

# AFRICAN ACCESS INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER



February 2026

## Together in the fight against cancer

Dear AAI Partners and Friends,

We start this year with a celebration of completed projects in 2025. In December, we arranged the formal unveiling of the Mural of Hope, a project BVGH organized in conjunction with University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH), the Burkitt's Lymphoma Fund for Africa (BLFA), the Medicaid Cancer Foundation (MCF), and the Nigeria Solidarity Support Fund (NSSF). We look forward to seeing the positive results this project has on the pediatric patients at UATH.



A portion of the Mural of Hope at UATH

BVGH also extends our thanks to our partners at Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), MedServe-LUTH Cancer Center (MLCC), and Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) for their collaboration in the BVGH-managed study targeting pediatric cost-effectiveness in Nigeria. This project is the first step in moving toward more affordable cancer care for children in the country.

With many of our courses from the end of last year now moving forward into follow-up sessions this year, we invite our network and yours to join us for AAI & MASCC Best Practices in the Systemic Treatment of Cancer Part II, GIA Fundamentals of Biomedical Research Part II, and AAI & SIOP Africa Advanced Treatment of Pediatric Cancer Part II.

We are eager to continue engaging with our partners in 2026 through our programs. As always, please feel free to share this newsletter with anyone in your network who may be interested.

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

# PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

## Bringing Hope to the Pediatric Ward at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital



The mural at UATH (left) and participants of the unveiling ceremony (right), including artist Joseph Steve (blue and white shirt, center right)

Nearly 60% of pediatric cancer patients at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH) decline to begin or discontinue treatment, often driven by fear, anxiety, and a loss of hope. In response to a need shared by UATH's pediatric team to create a more hopeful and welcoming environment, BVGH brought partners together to design a program aimed at improving the patient experience and reducing treatment abandonment.

As part of this broader initiative, a new mural has been unveiled in UATH's pediatric ward. Designed and painted by local artist Mr. Joseph Steve, the first-place winner of the Mural of Hope public art contest, the mural is intended to bring joy, comfort, and inspiration to children and their families during treatment. Research shows that murals and positive imagery in clinical settings can help ease anxiety, promote healing, and support overall well-being. Funded by the Burkitt's Lymphoma Fund for Africa (BLFA) and coordinated in collaboration with UATH, the Medicaid Cancer Foundation (MCF), and the Nigeria Solidarity Support Fund (NSSF), the mural is one of several ongoing projects at UATH focused on promoting hope, reducing fear, and supporting pediatric cancer patients to continue treatment.

## BVGH Facilitates Partnership for Nigeria's First National Pediatric Cancer Cost-Effectiveness Study

A child diagnosed with cancer in sub-Saharan Africa is over five times more likely to die than a child in North America. Delayed diagnosis and limited access to treatment are major contributors to these low survival rates. In Nigeria, a critical information gap compounds these challenges: no published data exists on the costs or cost-effectiveness of childhood cancer services across the country. Without this information, federal health officials allocate budgets across competing health priorities with limited evidence to support investments in childhood cancer care. Recognizing the need for data from Nigeria, Dr. Adeseye Akinsete and Dr. Adedayo Joseph, principal investigators at MedServe-LUTH Cancer Center (MLCC) and Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) sought to develop the study Nigeria's policymakers needed to make informed decisions.

BVGH leveraged its experience expanding access to cancer care in Africa to connect the Nigerian team with researchers at the Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) in Toronto, whose expertise in health economic cost-effectiveness research helped transform the vision into implementable research. BVGH facilitated the collaboration and grant application process, enabling the partnership between the MLCC, LUTH, and SickKids to design a study protocol tailored to Nigeria's healthcare landscape and secure funding from My Child Matters, the Sanofi Collective's Foundation S initiative. The resulting study, Nigeria's first comprehensive pediatric cancer cost-effectiveness study, now spans eight teaching hospitals across all six of Nigeria's geopolitical zones: Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Federal Teaching Hospital Gombe, National Hospital Abuja, University of Abuja Teaching Hospital, University of

Benin Teaching Hospital, University College Hospital Ibadan, and University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital. Together, these hospitals are collecting data to calculate cost-effectiveness ratios, model the impact of treatment abandonment, and generate evidence that will guide national priority setting.



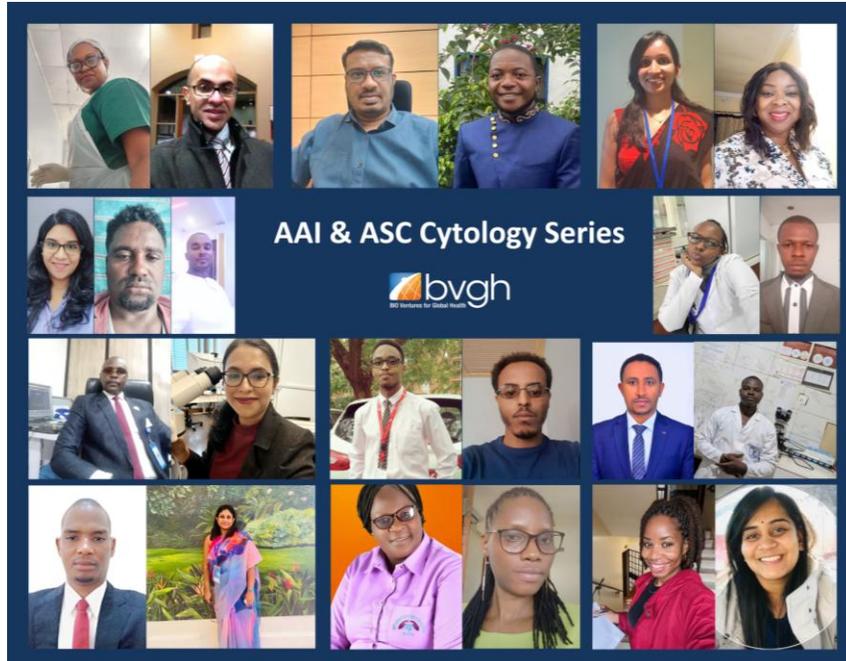
### Unveiling the Future of Oncology Care



