyo**

“The NCI Center for Global Health seeks to advance global cancer research, global cancer research training, and science-based global cancer control through a variety of programs and partnerships. Examples of such collaborations with UICC include its Technical Fellowships, scientific workshops at the World Cancer Congress, and evidence dissemination through the International Cancer Control Partnership, to name a few. This new opportunity to collaborate with UICC on its consolidated Breast Cancer Programme, particularly through technical support of the Project ECHO course, is an excellent way to continue our efforts with partners to ensure that current scientific evidence informs international cancer control efforts.”

- Dr Satish Gopal, Director of the Center for Global Health (CGH) at the National Cancer Institute (NCI)

“It is through continued and longstanding collaborations such as those between BHGI, NCI, UICC and others that the Knowledge Summaries for Comprehensive Breast Cancer Control (KSBC) were developed. The new UICC Breast Cancer Programme builds on this history of harnessing the effort and expertise of clinicians, advocates and policymakers from around the world to collectively advance the development, dissemination and implementation of evidence-based and locally relevant breast cancer initiatives to reduce disparities in breast cancer outcomes globally.”

- Allison Ekberg Dvaladze, BHGI Executive Committee Member and Health Policy Advisor, World Health Organization

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About the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)

The Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) is the largest and oldest international cancer-fighting organisation. Founded in Geneva in 1933, UICC has over 1,200 member organisations in more than 170 countries. It enjoys consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and has official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). UICC has over 50 partners, including associations, companies and foundations committed to the fight against cancer. UICC is a founding member of the NCD Alliance, the McCabe Centre for Law & Cancer, the International Cancer Control Partnership (ICCP) and established the City Cancer Challenge Foundation in January 2019.

UICC’s mission is to both unite and support the cancer community in its efforts to reduce the global cancer burden, promote greater equity and ensure that cancer control remains a priority on the global health and development agenda. It pursues these goals by bringing together global leaders through innovative and far-reaching cancer-control events and initiatives, building capacities to meet regional needs and developing awareness campaigns.

More information is available at www.uicc.org.

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