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Western Kenya Cancer Care Centre (WKCCC) Project

December 2016 Newsletter

Overview

On-going discussions between **CRCO** and **'Win Win Team'** on efforts aimed at putting up a comprehensive cancer patient-care facility in Western Kenya and Coast Region as part of 'Win Win Team' and Harvard Medical School – Global Health Catalyst Programme's activities for improving access to cancer treatment across Africa, has seen WKCCC Project Lead - Prof. Abinya along with 'Win Win Team' principals Prof. Ahmed Elzawawy, Prof. Wilfred Ng'wa and Prof. Eduardo Cazap champion the cause for securing radiotherapy equipment for the above cancer patient-care service deficient regions.



Prof. A. Elzawawy



Prof. W. Ngwa

A notable outcome of this effort is the opening of a window of opportunity to put up a radiotherapy facility in Western Kenya after **Merck** came in to provide funding for the construction of a bunker for the radiotherapy equipment. A site-visit by WKCCC Project team on 2nd Dec 2016 heralded the beginning of a concerted effort to establish the much needed cancer patient-care facility in the region.

Western Kenya Region Cancer Patient-care Service Needs

While limited chemotherapy services are available at Aga Khan Hospital Kisumu, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching & Referral Hospital (JOOTRH) in Kisumu and Moi Reaching & Referral Hospital (MTRH) Eldoret, radiotherapy service is not available in the whole region and majority of cancer patients are referred to Kenyatta National Hospital, Nairobi which is about 350 Kms from Kisumu City. This scenario is against a backdrop of about 12,000 cases reported in 2012 (Globocan estimates) from the region which covers: **Kisumu, Siaya, Homa-Bay, Kisii, Siaya, Migori, Nyamira, Bungoma, Kakamega, Vihiga, Busia, Kericho, Nandi, Uasin Gishu** Counties and stretches over an area of 26,500 Sq Km with a population of about 12M as per 2012 Kenya Population Census Report. During the site-visit, the dire need for a cancer treatment facility in Western Kenya Region stood out as a priority for all WKCCC Project partners.

Consultative Meetings

Ministry Of Health – County Government of Kisumu



WKCCC Project Team meeting with Hon. Minister of Health, Dr. E. Ogaja (seated center) County Government of Kisumu



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The confirmation that WKCCC Project is well aligned with Kisumu County Health Strategy given by Hon. Minister Dr. Elizabeth Ogaja is encouraging indeed. The assurance from His Excellency The Governor, that his leadership is not only committed to giving support, but is awaiting details to allow the County Government to sign a MOU to be followed by a formal project launch, confirms the political goodwill WKCCC Project is currently enjoying.

Maseno University – School Of Medicine

A review of WKCCC Project objectives during the meeting noted that **patient-care, education and research** are the primary foci of the project and thus the need for a broad-based partnership that takes into account the critical role of capacity building and research in cancer prevention and control. Siting of the project at JOOTRH will undoubtedly cement and add value to the existing partnership between Maseno University and JOOTRH.



A meeting of WKCCC Project partners including MOH-CGK led by Hon. Dr. E. Ogaja, Maseno University team led by DVC Prof. C. Muhoma and Project visiting team.

The timely entry of **Merck** through its flagship **Merck Cancer Access Program**, which has agreed to put up a bunker for the proposed facility is not only highly

commendable, but demonstrates **Merck's** commitment to capacity building for the development of oncology services in Kenya.



Dr. Rasha Kelej, Chief Social Officer & Vice President Merck – is championing for establishment of the project

Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching & Referral Hospital (JOOTRH)

Earlier consultations between Ministry Of Health – County Government of Kisumu and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching & Referral Hospital (JOOTRH) led to identification of two (2) possible sites for the proposed cancer treatment facility (radiotherapy machine) within JOOTRH. One of the sites still holds the remains of an Electron radiation machine that was installed but never commissioned.

The agreement by project partners that a site-visit by a bunker construction consultant be sought paves the way for preparatory work on putting up the housing for the regions' cancer treatment center.

Project Goals Review

During the site-visit meetings, partners reaffirmed the need for the facility to provide all aspects of clinical, preventive as well as patient-care support services in a training & research setting covering the following areas:



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- Radiotherapy, chemotherapy & surgery
- Training (clinicians) & research
- Screening for most common cancers
- Cancer Information Service & other related services

Site-visit Objectives

- Discussions among partners were held with a view to:
 - (i) Defining individual organization role in the project
 - (ii) Taking advice on individual organization representative(s) to WKCCC Project board of directors as well as management team.
- Inspect the proposed site and assess its suitability.



WKCCC Project team inspecting one of the proposed sites for the placement of a bunker.

Leveraging on the support and goodwill extended by Kisumu County Government to the project in order to ensure success cannot be over-emphasized. The assurance of support from the County Government of Kisumu given by Hon. Minister of Health during our site-visit discussions is not only encouraging but critical indeed for the success of the project.

Conclusion

The realization of all the above site-visit objectives which include endorsement of preparation of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for signing by key partners as a means of providing terms of reference (TOR) and a guide to project implementation, has necessitated the need to quicken the process of project formalization in readiness for the official launch.



A WKCCC Project partners group photo after the meeting at Maseno University Main Campus