

World Health Organization (WHO): Seventy-Fourth World Health Assembly (74th WHA)

Agenda 31. Management and legal matters

31.1 International Agency for Research on Cancer: amendments to Statute

(644 words)



Thank you, Chair!

India acknowledges that since its foundation in 1965, the **International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)**, a specialized agency of the World Health Organization (WHO) established by a resolution of the 18th World Health Assembly to coordinate international cooperation in cancer research with the objective to improve health through reduction in occurrence and death from cancer throughout the world has been making important contributions to the global fight against cancer, notably through its capacity to bring together people and organizations from across the world that share common values and objectives.

We are glad to share that according to The IARC's report on *Status of Collection of Assessed Contribution and CVCA* as of 30th April 2021, India, one of the twenty-six Participating States shows an outstanding contribution in the year 2020 and 2021 where IARC's activities are mainly funded by the regular budget contributions paid by its Participating States.

Chair,

In India, the estimated incidence of cancer in 2020¹ is 13.92 lakhs. Based on India's recent experiences, among males, cancers of lung, mouth, oesophagus, and stomach are the leading sites (major types) across most of the registries. Among females, is the cancer of the breast and cancers of the cervix uteri. Thus, to prevent the same, India has been carrying out population-based prevention and control, screening, and management initiative for common NCDs. We recommend such interventions in all parts of the world for primary and secondary (early detection) prevention, aiming to minimize the burden of cancer and associated risk factors.

To support and maintain IARC as a center of scientific excellence fostering peaceful worldwide collaboration and progress on research, in India, besides, the different programmes of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare various cancer prevention and research programmes are too being carried out by the institutions and departments like, the Dept. of Biotechnology (DBT), Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Indian Council of Medical Research.

Under the *National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke* several district clinics, cardiac care units, day care centres, community health centre and NCD clinics etc. have been set up for continuous monitoring and healthcare support in India. Also, an IT based NCD application is being used to ensure continuum of care to the oral, breast and cervix cancer patients.

¹ as per National Cancer Registry Program

We recommend and believe that more global unified action to spread awareness for prevention and control of NCDs and cancer and promote healthy lifestyle may certainly bring a downward slope in number of cancer cases. India has been doing so in mission mode at all healthcare delivery levels to defeat cancer and NCDs.

Chair,

In this pandemic, several challenges were posed for the patients suffering from cancer if infected with Covid-19 virus too. Not only should it propel us to innovate more in this field of science to improve healthcare but also to develop disease appropriate infrastructure. India to enhance the facilities for tertiary care of cancer has implemented 'Tertiary Care Cancer Center' Scheme with setting up of State Cancer Institutes (SCIs) and Tertiary Care Cancer Centres (TCCCs) in different parts of the country. Witnessing the pandemic Covid-19's experience, combined with the mental trauma a cancer patient goes through, may be fatal. Thus, the beneficial effects of psychological interventions on patients' mental and physical well-being especially needs a well-prepared response to both Cancer and Covid-19.

Through the above multi-pronged strategies and interventions, India has envisaged that the cancer burden would be reduced in the years to come. The Republic of India is committed to save lives and eliminate suffering with cooperation at regional, national and international levels and seek opportunities to develop research collaborations that adhere to the goals and values of IARC, including by upholding the highest standards in transparency, data quality, and transmission.

Thank You.