



December 2023

## Together in the fight against cancer

Dear AAI Partners and Friends,

As the year comes to a close, we are thrilled to share some exciting updates from the last couple of months.

BVGH recently attended the World Cancer Leaders' Summit, 2023 African Organization for Research and Training in Cancer (AORTIC) Biennial Meeting, Nigeria's International Cancer Week, and the Bloomberg American Health Summit. We value these opportunities to strengthen ties with partners, as well as make new connections to accelerate improved cancer patient outcomes in Africa. During the 2023 AORTIC meeting in Senegal, BVGH held a prostate cancer-focused event, bringing together AAI partners and collaborators from around the world.



Members of the HypoAfrica Team gather at the AORTIC conference.

Visit our newly developed and launched website at [bvgh.org](http://bvgh.org). The redesigned website provides more details about AAI, including partner country highlights and AAI program stories. BVGH's African Consortium for Cancer Clinical Trials (AC<sup>3</sup>T) page features an updated search tool that will better enable visitors to identify potential clinical trial site partners.

Numerous AAI digital training programs are nearing their conclusion as the holiday season approaches. The participation and engagement levels in these programs have been exceptional, and we look forward to sharing the outcomes with you. With the intention of meeting our partner hospitals' needs for oncology training in various topics, BVGH will offer new training opportunities in 2024. To be informed when we open registration for these courses, be sure to follow our news feed or sign up for AAI training program announcements [here](#).

We look forward to working with and updating you in the new year!

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

# 2023: A Year in Review

## AAI Training Programs

Courses conducted

30

Countries represented

94

Sites with attendees

2,500+

Individuals trained

6,670+

# Partnership Announcement

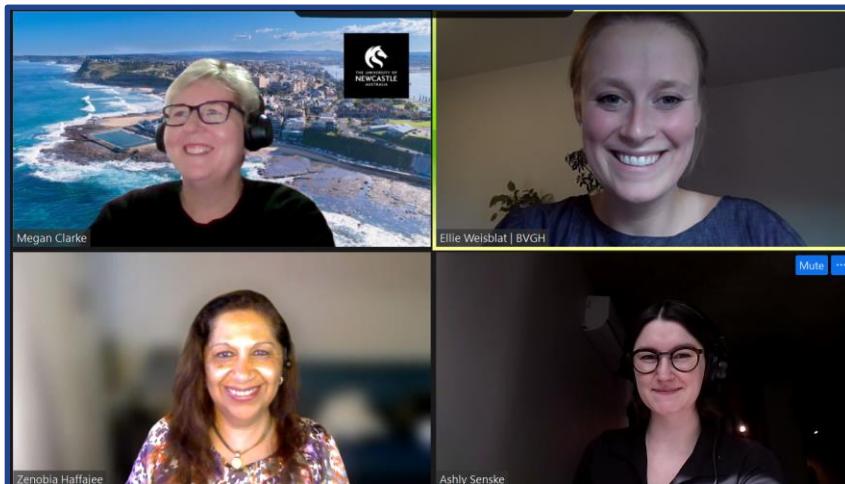


## BVGH and Amgen Unite to Fight Prostate and Colorectal Cancer

BVGH is pleased to announce a new partnership with Amgen focused on combating prostate and colorectal cancers in LMICs. The burden of these cancers is increasing in most LMICs and caused 47,000 and 43,000 deaths in 2020, respectively. This partnership will focus on goals prioritized by AAI partner countries at the governmental and hospital levels, including timely diagnosis and treatment of prostate and colorectal cancers as well as patient education and healthcare provider capacity building. Stay tuned for related programs in the new year!

## Building clinical oncology capacity

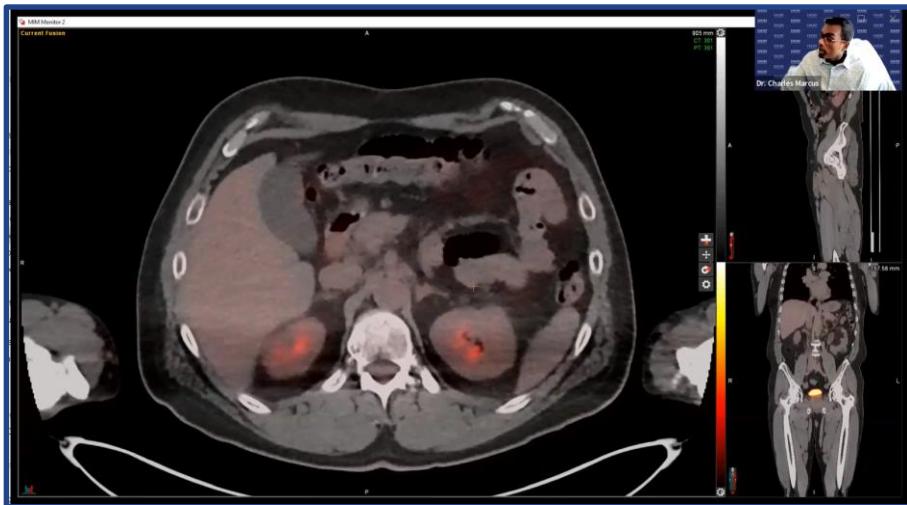
### AAI Lab Operations and Management Series Empowers Laboratory Staff



Megan Clarke (upper left) and Zenobia Haffajee (lower left), lecturers for session 4 of the AAI Laboratory Operations and Management Digital Training, meet with BVGH staff before the start of their lecture.

