

Center for Global Health

**Cancer Control Leadership**

F O R U M

**Caribbean Cancer Control Leadership Forum  
Bridgetown, Barbados  
May 11 – 13, 2015  
Meeting Report on Actions and Outcomes**

### **Background**

The Caribbean Cancer Control Leadership Forum was sponsored by the Center for Global Health, National Cancer Institute (NCI), USA in partnership with the Healthy Caribbean Coalition and the American Cancer Society. We at NCI are very grateful for also having the opportunity to collaborate with the Caribbean Public Health Agency, Cancer Care Caribbean, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries, the Pan American Health Organization and the University of Hawaii in developing the Forum.

### **Goal of the Cancer Control Leadership Forum Program**

The goal of the Caribbean Cancer Control Leadership Forum Program is to increase the capacity of participating countries to initiate or enhance cancer control planning and implementation through a multi-sectoral approach. National Cancer Control Plans comprise an important part of a country's non-communicable disease (NCD) plan and can help countries meet NCD targets outlined in the WHO Global NCD Action Plan. A comprehensive cancer control plan is a strategic national cancer plan that is based on data and developed by diverse partners, including government and non-governmental organizations, to guide efforts within a country to decrease the burden of cancer. The Forum was an opportunity for countries and individual country representatives (ICRs) in the region to exchange experiences and ideas about creating and implementing comprehensive cancer control plans.

### **Goal of the Caribbean Regional Meeting**

An additional half-day session was added on May 13, 2015 to explore regional collaboration in cancer control planning. The main purpose of the Caribbean Regional Cancer Control Strategy Meeting was to utilize the key leaders within the Caribbean region who had already assembled for the Forum to develop recommendations for strategic regional initiatives focused on cancer control. This meeting provided an opportunity for key leaders to identify specific cancer control challenges and issues that cut across all countries within the Caribbean region and discuss which of those challenges might be best addressed with a regional approach and where it is advantageous to share resources. Experts in the Caribbean region shared information on their current regional initiatives and experts from two other regions (Latin America and the Pacific) shared examples of their regional cancer control planning activities and how they implemented strategies to work together on collaborative initiatives.

## Outcomes

The outcomes for each Forum country team and ICR:

- Increased awareness of the importance of national cancer control planning and implementation;
- Enhanced understanding of how to develop and implement a national cancer control plan;
- Development of a written 12-month action plan with specific tasks to initiate or enhance each country's national cancer control planning and implementation efforts;
- Completion of the action plan within one year of the Forum with technical assistance support from NCI;
- Improved knowledge of how cancer control planning can be used to address needs in specific areas such as engaging civil society, cervical cancer control, understanding unique challenges in cancer control planning including addressing health disparities, and complementing non-communicable disease planning efforts.

## *Caribbean Country Teams*

### **Bahamas**

**Team Members:** Dr. Wesley Francis, Mr. Terry Fountain, Dr. Tracy Roberts, Mrs. Melissa Major, Dr. Raleigh Butler

Currently, the Bahamas does not have a comprehensive cancer control plan in place. The Bahamas team indicated that their main goals are to build and sustain a coalition for national cancer control planning, strengthen their cancer data and develop a National Cancer Control Plan. Their current strengths include: a) readiness and full buy-in of the Ministry of Health (political will); b) motivated core group and impassioned stakeholders; c) good resources to start; including a strong foundation in diagnosis and treatment to further build upon; d) a strong hospital-based registry to augment data strengthening. Their greatest needs moving forward with their priority actions are to have the Ministry of Health empower the coalition to remain focused on achieving the ultimate goal of developing a national cancer control plan that includes a comprehensive cancer control plan for data strengthening.

### **Country Team Priority Action Items**

1. Build and Sustain a Coalition for National Cancer Control Planning
2. Data Strengthening
3. Develop National Cancer Control Plan

### **Barbados**

**Team Members:** Dr. Kenneth George, Dr. Natalie Greaves, Dr. Vikash Chatrani, Dr. Theresa Laurent, Dr. Dorothy Cooke-Johnson

Barbados primary goals are to create a comprehensive national cancer control plan and partnership. In addition, the Barbados team created a rapid cancer action plan to implement over the next four months, which will include:

- HPV vaccine uptake
- National cancer screening program (prostate, colorectal, cervical, breast)
- Palliative care for the public sector

- Continue work of tobacco reform (policy ratification)
- Develop “Cancer Control Barbados” (plan and partnership)

Barbados’s strengths lie in the fact that they have existing element of cancer control in their NCD strategic plan and palliative care needs assessment report and they have a population-based registry and access to university academics, all of which will help further their efforts in national cancer control planning and implementation. The country’s greatest need is access to planning and research staffs at the Ministry of Health, in order to support the process for a cancer control plan development. They also need access to the policy process for implementing the action plan via the Ministry of Health. In addition, they need to increase the output from their national cancer registry to inform the plan. Lastly, they will need to train staff/human resources to implement the plan.

