For World Cancer Day, New Reports Highlight the Need for Equal Access

Investing in cancer prevention, early detection, treatment and care will have major impact on the wider economy—and cancer patients' lives.

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Geneva, Switzerland — In the build up to World Cancer Day 2018 this Sunday, a report conducted by the International Agency for Research on Cancer released yesterday shows that a staggering $46 billion is wasted in lost productivity due to premature cancer deaths in emerging markets.

The report is the first to look into the cost of lost productivity caused by premature cancer deaths in BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). BRICS countries account for a quarter of global GDP and 42 percent of global cancer deaths

Commenting on the "Productivity losses due to premature mortality from cancer in Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS)" report in Cancer Epidemiology, Cary Adams, BSc, MBA, CEO of the Union for International Cancer Control, said:

> "This report shows that investing in cancer prevention, early detection, treatment and care will have a major impact on the wider economy as well as cancer patients' lives.
>
> "The historical lack of investment across cancer services means that across BRICS countries, vulnerable communities increasingly have to cope with unequal access to life-saving diagnosis, treatment and care.
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> "With World Cancer Day this weekend, we are calling on all governments to implement stronger national cancer control policies to reduce both the economic and social impact of cancer.
> "We have more knowledge at our disposal than ever before to cut premature cancer deaths and everyone—no matter where they are born—deserves to have access to effective cancer care and treatment."

Also appearing this week in The Lancet medical journal, the CONCORD- 3 study highlights the difference in survival rates between countries that invest comprehensively across cancer care, treatment and services as opposed to those without strong cancer prevention strategies and underfunded cancer service programmes

Commenting on the "Global surveillance of trends in cancer survival 2000–14 (CONCORD-3)" report in The Lancet, professor Sanchia Aranda, president of UICC and CEO of Cancer Council

Australia, said:

> “This analysis shows that greater access to cancer services improves survival rates for patients worldwide. In the UK, a lack of access to treatment is leading to premature deaths which could have otherwise been prevented.
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> Unfortunately, we see this pattern replicated around the world, with low- and middle-income countries facing the brunt as millions of people die prematurely from cancer every year as a result of inequities in access to cancer diagnosis, treatment and care. Even in countries with the best survival rates, there are sub-populations who experience poorer outcomes, including the indigenous, immigrant, refugee, rural, and lower-socioeconomic populations.
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> As we head towards World Cancer Day this Sunday, we are calling on the international cancer community to address the global equity gap in access to cancer services and to help support governments around the world who are working to improve cancer survival rates for their people.”

On Sunday, February 4, World Cancer Day is focused on raising awareness of the millions of people worldwide facing unequal access to cancer detection, treatment, and care services. With cancer leaders, health professionals and supporters across the world pushing for urgent action to reduce the rate of premature cancer deaths globally, the day calls for diagnostic and treatment access to be prioritised.

The World Health Organization’s global target of a 25 percent reduction in premature deaths from cancer and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by 2025 is possible. However, to deliver on this global commitment, the current inequities in risk factor exposure, and in access to screening, early detection and timely and appropriate treatment and care, must be addressed.

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