

Cancer care that knows no boundaries—NCCN guidelines customized for use in Africa

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The fact that you live in a particular country or community should not impact your ability to get good care for cancer.

That's the motivation behind a new collaborative international effort to improve [cancer](#) care in many African nations, says Roswell Park's James Mohler, MD, a urologic oncologist and Chair of the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines) Panel for Prostate Cancer.

Dr. Mohler was one of six U.S. cancer experts who have been part of this effort, which was launched today with the debut of the NCCN Harmonized Guidelines for Sub-Saharan Africa.

"Over the last couple decades, life expectancy has increased so much in sub-Saharan Africa that cancer, a disease of older people, has become a real problem in these countries and the rates of certain cancers are increasing dramatically," says Dr. Mohler, who has traveled to Kenya and Uganda as part of this effort.

"The whole concept of creating cancer care guidelines, as the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) and other organizations have done in the U.S. and many parts of the world, is to give patients and physicians a framework for delivering effective clinical care. When these nations approached NCCN and our collaborators about

customizing eight key guidelines and developing a guideline for Kaposi's sarcoma for 12 African nations, based on the resources and priorities within those particular countries, we enthusiastically agreed to support the initiative."

The NCCN Harmonized Guidelines, based on the NCCN Guidelines, were jointly created by the African Cancer Coalition and NCCN, and were presented for the first time today as part of the African Organisation for Research and Training in Cancer (AORTIC) conference in Kigali, Rwanda. The American Cancer Society (ACS) and the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) helped drive and support the effort as well.

"All these partners signed on to work with the African Cancer Coalition on its goal to help the greatest number of people to benefit from the most effective treatments for cancer," Dr. Mohler adds.

The first eight guidelines created through this initiative, all released today, are targeted recommendations on treating breast cancer, cervical cancer, [prostate cancer](#), B-cell lymphoma, chronic lymphocytic leukemia/small lymphocytic lymphoma and Kaposi sarcoma, as well as addressing cancer pain in adults and providing palliative care. They are based on the NCCN Guidelines, which were created to improve the quality of cancer care by providing recommendations based on the best evidence available. The NCCN Harmonized Guidelines offer treatment recommendations depending on access to resources like radiation equipment or minimally invasive surgical tools.

"This collaboration provides an opportunity to bring together leading African oncology experts and NCCN experts to develop clinical guidance that ensures our patients get access to the highest quality [cancer care](#) possible," says Jackson Orem, MD, Executive Director of the Uganda Cancer Institute and Co-Chair of the African Cancer Coalition.

The partners plan to unveil additional guidelines in 2018 as part of this initiative.

Provided by Roswell Park Cancer Institute

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