### **Country Team Priority Action Items**

1. Develop a comprehensive national cancer control plan and partnership
2. Develop a rapid action plan for cancer control in Barbados

### **Belize**

**Team Members:** Dr. Byron Simmons, Dr. Beatriz Thompson and Mrs. Laura Longsworth

In January 2013, Belize drafted a comprehensive national cancer control plan. The priority actions the Belize team identified during the Forum are as follows: a) establishing a clearly defined shareholder partnership; b) move forward with a cancer registry; and c) identifying a focal person for the national cancer plan. In order to further their efforts in national cancer control planning and implementation, Belize will build on their existing national cancer program template, use their electronic countrywide information system as a platform for a national cancer registry and capitalize on their large number of private pathologists and their functional cancer center. To move forward with their priority actions, Belize will need to improve their cancer data and lobby to make cancer a mandatory reportable disease.

### **Country Team Priority Action Items**

1. Form and activate a core group of partners
2. Improve transparency in communicating with partners
3. Work towards development of population-based cancer

### **Jamaica**

**Team Members:** Dr. Tamu Davidson Sadler, Dr. Carol Lord, Dr. Nadine Williams, Mrs. Yulit Gordon and Prof. Horace Fletcher

In 2013, Jamaica developed the National Strategy and Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Cancer through a series of stakeholder consultations, which was further developed by a National Cancer Technical Working group. The Jamaica team identified the following priority actions upon their return to Jamaica: a) establish a Jamaica National Cancer Control Task Force; b) improve communication to stakeholders and the public about the Jamaica National Cancer Control Plan; and c) discuss needs and improvements in the registry regarding staff certificates/certification. In addition to having the Jamaica National Cancer Plan, the existing partnerships with public, private, civil society and academia stakeholders are strengths the team will build on to further their efforts in national cancer control

planning and implementation. Jamaica's greatest needs moving forward with their priority actions are to address human resources gaps, put in place sustainable funding for cancer control and assistance from country leaders to identify resources to support the needs identified and policies to support these gaps.

### **Country Team Priority Action Items**

1. Establish the Jamaican National Cancer Task Force (JNCTF)
2. Increase Communication Regarding the Jamaican National Cancer Plan and Cancer Control Efforts in Jamaica
3. Increase the Capacity and Skills of Jamaican Registry Staff

### **Trinidad and Tobago**

**Team Members:** Dr. Joanne Warner, Mrs. Nicole Jordan and Mrs. Sherma Mills-Serrette

Trinidad and Tobago team were unaware of any comprehensive cancer control plan in their country. The Trinidad and Tobago team indicated that their goals are to: a) formulate a detailed report on the Leadership Forum for their Chief Medical Officer of Health; b) determine whether Trinidad and Tobago has an existing cancer control plan; and c) research and review national cancer control plans that are available on the ICCP website ([www.iccp-portal.org](http://www.iccp-portal.org)). In order to move forward with these efforts, the Trinidad and Tobago team will continue building a stronger relationship between the Ministry of Health and Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society. The Trinidad and Tobago team also committed to engaging and encouraging the corporate community to continue their support of the Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society. The team identified the two major needs for moving forward with their priority actions are to implement the cancer control plan in a timely manner and get the national cancer registry functioning.

### **Country Team Priority Action Items**

1. Increase Ministry of Health engagement with partners from civil society, academia, etc.
2. Strengthen the national cancer registry
3. Strategize planning for the Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society

### ***Individual Country Representatives***

Antigua – Dr. Tom McGowan

Dominica – Ms. Diana Gittens

Haiti – Dr. Ruth Damuse

St. Maarten – Ms. Keoma La. Hamer

Suriname – Dr. Els Dams and Ms. Katherine Lolley

The ICRs spent significant time discussing their needs with regard to cancer control planning and implementation with designated facilitators. Many of the ICRs indicated that they had increased their understanding of cancer control planning through the Forum and were able to identify areas for action upon return to their respective countries. Each ICR developed their own 12-month action plan and some of the action items included engaging partners in other sectors, organizing a cancer control planning work groups, strengthening knowledge about cancer control at home, and advocating for development of national cancer control plans in their countries.