



December 2022

## Together in the fight against cancer

Dear AAI Partners and Friends,

As we reflect back on this past year, we are filled with gratitude to our partners. Our relationships with the African hospitals, industry representatives, and academics who join with BVGH to improve cancer outcomes in Africa are the foundation of our AAI programs.

These relationships expose us to new ideas and opportunities. Takeda recently detailed our [partnership](#) and [work together in Nigeria](#) in their [Access to Medicines Progress Report 2022](#). We are proud to contribute to Takeda's access to medicines goals and are inspired by the company's outsized commitment to delivering access for all patients. During the World Cancer Congress in Geneva, I sat down with Dr. Denise Ejoh, founder of AAI partner Cormode Cancer Foundation and herself a cancer survivor, to discuss cancer in Nigeria on her [live cancer awareness television program](#).

Dr. Zakaria Youbi joined forces with BVGH in Nigeria again to help refine brachytherapy practice at the University College Hospital (UCH) Ibadan. Our partnership with the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) has led to knowledge sharing opportunities, including an in-person pathology grossing workshop in Côte d'Ivoire. Additionally, we organized the placement of ASCP Global Health Fellows at AAI hospitals in Kenya, Nigeria, and Rwanda.

Our commitment to Africa-led solutions moves forward with us to 2023. Please share this newsletter with any of your colleagues who are interested in supporting AAI. We welcome any ideas or suggestions for improving cancer outcomes in Africa.

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

# Building clinical oncology capacity

## Strengthening of High Dose Rate Brachytherapy Capacity in Nigeria



Dr. Youbi, center, with the UCH Ibadan team.

The University College Hospital (UCH) Ibadan (Nigeria) began providing cancer patients with high dose rate (HDR) brachytherapy in 2008. Since then, the hospital has used brachytherapy to treat an average of 450 cervical and prostate cancer patients per year. Given that the demand for brachytherapy treatment continues to grow in Nigeria, the UCH Ibadan radiotherapy team expressed their need for continued education and improvement of their treatment practices. In response, BVGH recruited Dr. Zakaria Youbi (University of Montreal Health Center [Canada]) and Dr. Claire Dempsey (Calvary Mater Newcastle [Australia]) to provide customized mentorship and training. Dr. Youbi, a medical oncologist, travelled to Ibadan, providing hands-on demonstrations on ultrasound-guided applicator insertions for cervical cancer treatment and auditing the team's daily practices to implement improvements. Dr. Dempsey provided the hospital's medical physics team with remote guidance.

***"We enjoyed working with Dr. Youbi and Dr. Dempsey. We are grateful for their patience and understanding when obstacles presented themselves during the training. As a result, our team is more confident, and we now have new techniques to treat our patients."*** – Dr. Iyobosa Uwadiae, Medical Physicist, Department of Radiation Oncology at UCH Ibadan

## Hands-On Pathology Training in Côte d'Ivoire



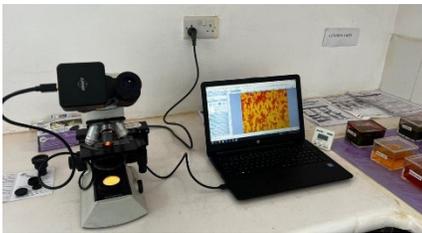
Ms. Lee, right, and the CHU Cocody pathology team.

A cancer diagnosis is only as good as the specimen slide prepared by the laboratory histotechnician. Building upon their training programs for pathologists in Côte d'Ivoire, BVGH and the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) partnered with Prof. Isidore Diomande, a pathologist and President of the Ivorian Society of Pathology (Côte d'Ivoire), and Ms. Danielle Lee, a registered technologist and the CEO of Pathology Solutions (Canada), to upscale the grossing skills of Ivorian histotechnicians. Over the course of a two-week program at the University Hospital Center (CHU) Cocody – one of Côte d'Ivoire's two public cancer hospitals – Ms. Lee presented lectures, gave demonstrations, and oversaw students' practical application of grossing techniques. Focusing on the "why" behind each technique, and the need to adapt to changing staging criteria and methods, Ms. Lee shared new skills with CHU Cocody's pathology team that will improve cancer diagnoses at the hospital.