Early detection of cancer is essential for timely treatment and the best possible outcome for the patient. This can only be achieved through prompt, accurate, and efficient cancer diagnoses. With guidance from AAI hospital, the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, BVGH designed a five-week [AAI Laboratory Operations and Management Digital Training Program](#) to educate African pathology laboratory staff on best practices, quality control, and standard laboratory procedures in order to enhance cancer diagnosis. A total of 429 participants attended the digital course, which was taught by experts from the University of Oklahoma, Swift Path Solutions, NSW Health Pathology, and the Royal College of Pathologists and Australasia.

## Healthcare Providers Enhance Skills in Diagnostic Imaging Lecture Series



Dr. Charles Marcus explains a PET-CT scan showing radiotracer uptake in the urinary bladder during lecture 6.

Diagnostic imaging plays a major role in the early detection of health conditions, particularly cancer. In response to AAI hospital requests, BVGH partnered with NANO-X IMAGING LTD to organize a [two-part digital lecture series](#) with the goal of improving radiologists' diagnostic imaging abilities, image interpretation, and patient safety. Following the Introduction to Diagnostic Imaging Seminar Series 1, which covered various techniques such as ultrasound, x-ray, and tomosynthesis, Series 2 featured an additional seven lectures covering an introduction to PET-CT imaging, abdominal CT, interventional CT, breast MRI, and an advanced lecture on chest x-ray. The second series attracted more than 450 participants from 15 different African countries.

## Cancer Registry Special Lecture Presented During International Cancer Week in Abuja, Nigeria



Participants in Abuja watch Dr. Max Parkin's live lecture during International Cancer Week.

Nigeria's National Institute for Cancer Research and Treatment (NICRAT) hosted International Cancer Week (ICW) in Abuja, Nigeria to bring together international cancer stakeholders to form partnerships and discuss cancer-related programs. Alongside ICW, BVGH organized the [AAI Cancer Registry Special Lecture](#) describing the components of a cancer registry and the steps to launch a national registry. Dr. Max Parkin, coordinator of the African Cancer Registry Network, presented the lecture, which was attended by approximately 200 participants from 15 countries, both online and in-person. Cancer registries contain data on cancer patients, which allows for cancer surveillance and analysis as well as documents the status of the cancer burden. These registries assist with evaluating prevention and control techniques, as well as inform health resource allocations.

## African Healthcare Professionals Receive Training in Palliative Care



Participants of the 2023 AAI Palliative Care Digital Training Program.

Although essential for enhancing the quality of life of cancer patients – especially those with late-stage disease, access to palliative care services is limited in Africa. In response to requests from several AAI partner hospitals, BVGH developed a 12-session [AAI Palliative Care Digital Training Program](#). Among other topics, lectures from the training series covered how to break bad news to patients and their families, pain and wound management, prognosis communication, and common symptoms associated with end-of-life care. Organized in collaboration with Hauteville Public Hospital Center, Balsam – The Lebanese Center for Palliative Care, and the Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Curriculum, BVGH's palliative care program trained a total of 1,894 healthcare professionals from 53 different countries.

## Facilities Gain Brachytherapy Treatment Training for Cervical and Prostate Cancers



Dr. Gregory Twork, lecturer for the AAI Brachytherapy Digital Training Program, with BVGH staff before presenting lecture 4.

In 2020, Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Health equipped the country's cancer centers of excellence with equipment to provide brachytherapy – radiotherapy administered internally via implanted radioactive seeds, wires, and ribbons – to cancer patients. Despite the intervening years, the majority of centers have not yet integrated brachytherapy into their routine treatment practices. The centers attributed their minimal use of brachytherapy to their staff's insufficient training, experience, and comfort in using the treatment technology. In support of the centers' use of brachytherapy for the treatment of cervical and prostate cancers, BVGH organized the [AAI Brachytherapy Digital Training Program](#), which consisted of weekly lectures administered over three months. With the support of Nigeria's National Institute for Cancer Research and Treatment, this digital training series attracted over 650 radiation oncologists, medical physicists, radiation technicians, and oncology nurses from 45 countries.

