

IARC/WHO and UICC Partnership in Regional Hubs to accelerate local availability of information vital for cancer control planning in LMIC settings

Lyon, France, 4 February 2015 – To mark the occasion of World Cancer Day, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a specialized Agency of the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) announce a joint commitment to develop and integrate six local reference centres that aim to improve cancer information in every country of the world. Officially designated as IARC Regional Hubs, the objectives of the Hubs are to accelerate the availability and enhance the quality of data to inform national cancer control policies in low- and middle-income countries. The IARC-UICC partnership focuses on the delivery of targeted training courses and the production of accompanying reference tools for planning and developing cancer registries.

“IARC has a long-standing history of collaboration with population-based cancer registries worldwide,” explains Dr. Freddie Bray, Head of the Section of Cancer Surveillance Unit at IARC. “Our strategic partnership with the UICC allows us to broaden our reach with the global health community and bring to focus the fundamental role cancer registries play in cancer control. At present, two-thirds of the world’s countries have limited or no data for cancer planning purposes. By developing population-based cancer registries, we are implementing a solution that works even in resource-challenged countries. We intend to redraw the global cancer surveillance map.”

The Hubs represent the focal point for regions within the IARC-led Global Initiative for Cancer Registration Development (GICR, <http://gicr.iarc.fr>). Six Regional Hubs will be up and running in 2015 and providing tailored support to countries in Asia, Africa, South America, the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands. The Hubs will work with IARC and partners to deliver courses matched to the local challenges and enable opportunities for technology transfers and twinning. To implement the planned actions, the GICR has launched a fundraising campaign targeting \$15 million over the next five years.

“The need for transformative change in many parts of the world is well documented. By working together with our international partners, we now have a way to meet this ambitious challenge with a full-scale global solution that supports the sharing and creation of knowledge. What is most significant about the GICR is that it represents the first unified approach. With a strong public purpose, it has set in motion a way for countries that were previously alone in their efforts to be identified, and most importantly, supported by experts. This is truly exciting,” Cary Adams, CEO of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).

High-quality data on cancer incidence and survival are valuable indicators of progress in the fight against cancer. Cancer incidence is part of the set of indicators measured by the WHO non-communicable diseases (NCDs) global monitoring framework to report on progress in implementing the WHO global NCD action plan developed following the United Nations General Assembly high-level meeting on NCDs in 2011.

“The cancer burden is projected to increase from 14.1 million in 2012 to 21.6 million new cases by 2030. Within these increases, 60-70% of new cases are forecasted in Latin America, Asia and Africa. This creates a demand for expert consultancies, training and advocacy to help countries plan, monitor and deliver cancer control policies. By creating a reliable picture of the local cancer scale and profile through registries, planners can act in those areas that are most needed and predict how this may change over time,” said Christopher Wild, Director of IARC.