World Cancer Leaders’ Summit

Cancer and Universal Health Coverage

15-17 October 2019
Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan
Ensuring UHC reforms prioritise cancer services

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UHC is Driving the Global Health Agenda

• UNGA UHC HLM 2019
• UNGA Resolution on UHC December 2012
• Designated UN UHC Day from Dec 12th 2018
• SDG Target 3.8
• WHO, World Bank and other agencies promoting UHC as best way to reach SDG 3
What is Universal Health Coverage?

Universal health coverage (UHC) means that all people can use the promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative health services they need, of sufficient quality to be effective, while also ensuring that the use of these services does not expose the user to financial hardship.
UHC is fundamentally about EQUITY

- Universal = Everybody. Nobody left behind
- Health services allocated according to NEED
- Health financing contributions according to one’s ability to pay
- Healthy-wealthy cross-subsidise the sick and the poor
Consensus on health financing for UHC

- Market-driven privately financed health systems do not result in UHC
- The state must force the healthy-wealthy to cross subsidise the sick and the poor - achieving this is inherently political
- The state must be heavily involved in all three main financing functions of raising revenues, pooling and purchasing services
- This doesn’t rule out private sector administration or provision of services
“If there is one lesson the world has learnt, it is that you can only reach UHC through PUBLIC financing.”
Public Health Financing Replacing Out-of-Pocket Expenditure in Asia and the Pacific
The importance of publicly-financed PHC-led UHC
The Case for Inclusion of Oncology Services

• People requiring cancer services (preventive, curative & palliative) are high-need population group often with low ability to pay for costly treatments

• Many cancer services are very cost-effective and should be a top priority for universal coverage

• Cancer services should be predominantly publicly financed but not necessarily publicly provided
It’s not UHC if there isn’t palliative care for everyone who needs it.
How can we ensure oncology services are covered in UHC benefit packages?

- Evidence and research
- Agree cancer service coverage indicators
- Advocacy - get political, fight injustices
- Rally behind the global campaign for UHC
- Promote health, economic, environmental and political benefits of cancer services
Politicians like to be seen to care about cancer
Find and support political champions
WHO’s DG is targeting political leaders

WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus says universal health coverage is his ultimate priority - however it will require engagement with political leaders.
The Elders are supporting South Africa’s UHC reforms
Concluding thoughts

- UHC is highly political, especially introducing an equitable public financing system
- UHC is popular with people and politicians across the world – it brings politics into health systems
- Cancer is a highly emotive and therefore political issue
- Ensuring UHC reforms include oncology services will require technical and political strategies
Thank you

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