## Elucidating the Nurse's Role in Clinical Research



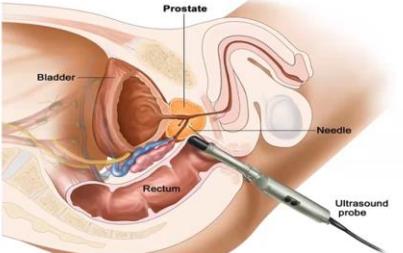
Considering the essential nature of research to the development and evaluation of cancer treatment therapies, former National Hospital Abuja Chief Nursing Officer Nana Hauwa Lawal expressed her wish for a BVGH digital course that empowered nurses to lead and contribute to research. BVGH trained 434 nurses in 22 different countries through the [AAI Nurse's Role in Research Digital Training](#) that concluded at the end of October. Dr. Kathleen Shannon Dorcy, a clinical research nurse at Fred Hutch Cancer Center, presented on research study basics and the nurse's role in research over 4 weeks, including patient screening, recruitment, and data collection, among others.

Participants of the 2023 AAI Nurse's Role in Research Digital Training Program.

## Training on Surgical Treatment of Various Cancers to Enhance Treatment Skills

### Prostate Biopsy

Transrectal Biopsy



Transperineal Biopsy



• Usually performed in the clinic with local anesthesia  
• Transperineal with low infection rate and no antibiotics

Dr. Yaw Nyame, lecturer for the AAI Cancer Biopsy and Surgical Treatment Digital Training, explains two different ultrasound-guided biopsy methods for prostate cancer.

Robust training in biopsy and surgical techniques is necessary to adequately treat cancer patients. Biopsies inform healthcare providers whether cancerous cells are present, while surgery is used in both diagnosis and treatment stages. At the request of the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital, an AAI partner hospital in Nigeria, BVGH coordinated a 7-week long [AAI Cancer Biopsy and Surgical Treatment Digital Training Series](#). Over 500 surgeons and oncologists gained valuable training in performing biopsies and surgeries for Wilms tumor, breast cancer, liver cancer, prostate cancer, rhabdomyosarcoma, and hematologic cancers. Lectures were presented by subject matter experts from Yale University, AIC Kijabe Hospital, the University of Washington, and the University of California, Davis.

## ASI Ukpo Gains Hands-on Brachytherapy Training



ASI Ukpo staff observe proper applicator insertion on a phantom dummy at UCH Ibadan.

Earlier this year, ASI Ukpo Comprehensive Cancer Center installed a brand new Elekta brachytherapy machine. Prior to the commissioning of the machine, the radiotherapy team at ASI Ukpo requested BVGH's support in organizing additional hands-on training in HDR brachytherapy for the treatment of prostate and cervical cancers. BVGH organized a trip for healthcare professionals from ASI Ukpo: Dr. Samuel A. Otene, a radiation oncologist, Mr. Bede Madu, a medical physicist, and Mr. Aaron Onerhime, a radiation therapist, to travel to AAI partner sites NSIA-LUTH Cancer Center (NLCC) and UCH Ibadan for a 2-week training on both theoretical and practical training in brachytherapy techniques. The ASI Ukpo team looks forward to implementing these skills at their own center.

## BVGH Convenes AAI Partners at 2023 AORTIC Meeting



Jennifer Dent with Prof. Blaise Nkegoum, Dr. Anne Maison, and Dr. Julie Gralow at the Prostate Awareness Dinner.

BVGH staff attended this year's African Organization for Research and Training in Cancer (AORTIC) conference in Dakar, Senegal, where meetings were held with partners from across our AAI hospitals to discuss key priorities and provide updates on BVGH programs. During these discussions, BVGH began planning for a prostate awareness campaign in Cameroon and explored ways to enhance and broaden BVGH's Introduction to Oncology Pharmacy training programs. BVGH staff gave presentations on our initiatives to help build the capacity of African oncology pharmacies, as well as the ongoing HypoAfrica study. In order to convene stakeholders and create public-private partnerships to raise awareness, provide access, spur research, and enhance the prognosis of African prostate cancer patients, BVGH hosted a dinner in partnership with the MADCaP (Men of African Descent and Carcinoma of the Prostate) Network and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and with BVGH Board Director Professor Serigne Magueye Gueye.

# Partner Announcements

## Dr. Iyobosa Uwadiae Becomes First Nigerian Internationally Certified as a Medical Physicist



Congratulations, Dr. Iyobosa B. Uwadiae! A medical physicist at UCH Ibadan and the Secretary General of the Nigerian Association of Medical Physicists, Dr. Iyobosa recently [received certification as a clinically qualified medical physicist](#) from the International Medical Physics Certification Board (IMPCB). Dr. Uwadiae is the first Nigerian to be recognized by IMPCB for this honor.

## Announcements

### National Cancer Institute Clinical Trial Survey

The National Cancer Institute is inviting clinical researchers to participate in a survey to elucidate the landscape of cancer therapeutic clinical trials in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The purpose of this survey is to help improve cancer outcomes through clinical trials. View more information and the survey link [here](#).

### Upcoming AAI Digital Trainings

Stay tuned for more information about BVGH's upcoming AAI digital training programs. If you would like to receive invitations to our courses, please submit this brief form: <https://forms.gle/8stQmomGXAifY2ah8>

- **Pediatric Oncology**
- **Treatment of Hematologic Cancers in Adults**

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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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