



World Cancer Day 2016: millions to take action against the world's most deadly disease

Thursday 4 February 2016 – World Cancer Day: Geneva, Switzerland – Cancer will kill more than eight million people worldwide this year, which is equivalent to the entire population of New York. Half of these will be people of working age (30-69 years old).

It has been estimated that the cost implications on world economies caused by cancer and the other non-communicable diseases (including mental health) could be as high as USD47 trillion¹ if no action is taken to reduce the anticipated growth in cases over the next two decades. This is a greater economic impact than the global financial crisis of 2008 and represents 75% of global GDP.

Today on World Cancer Day 2016 (Thursday 4 February), the world unites against this disease that knows no borders and represents one of humanity's most pressing and financial concerns.

Under the campaign theme *'We can. I can.'* World Cancer Day represents a unique opportunity to draw attention to what can be done to address cancer, save millions of avoidable deaths and, in turn, support global economic growth and development.

'We can': Today, the world's leading international cancer NGO, the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), urges corporations to focus their business on products and services that improve public health.

Moreover, UICC is asking governments to urgently reaffirm their commitment to the following cost-effective cancer 'essentials' package that save lives:

- Implementation of vaccination programmes which prevent infections that cause cervical and liver cancer
- Scale up of access to early detection and screening programmes for cervical, breast and bowel cancers and follow-on treatment*
- Improved tobacco taxation, regulation and control
- As well, as pain relief and palliative care services for all cancer patients.

"Preventing millions of unnecessary deaths and suffering from cancer is not outside of the world's scientific or financial capabilities," said Dr Cary Adams, Chief Executive Officer, UICC.

"It will however require collaborative action at both individual and collective levels – spearheaded by key leaders in society. Governments have made global commitments to priority actions for addressing cancer, we now need to see these converted to national investments in treatment centres, services and skilled health workers, as well as health promotion. Employers can play a crucial role also by investing in the well-being of their workplace and the wider environment which they impact," he added.

'I can': With more than a third of all cancers (up to 4.5 million per year) preventable through lifestyle interventions, UICC also calls on individuals to take responsibility for reducing their own cancer risk. Simple measures such as stopping smoking, eating less red and processed meat, exercising regularly and reducing alcohol use can extend a healthy life, and must be seen as the first-line of defence against cancer and other associated non-communicable diseases.

"World Cancer Day 2016 is a chance to reflect on what everyone can do to reduce the impact of this devastating disease, now, and for the future. We wish it to be a springboard for positive change. Take action for yourself, your organisation or your community/country, as everyone can make a difference and inspire others. 'We can. I can.' beat cancer," noted Professor Tezer Kutluk, UICC President.

"Join us on World Cancer Day 2016 to take action on cancer by making health and well-being commitments, participating in the official 'Talking Hands' social media activity and getting involved in hundreds of other awareness raising initiatives that are happening worldwide," he continued.

Visit www.worldcancerday.org for more information on how the day is being marked around the globe.

¹ [The Global Economic Burden of Non-communicable Diseases](#) - A report by the World Economic Forum and the Harvard School of Public Health - September 2011



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About World Cancer Day 2016

World Cancer Day takes place every year on 4 February and is the single initiative under which the world can unite to raise the profile of cancer in a positive and inspiring way.

Coordinated by UICC, World Cancer Day is this year taking place under the tagline 'We can. I can.' and explores how everyone – as a collective or as individuals – can do their part to reduce the global burden of cancer. Just as cancer affects everyone in different ways, everyone has the power to take action to reduce the impact that cancer has. World Cancer Day is a chance to reflect on what you can do, make a pledge and take action.

For more information on how to get involved, please visit: www.worldcancerday.org

About the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)

UICC is the largest international cancer-fighting organisation, with over 900 member organisations across 155 countries representing the world's major cancer societies, ministries of health, research institutes, treatment centres and patient groups.

The organisation is dedicated to taking the lead in convening, capacity building and advocacy initiatives that unite the cancer community to reduce the global cancer burden, promote greater equity, and integrate cancer control into the world health and development agenda.

UICC is dedicated to continuing to work with world leaders to increase their support for cancer control measures, and encourage accountability for the cancer commitments made in the UN Political Declaration on NCDs and the Sustainable Development Goals. UICC uses key convening opportunities like the World Cancer Leaders' Summit, World Cancer Congress and World Cancer Day for continued focus on:

- Developing specific time-bound targets and indicators to measure the national implementation of policies and approaches to prevent and control cancer
- Raising the priority accorded to cancer in the global health and development agenda
- Promoting a global response to cancer

UICC and its multisectoral partners are committed to encouraging governments to look towards the implementation and scale-up of quality and sustainable programmes that address the global burden of cancer and other NCDs. UICC is also a founding member of the NCD Alliance, a global civil society network that now represents almost 2,000 organisations in 170 countries.

For more information, please visit: www.uicc.org

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* For organisations who are interested in more information about treatment and care, please visit <http://www.uicc.org/advocacy/treatment-and-care> for access to updates and initiatives in this area, including the now open consultation on the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines (EML) process and recent Lancet Oncology commission reports that make the investment case for radiotherapy and cancer surgery.