



June 2020

Adapting to a Changing Global Health Landscape

Dear AAI Partners and Friends,

In these times of uncertainty, it is more important than ever that we work together – governments, private industry, experts, and clinicians – to ensure access to quality healthcare for all populations of the world. The coronavirus pandemic has spurred a new normal – one in which we remain at a distance to keep each other safe. And yet, we find innovative ways to connect to one another, to learn together, and reflect on our collective progress, goals, and visions for the changing global health landscape that lies ahead of us.

Through the African Access Initiative (AAI), we continue to support our partners in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Senegal to build clinical capacity and provide high-quality health services and treatment to cancer patients. BVGH is coordinating online distance-learning courses to improve diagnostic and radiation therapy techniques, driving strategic pricing agreements for cancer medicines and technologies, and generating policy-shaping analyses and health systems improvement projects.

Please share this AAI newsletter with your colleagues and reach out to us with any suggestions or ideas for how we can work together to improve cancer patient outcomes in Africa.

On behalf of the entire team here at BVGH, thank you to the frontline healthcare workers in clinics around the world who are doing their part to keep us safe in these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dent, President & CEO

BIO Ventures for Global Health

Building Diagnostic Capacity in Cote d'Ivoire



With the generous support of Friends of Cancer Patients – Ameera Fund, BVGH partnered with PhenoPath Laboratories – a Quest Diagnostics company – to conduct a hands-on fellowship program for two AAI clinicians from Côte d'Ivoire.

Professor Isidore Diomande and Dr. N'Da Marcelin Homian – both distinguished Ivorian medical professionals in pathology and medical oncology, respectively – learned advanced pathology techniques, such as flow cytometry and immunohistochemistry, while at PhenoPath. Now back in Côte d'Ivoire, Prof. Diomande will use his new skills to improve the diagnosis of breast and colon cancer patients and direct the selection of the most appropriate treatment options. Dr. Homian will use the techniques to further his breast cancer research programs and enhance his management of cancer patients. Read more about the PhenoPath fellowship program in the blog [here](#).

Following his fellowship, Dr. Homian was nominated to serve as a member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Resource Stratified Guideline Advisory Group, where he will contribute to the development of clinical practice guidelines specific to LMIC settings and continue to share the knowledge gained through his fellowship experience with oncology leaders worldwide.

During their time in Seattle, Prof. Diomande and Dr. Homian presented their work in Côte d'Ivoire at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center as part of the Global Oncology Lecture series. Watch the presentation [here](#).

Skoll World Forum Presentation: Improving Access to Cancer Medicines in Northern Nigeria



Jennifer Dent, President and CEO of BVGH, and AAI partner, Dr. Faruk Mohammed, a cancer scientist in the Department of Pathology at the Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH), presented BVGH's AAI Cancer Drug Access Program during the 2020 Skoll World Forum Online. The presentation highlighted BVGH's progress towards improving affordable access to prioritized cancer drugs in Northern Nigeria, in partnership with ABUTH and the government of Kano State. Watch the presentation [here](#).

BVGH, ABUTH, and Kano State are piloting a first-of-its-kind drug access program to improve Nigeria's access to affordable, high-quality cancer medicines manufactured by multinational pharmaceutical companies.

Surgical Mentorship Improves Care for Patients in Senegal



BVGH organized a surgical mentorship program in Senegal in partnership with [Mercy Ships](#). Dr. Diegane Faye of Senegal trained in head and neck surgery under Dr. Mark Shrime of Harvard Medical School, who was serving as a volunteer surgeon aboard the *Africa Mercy*, the largest non-governmental hospital ship in the world. Dr. Faye expressed that his time spent training with Dr. Shrime exceeded his expectations.

"It was a great experience to be part of the mentoring program. Despite the short time I spent on the Africa Mercy, I gained a lot of knowledge that has already allowed me to provide better care to my patients."

- Dr. Diegane Faye

Virtual Training Course Builds Diagnostic Capacity in 38 Hospitals

BVGH and the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) are leading a virtual training program with Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH) to improve cancer diagnostic capacity in Nigeria. Informed by the AAI hospital needs assessment results, the program covers the fundamentals of histology and immunohistochemistry for the diagnosis of Nigeria's six most common cancers: breast, cervical, prostate, liver, colorectal, lymphomas, and pediatric cancers.

The nine-week course has been attended by more than 60 pathologists from 38 hospitals across Nigeria. The Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria has recognized the program as an accredited course and will be awarding participants continuing medical education credits.

"The virtual training program has been a boon for my institution [ABUTH], where we diagnose more than 1,800 cancer patients each year. The training course will enable my colleagues and I to correctly diagnose difficult cancer cases, thereby ensuring those patients are offered the most appropriate treatment option."

- Dr. Yawale Iliyasu

Presentations and Publications

Presentation: AAI Drug Access in Kigali, Rwanda

Callie Weber of BVGH presented the AAI Drug Access Program during Rwanda's National Cancer Symposium on World Cancer Day. The symposium coincided with the official launch of Rwanda's National Cancer Control Strategy (NCCS), the National Cancer Registry, and the Rwanda Cancer Center – the first radiation therapy center in the country. Affordable and sustainable access to cancer drugs will be critical to the success of the NCCS and the improvement of cancer patient outcomes in Rwanda.

Presentation: African Consortium for Cancer Clinical Trials (AC3T)

BVGH's African Consortium for Cancer Clinical Trials (AC3T) was presented as part of the Conducting Oncology Clinical Trials in Africa II webinar series. Click [here](#) to watch Daniel Seymour's presentation. For additional information, contact: captc@cop.ufl.edu

Upcoming Manuscript: "Operational Strategies for Clinical Trials in Africa"

Be on the lookout for BVGH's new manuscript, "Operational Strategies for Clinical Trials in Africa," which will be published in the JCO Global Oncology journal.

Click [here](#) to download BVGH's latest AAI summary.

Join the Fight

To learn more about AAI and to get involved, please contact [Katy Graef](#).

Thank you to our AAI Partners



Don't miss this opportunity!

African Cancer Research Webinar Series

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The Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Dana-Farber Harvard Cancer Center are hosting an African Cancer Research Webinar series.

The next webinar, "ARGO: The African Research Group in Oncology" will be led by Dr. Peter Kingham, Memorial Sloane Kettering Institute and Dr. Isaac Alatishe, Obafemi Awolowo University on June 19, 2020. Dr. Kingham and Dr. Alatishe will describe results from cancer research training programs and breast and colorectal cancer research focused on screening, biology, diagnosis, and outcomes in Nigeria.

For more information about upcoming webinars and registration, contact: amy_hayward@dfci.harvard.edu



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