



Medicines, vaccines and health products – cancer medicines

Document EB144/18

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of the Union for International Cancer Control, representing over 1,000 member organisations across 170 countries and territories.

We warmly welcome the report and applaud the secretariat on its thorough examination of the issues. The timing of the report is auspicious as cancer is now the second leading cause of mortality globally. There were 18.1m cancer cases in 2018 and 9.6m cancer deaths, and we expect this to increase to 29.5m new cases annually by 2040. Many of these deaths could be averted if cancer patients had access to timely diagnosis and treatment.

Recognising the potential for action, we encourage Member States to integrate cancer in sustainable universal health coverage plans. Using the options contained in the report, countries can improve pricing and procurement strategies for cancer medicines and other health products, recognising access is a pillar for strong health systems. Many NGOs are currently supporting cancer patients and represent a key partner in taking these actions forward.

We call on WHO to use the findings in this report and integrate them within technical guidance to best support Member States. Leveraging the disease-based approach of oncology section in the WHO model list of essential medicines (EML), the prequalification programme and the clear pricing policy options contained in the report that call for increased transparency, WHO can support Member States to improve access to cancer medicines as part of the journey to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. As a contributor to the update of the EML, UICC would have welcomed the opportunity to input into the report and future such reviews.

We welcome the opportunity to support WHO and Member States in their endeavour to improve access and affordability for 18,1 million cancer patients worldwide.