

African Access Initiative (AAI) Newsletter

May 2018

African Access Initiative (AAI)

Driven by Africa - for Africa – AAI is an innovative program that engages stakeholders across sectors to accelerate access to cancer treatment.

Using data generated at the country-level by African hospitals and governments, AAI is expanding access to cancer medicines and technologies, strengthening healthcare infrastructure, and building clinical oncology and R&D capacity in Africa.



President's Letter

Dear BVGH Partners and Friends,

Cancer is on the rise across the globe – with the greatest increase in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The number of Africans dying from cancer is expected to increase 70% by 2030.

BVGH is taking a cross-sector, multi-pronged approach with the African Access Initiative (AAI) to derail the rising African cancer epidemic. AAI brings together key stakeholders including ministries of health, African oncologists and hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, and NGOs to build capacity and establish access to prioritized cancer medicines and technologies.

Hear first-hand from African ministers of health and oncologists and industry leaders in a new video that features the powerful voices of our AAI partners as they discuss the realities of cancer in Africa. Travel with me to Nigeria where I participated in the launch of the country's new National Cancer Control Plan, and learn about how donated laboratory equipment will empower Africans to improve their diagnostic capacities.

We invite pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies with strategic interests in oncology and Africa to join us in improving access to cancer treatment in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, and Rwanda through business and strategic pricing agreements for cancer medicines and technologies; capacity building (fellowships, workshops, and more); diagnostic laboratory equipment placements; and participation in the African Consortium for Cancer Clinical Trials (AC3T).

Sincerely,
Jennifer Dent
President, BVGH

New AAI Video Captures the Powerful Voices of AAI Partners and Stakeholders

BVGH's AAI video features AAI partners and stakeholders' priorities for improving cancer patient management in Africa. Interviews with African oncologists, government leaders, and hospital executives reveal the realities of cancer in Africa and opportunities for AAI to make a substantial impact on the lives of African cancer patients.



Prioritizing Cancer in a Country of 196 Million People

Nigeria has stepped up its fight against cancer with the launch of its National Cancer Control Plan 2018-2022. During the inaugural launch event, BVGH presented AAI and its alliance with the Nigerian government to address the rapidly rising burden of cancer in the country.

Professor Isaac Adewole, Nigeria's Minister of Health and an oncologist, introduced the National Cancer Control Plan and highlighted AAI's activities in Nigeria in his keynote speech at the launch event. Sixteen Nigerian hospitals are participating in AAI and are conducting detailed needs assessments to inform AAI activities in the country.



High-Value Equipment Finds a New Home

Driven by Africa, for Africa, AAI uses a comprehensive AAI Hospital Needs Assessment – completed by each AAI hospital – to capture information on cancer patient populations; staffing; diagnostic, treatment, and research capacity; and prioritized cancer drugs. These assessments are critical to understanding each hospital’s oncology priorities, capabilities, and gaps, and appropriately coordinating relevant AAI activities for the hospital.

The Federal Medical Centre (FMC) in Owo, Nigeria expressed its need for laboratory equipment in its AAI Hospital Needs Assessment. BVGH coordinated the placement of five high-value laboratory instruments – donated by Pfizer to BVGH – at the FMC to meet its diagnostic laboratory needs.



Transnational Partnerships and Training

Dr. Dina Bell, an oncologist and director of the Bonassama District Hospital, Cameroon, currently treats over 140 breast cancer patients annually. Through the AAI Hospital Needs Assessment, Dr. Bell noted her desire to expand her knowledge in the use of new treatment protocols to improve her practice and management of breast cancer patients.

Through AAI, BVGH connected Dr. Bell with Dr. Lisa Newman from the Henry Ford Health System (HFHS) International Center for the Study of Breast Cancer Subtypes (ICSBCS), who leads the Breast Cancer Research and Training Program throughout Africa. Dr. Bell travelled to Ghana and participated in a training program with Dr. Newman’s team.

“The African Access Initiative is linking us to experts to improve our practice and linking us to a good research project on cancer.” – Dr. Dina Bell.

Clinical Trial Consortium to Debut at *Upcoming 2018 BIO International Convention*

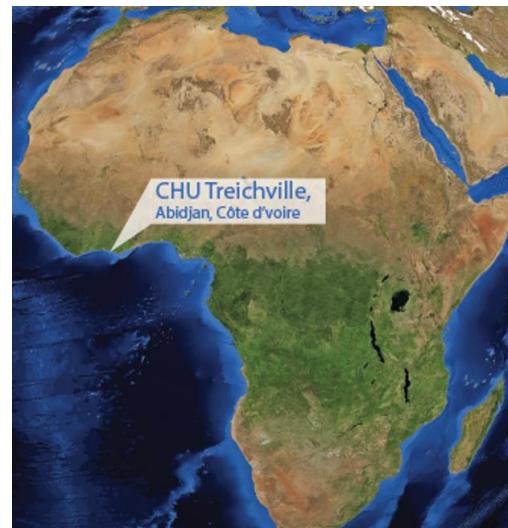
Clinical trials present an opportunity to take action against the growing cancer epidemic in Africa. In November 2017, BVGH launched the African Consortium for Cancer Clinical Trials (AC³T) – a first-of-its kind clinical trial consortium. AC³T supports African oncologists to implement cancer clinical trials and improve our understanding of how African patients respond to life-saving medicines already approved in the United States.

Since AC³T's launch, an advisory committee composed of world-renowned cancer researchers, clinicians, and pharmaceutical company representatives was formed. This June, BVGH will host a [panel session](#), an AC³T committee meeting, and a roundtable meeting with industry representatives and African delegates that focus on AC³T and clinical trials in Africa at the 2018 BIO International Convention in Boston.

AAI Hospital Spotlight

CHU Treichville

Located in the suburbs of Abidjan – the economic capital of Côte d'Ivoire – the University Hospital Center (CHU) Treichville is a 630+ bed public teaching hospital whose oncology department specializes in solid tumors. Breast, liver, prostate, cervical, and colorectal cancers are the most commonly-diagnosed cancers at CHU Treichville. The hospital currently has basic pathology laboratory capacity, however, with support from the Côte d'Ivoire government, CHU Treichville is refurbishing its pathology laboratories. This laboratory update will aid the hospital in more efficiently and accurately diagnosing its cancer patients.



Access to prostate cancer medicines, oncology research training, access to diagnostic laboratory equipment, and complementary oncology healthcare worker training are priority needs that CHU Treichville has highlighted through its AAI Hospital Needs Assessment.

Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Global Cancer Disparity Initiatives Observership Program

The Observership Program was created to provide physicians who are making a difference in low- and middle-income countries with the opportunity to participate in a period of observation and education alongside MSK's experts. Successful applicants will receive a travel grant to be used toward airfare and living expenses for the duration of the six-week observership.

Advances in Hematology in Africa

This four-day hematology course will consist of lectures and clinical case presentations covering sickle cell disease, hematological malignancies, red cell disorders, and hemostasis and blood transfusion. A limited number of bursaries that will cover travel and local expenses, partially or totally, are available to participants from outside Dar es Salaam.

Get Involved with AAI

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



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401 Terry Avenue N., Seattle, WA 98109

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