## American Society for Clinical Pathology Global Health Fellowships

In response to the needs of AAI hospitals, BVGH coordinated the placement of American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Global Health Fellows at AAI hospitals in Kenya, Nigeria, and Rwanda.

### Paving the Way for Automated Immunohistochemistry



New microscope camera at Machakos to assist with IHC services.

Two ASCP Global Health Fellows from the USA, Dr. Peter Wanes and Dr. Julum Nwanze, partnered with the Machakos Cancer Care and Research Center (MCCRC) in Kenya to support the hospital's breast cancer diagnostic needs. In addition to installing a microscope camera and training the laboratory staff to acquire high-resolution digital images, Dr. Wanes, Dr. Nwanze, and MCCRC's histotechnicians reviewed the hospital's anatomic pathology practices. Recognizing the advantages of automating MCCRC's immunohistochemistry (IHC) processes, Drs. Wanes and Nwanze finished their fellowship by helping the hospital identify research grants that could fund MCCRC's procurement of automated IHC equipment.



ASCP Global Health Fellows and partners at ABUTH discussing pathology curriculum.

### Updating Pathology Curriculum

The Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH) in Nigeria trains approximately 100 medical students each year – including on the pathologic diagnosis of cancer. With the goal of updating ABUTH's pathology curriculum, ASCP Global Health Fellows Dr. Kene Ojukwu and Dr. Ion Prisneac, both from the USA, organized an eight-part virtual lecture series that will act as foundation for ABUTH's future curriculum development and be used as a tool for medical students at ABUTH and its partner institutions. A follow-up course is in development.



Dr. Fathima, left, and Dr. Hategekimana, right.

### Introducing Peritoneal Fluid Cytology

Dr. Samreen Fathima, a pathology resident from the USA, spent four weeks working with the University Teaching Hospital of Butare (CHUB) through a virtual ASCP Global Health Fellowship. Along with presenting three digital lectures covering cytology of pleural and peritoneal effusion and lymphoproliferative diseases, she prepared digital grossing protocols that will improve standardization and efficiency of grossing reporting at the Rwandan hospital. In partnership with Dr. Elisée Hategekimana, Head of the Anatomic Pathology Service, CHUB, Dr. Fathima also prepared a research proposal to evaluate the cancer burden seen at CHUB over the past five years – the results of which will assist with future allocation of cancer intervention resources.

# Expanding awareness of cancer in Africa



## Colorectal Cancer Awareness in Nigeria

AAI partner, the [Niola Cancer Care Foundation](#), is conducting a survey to understand colorectal cancer awareness amongst the Nigerian public. Live in Nigeria? BVGH and Niola Cancer Care Foundation encourage you to take (and share with family and friends) the anonymous survey: <https://forms.gle/yBKR5FF8RxTpb9bz5>

## Announcements

### Design and Implementation of a Cancer Screening Program in Cameroon

Early detection of cancer can reduce patient burdens and lead to better health outcomes, yet it can be difficult to implement screening programs in low-resource settings. AAI hospital Cameroon Oncology Center published a paper in the *International Journal of Clinical Oncology and Cancer Research* detailing its screening program in the Dibombari Health District of Cameroon. Read on to learn about the screening program's results: [Design and Implementation of a Cancer Screening Program for a Health District in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Pilot Study](#)

### Cormode Cancer Foundation on AIT and Plus TV

Cormode Cancer Foundation (CCF) partners with [African Independent Television \(AIT\)](#) for a twice-monthly program that offers support for cancer patients and general cancer education. The program airs every second and fourth Wednesday at 8:15am WAT. CCF has also newly partnered with [Plus TV](#) and will build to weekly appearances on Saturdays. View CCF's library of shows [here](#).

### Strategic Training Achievements for Research Success (STARS)

Applications are open for a part-time program that seeks to promote strategic and operational capacity in Sub-Saharan African cancer research. Training will take place over nine months. Letter of intent deadline is **December 30, 2022**. Learn more, including how to apply, [here](#).

### Upcoming AAI Digital Trainings

Stay tuned for more information about BVGH's upcoming AAI digital training programs:

- Early Detection of Cancer and Blood Disorders
- Advanced Oncology Pharmacy – French
- Advanced Oncology Pharmacy – English
- Diagnostic Imaging

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## 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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