



August 2021

## Together in the fight against cancer

Dear AAI Partners and Friends,

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting vaccines have demonstrated what we can achieve – in a short period of time – when we work together. Yet the limited penetration of the vaccines into low- and middle-income countries underscores the numerous barriers to healthcare that remain in these markets. Barriers to care are nothing new to Africa’s cancer patients and providers; and just like the COVID-19 pandemic, public-private partnerships are the key to breaking down these life-threatening barriers.

Through the African Access Initiative (AAI), we have partnered with diverse organizations such as [African government agencies](#), pharmaceutical companies and [private industry organizations](#), African healthcare providers, cancer experts and academic think tanks, and more to eliminate African cancer patients’ barriers to care.

The partnerships are paying off. We have coordinated affordable access to high-quality medicines that will benefit over 2,000 cancer patients in Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Nigeria. Through our engagement with African governments, such as Nigeria’s Kano State Governor, His Excellency, Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, many more cancer patients will soon access life-saving medicines.

In parallel, our partnerships with international cancer experts are ensuring that African healthcare providers have the skills to diagnose and treat cancer patients with a high standard of care. The partnerships are also equipping Africa’s rising cancer research leaders with the expertise needed to conduct crucial oncology clinical trials.

Your partnership and dedication to Africa’s cancer patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals are critical.

If you or your colleagues are interested in supporting AAI, please share this newsletter and reach out to us with any suggestions or ideas for how we can work together to advance and improve cancer care on the African continent.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Dent, President & CEO  
BIO Ventures for Global Health

# Partnership Announcement

## Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority

BVGH and the [Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority \(NSIA\)](#) have partnered to strengthen Nigeria's cancer investments. The [partnership](#) will initially focus on building capacity, establishing sustainable drug access agreements, and forging international partnerships for NSIA's flagship cancer hospital, the NSIA-LUTH Cancer Center.

*"This partnership will not only improve access to quality cancer treatment for Nigerian citizens, but will also strengthen our economy as medical tourism is made unnecessary for cancer treatment," - Mr. Uche Orji, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, NSIA*



Credit: Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority



BVGH and the [College of Pathologists of East, Central, and Southern Africa \(COPECSA\)](#) have partnered to promote excellence in the practice of cancer pathology in Africa to benefit cancer patients and improve the understanding and outcome of malignant diseases.

### Cameroon Oncology Center



We are pleased to welcome our [newest AAI member hospital](#), the [Cameroon Oncology Center \(COC\)](#). Located outside of Douala, the center is equipped with Cameroon's only medical linear accelerator and computerized treatment planning system and provides sophisticated radiotherapy treatment to 70 patients daily. The COC houses a modern oncology suite with 10 infusion stations and an imaging center with a CT scanner, mammography capabilities, and more.

## Establishing sustainable access to cancer medicines and technologies

### Driving Affordable Cancer Drug Access in Northern Nigeria

[Following a meeting](#) with the Vice Chancellor of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), His Excellency, Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, Governor of Kano State, accepted BVGH's and ABU's request for support for the AAI Northern Nigeria Priority Drug Access Program. [Governor Ganduje confirmed](#) that the Kano Government is "willing to spend any reasonable amount of money for the realization of this project and partnership."



Governor Ganduje, Vice Chancellor Kabir Bala, and Nigerian cancer leaders met in Kano State to accelerate affordable access to priority cancer medicines.

