

International Cancer Control Partnership ECHO Program

Case Presentation Slide Template Instructions

- Limit presentation to no more than **10** minutes
- Suggested number of slides no more than 8
- Slides and short bio-sketch of presenter is due 2 days prior to the session

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Session Topic: Improving Service Delivery, Implementing System Changes/ Reducing Time To Diagnosis And From Diagnosis To Treatment

Presentation Date: July 14, 2021



Introductory Slide - Country context:

- Tanzania National cancer control plan (NCCP) information:
 - The current existing plan is for the 2013-2022
 - The development of NCCP involved consultative meetings of the national steering committee for cancer control and inputs from a wide range of individuals, groups, organizations and members through stakeholders' workshop.
 - Implemented at National, Regional and District Level
 - Tanzania Cancer Commission (TAAC) oversee the implementation of the plan, and meet every six months for evaluation of the progress.

What strategies in your NCCP address reducing time to diagnosis and/or time between diagnosis and treatment?

- In 2010, MMED Clinical Oncology programme was initiated which has enabled production of a good number of oncologists in the country and neighbouring countries.
- Government of Tanzania has initiated cancer management at the level of zonal hospitals(Bugando, KCMC, Mbeya and Benjamin Mkapa Dodoma) and some private hospitals that are routinely doing cancer screening and management.
- Cervical cancer screening is routinely available at the level of Regional hospitals and currently the plan is to go at the district level.
- Index of suspicion;ORCI together with British Council and EDDBA were conducting short trainings to regional hospital doctors on role of ruling out malignancies as earlier as possible.

- Mass screening;ORCI,MEWATA and other cancer stakeholders have been doing mass cervical and breast cancer screening in some regions that are far from zonal hospitals.

How is the current COVID-19 pandemic affecting time to diagnosis and/or time between diagnosis and treatment for cancer patients?

Patients were postponing seeking medical attention especially when they had mild symptoms due to the fear of contracting COVID-19.

- Cancer cases. Patients who were on follow up also showed up late due to fear of COVID -19. ORCI sent phone messages instructing non symptomatic follow up cases to extend their waiting period as well as to make calls when they were in dilemma.
- Mass cervical and breast cancer screening were stopped during 1st and 2nd wave of COVID-19.
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- Postpone RT for new patients in whom RT can be delayed without significant consequences (prostate ca- common in elderly with co-morbidities and high risk for COVID-19, low grade/slow growing tumours)
- Decontaminate radiotherapy equipment after each use (patients had to wait for sometime)
- Treatment was at a set time with RT machines dedicated for patients who are known/suspected for COVID-19, and are stable for radiotherapy. Radiotherapist treating these patients wear full PPE during treatment
- If local treatment for early stage (surgery) is planned, explore possibilities of postponing using a “wait and see” approach (like in some prostate cancer) or prioritise treatment balancing the cost/benefit ratio according to age, co morbidities and impact on outcome of the surgical procedure
- Longer neo-adjuvant chemotherapy regimens in order to delay RT, consider hormonal treatments
- Tumour boards are conducted virtually

What are some solutions you have identified to address time to diagnosis/treatment?

- Medical doctors Universities to incorporate cancer speciality rotation as a must for the MD students, and develop training curricular for nurses, MDs and postgraduate level.
- To continue with cancer education and mass cancer screening.
- Index of suspicion trainings; to resume with trainings to regional hospital doctors.
- The MUHAS MMED Oncology Program should continue to increase enrolment
- The Government should continue facilitating other zonal hospital with current radiotherapy machines.
- ORCI through ministry of health should plan to establish satellite cancer centres so that cancer patients can receive their care easily.

Questions for Discussion

- List out 1-2 questions to ask the ICCP ECHO participants, related to this topic and your initiatives, to gain input and ideas from other countries.