

An Initiative to Enhance the Quality of Care for Cancer Patients Through Implementing Supportive Care Practices in Armenia

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INTRODUCTION

Armenia faces an urgent need for palliative and supportive care, as approximately 70% of patients with life-limiting illnesses require specialized attention. However, resources and expertise in this critical area remain insufficient. Notably, there is currently no sub-specialization available in palliative medicine within Armenia. This presentation aims to discuss the pivotal role of establishing the first interdisciplinary center for supportive medicine in Armenia, addressing existing gaps and enhancing the quality of life for patients and their families.

	Males	Females	Both sexes
Population	1 397 735	1 574 234	2 971 969
Incidence*			
Number of new cancer cases	5 046	4 474	9 520
Age-standardized incidence rate	257.5	163.9	201.6
Risk of developing cancer before the age of 75 years (cum. risk %)	26.9	17.2	21.4
Top 3 leading cancers (ranked by cases)**	Lung Prostate Colorectum	Breast Colorectum Corpus uteri	Lung Colorectum Breast
Mortality*			
Number of cancer deaths	3 244	2 617	5 861
Age-standardized mortality rate	160.3	87.0	116.7
Risk of dying from cancer before the age of 75 years (cum. risk %)	17.4	9.6	12.9
Top 3 leading cancers (ranked by deaths)**	Lung Prostate Liver	Breast Colorectum Lung	Lung Colorectum Liver
Prevalence*			
5-year prevalent cases	10 713	11 638	22 351

Statistics at a glance, 2022

METHODS

There are several key steps required for the successful implementation of the Clinic. First, we identified the gaps in the current healthcare system, which is providing palliative care. A multidisciplinary team was formed to develop a curriculum in palliative medicine. Partnerships with international palliative and supportive care associations were formed to implement their knowledge in Armenia. New guidelines were developed to address system gaps. The initiative also included creating health ministry-controlled pharmacies for around-the-clock access to essential medications and developing electronic patient records systems. In-hospital supportive care, outpatient consultations, and mobile clinic services are among the services provided to patients who are unable to come to the facility.

Data source and methods

Incidence

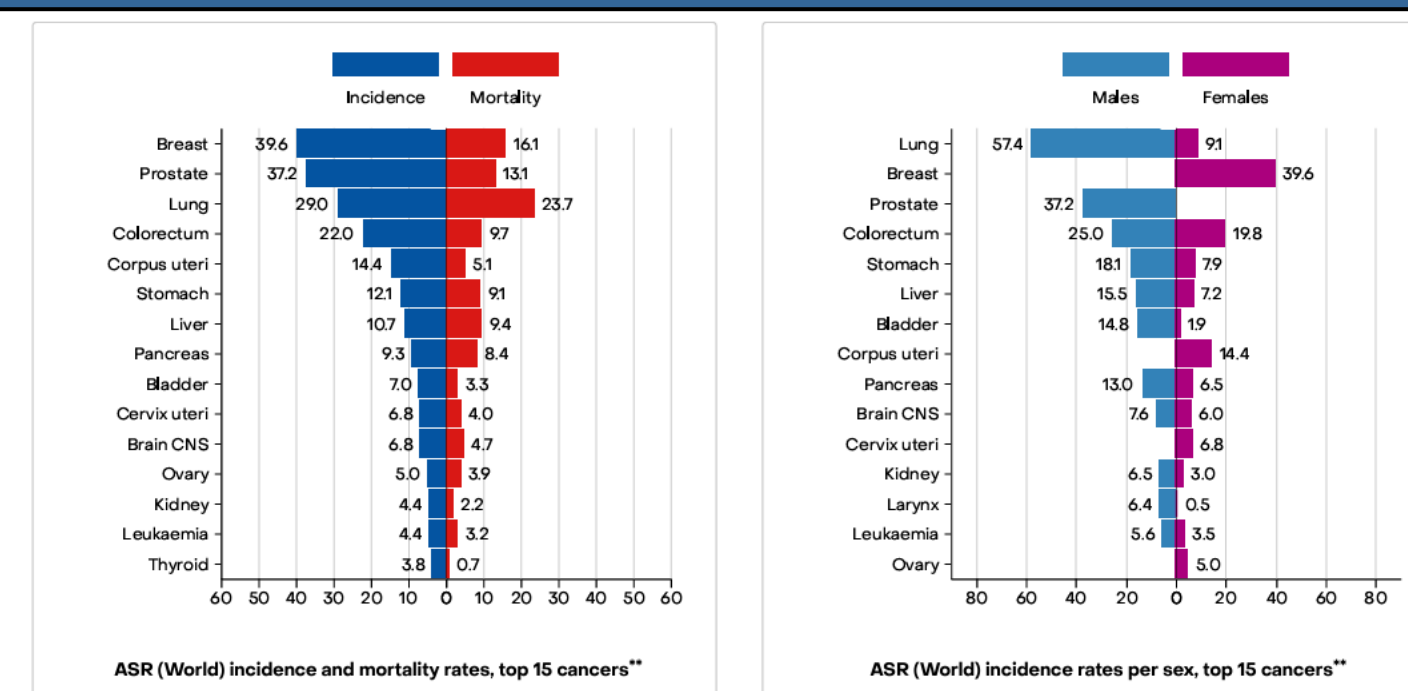
Country-specific data source: No data
Method: Estimated from national mortality estimates by modelling, using mortality/incidence ratios derived from survival estimation

Mortality

Country-specific data source: National (WHO)
Method: National rates projected to 2022

Prevalence

Computed using sex-, site- and age-specific incidence to 1-3- and 5-year prevalence ratios from Nordic countries for the period (2011-2020), and scaled using Human Development Index (HDI) ratios.



Data source and methods

RESULTS

The interdisciplinary center is set to launch in Spring 2024. It is anticipated to provide comprehensive inpatient and outpatient palliative care, including pain management, psychosocial and spiritual support, and symptom relief. The center aims to reduce the burden on emergency services and healthcare costs while improving patients' quality of life.

CONCLUSIONS

The establishment of this center marks a significant advancement in Armenia's healthcare system, particularly in palliative and supportive care. It is expected to improve patient outcomes and serve as a model for future developments in this essential area of medicine.