# Building clinical oncology capacity

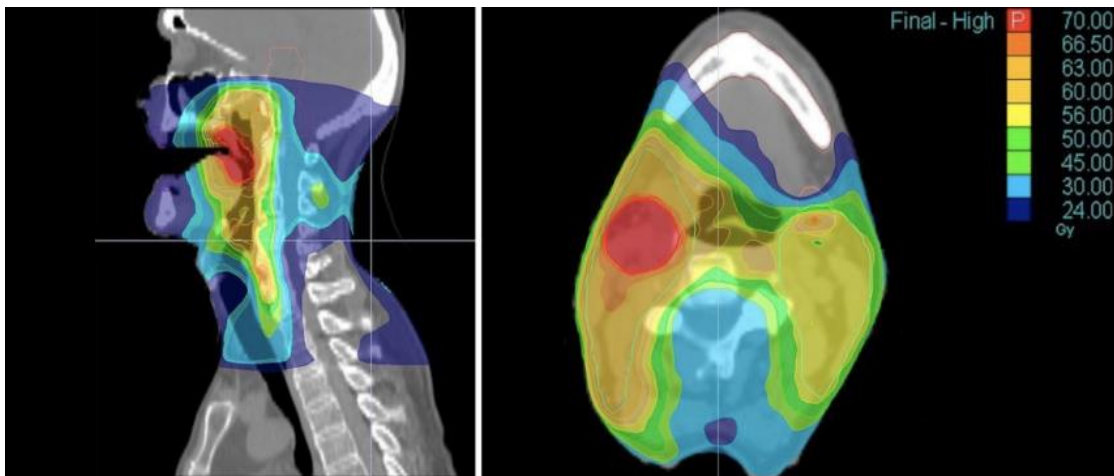
## Immunotherapies Special Lecture

Our AAI Virtual Training Series for Oncology Nursing participants ask and BVGH provides! In partnership with the [Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer \(SITC\)](#), BVGH organized a [special lecture on cancer immunotherapies](#). Taught by Laura Wood of the Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center, the virtual lecture was attended by 143 clinicians from 9 countries.

## 3D/IMRT Advancement for RTTs

BVGH and [Rayos Contra Cancer \(RCC\)](#) launched a 17-week virtual training program for radiotherapy technicians (RTTs) on 3D and intensity-modulated radiotherapy (IMRT). The course – designed as a companion to RCC's IMRT training for medical physicists and radiation oncologists – will equip the 123 participating RTTs with the knowledge needed to deliver precise doses of radiation to tumors while sparing surrounding tissues.

Parlez-vous français? BVGH and RCC's French version of the IMRT for RTTs course will start in late August. Please email [Katy Graef](#) for more information.

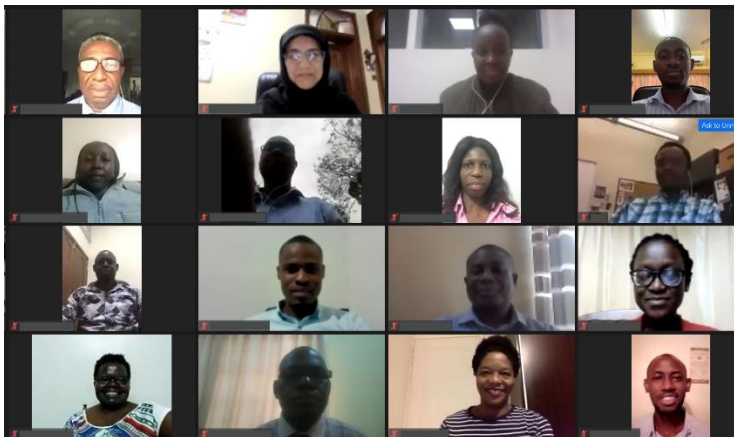




# Addressing the cancer data gap in Africa through clinical trials

## Introduction to Cancer Clinical Trials

[Less than 2%](#) of global cancer clinical trials are performed in Africa. The African Consortium for Cancer Clinical Trials (AC<sup>3</sup>T) aims to change this. BVGH and partners from Harvard, Oxford, and Takeda held a [14-week virtual course](#) that trained 400+ African clinicians on the fundamentals of performing clinical trials. Strengthening Africa's cohort of trained trialists is a critical step towards the continent's routine involvement in this essential aspect of cancer patient management and product development.



Participants of the clinical trial course graduation ceremony, which featured a special keynote by ASCO Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Julie Gralow

# Expanding awareness of cancer in Africa

## Emerging Frontiers in Oncology

BVGH emphasized its commitment to creating a market access model, rather than a donation-based model, for cancer medicines on the African continent during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Emerging Frontiers in Oncology Summit.

## Creating Access to Cancer Drugs in Africa

[BioCentury](#) featured AAI as a “data-driven approach which gives a voice to the physicians who care for patients, ensuring that contributions are matched to needs and capabilities.”

## Continuing Medical Education during COVID-19: Virtual Training for Gynecologic Oncology Management in Rwanda

BVGH and partners published an [article](#) in the *International Journal of Gynecological Cancer* describing its virtual training program that taught Rwandan OB-GYNs about screening, diagnosis, treatment, and referral of gynecologic cancers.

## Join the Fight

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

## Thank you to our AAI Partners



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