Participants of the AAI & ASCO Frontiers in Cancer Treatment digital course

Cancer treatment is a constantly evolving landscape as new research is conducted and new treatments are developed. To ensure that our AAI hospital partners are kept up to date, BVGH partnered with American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) to offer 2025 AAI & ASCO Frontiers in Cancer Treatment. This year-long, 8-session course covered new advances in treatment for a variety of cancer types including lung cancer, prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, and breast cancer; and featured expert trainers from Fred Hutch Cancer Center, Obafemi Awolowo University, University of Toronto, and Baptist Cancer Center. This course was attended by 514 participants from 61 countries and will be available on BVGH Learn soon.

## Showcasing Valuable Insights for Pathologists



Participants of the AAI & ASC Cytology digital series

Cytology and pathology are incredibly important in the diagnosis of cancer – yet too often, pathologists lack the resources to access complex or intriguing cases to build their knowledge and allow them to better identify cancer markers. This is why BVGH worked with the American Society of Cytopathology (ASC) to conduct the 2025 AAI & ASC Cytology Series, a compilation of case discussions hand-selected and led by industry experts. Topics covered included surgical pathology, ultrasound guided fine needle aspiration, rapid on-site evaluation, and the PARIS system. Nearly 600 pathologists attended from 84 countries, and lecturers came from Cleveland Clinic, Memorial Sloan Kettering, Hofstra Northwell School of Medicine, and Loyola University.

## Strengthening Pediatric Oncology Skills Across Africa



Participants of the AAI & SIOP Africa Advanced Treatment of Pediatric Cancers Part 1 digital course

Specialized training in pediatric oncology is limited in much of Africa, particularly for complex cancers. To help address this, BVGH partnered with SIOP Africa to deliver Part I of the Advanced Treatment of Pediatric Cancers, a 13-session digital course building on a prior introductory program, also in collaboration with SIOP Africa. Expert faculty from Africa and international institutions covered neuro-oncology topics, including CNS tumors, gliomas, medulloblastomas, and ependymomas, as well as solid tumors such as neuroblastoma, Wilms tumor, and retinoblastoma. For each cancer type, participants received a comprehensive overview of clinical presentation, diagnosis, staging, and treatment. Over 1,000 healthcare professionals from 68 countries participated in the course, gaining practical knowledge and tools to improve care for children with cancer across the region.

Registration for Part II is now open, with 13 sessions covering leukemias, lymphomas, non-RMS soft tissue sarcomas, rhabdomyosarcoma, osteosarcoma, and additional pediatric cancer topics. This next series will continue to build skills, foster collaboration, and strengthen the capacity of pediatric oncology teams throughout Africa.

Register for Part II here: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_qA05kiwaQsu7cL0ZzGONuA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qA05kiwaQsu7cL0ZzGONuA)

## Building Practical Skills for Multidisciplinary Cancer Care in Africa

### Waste Management Paths for Hazardous Drugs

- Pharmaceutical **reverse distribution**
  - Return unused hazardous drugs to distributor
  - Distributor looks for new customer for in-date drugs
    - ❖ You may get \$ credit towards your next purchase
  - Offers proper disposal of expired drugs



Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

25

AAI & MASCC Best Practices in the Systemic Treatment of Cancer Part 1 digital course Session 4, presented by Mr. Paul Zel

Many healthcare professionals in Africa have limited opportunities to receive training on the safe and effective use of systemic cancer therapies. To help fill this gap, BVGH collaborated with the Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer (MASCC) to deliver Part I of the Best Practices in the Systemic Treatment of Cancer, a 10-session digital course designed for a multidisciplinary audience of pharmacists, nurses, and oncologists. Sessions explored chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, immunotherapy, and targeted therapy, along with chemotherapy safety and administration for nurses, the role of nutrition in cancer care, supportive care, and more. The course reached over 800 healthcare professionals from 27 countries, providing practical guidance to strengthen patient care across diverse clinical settings.

Part II is now open for registration, offering 6 sessions specifically for pharmacists in Africa, covering basic oncologic pharmacology, oncology care plans, the role of oncology pharmacists in clinical trials, and other oncology pharmacy-focused topics.

Register for Part II here: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_MsTj5HYgSqe2Nf8WDzjhbw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MsTj5HYgSqe2Nf8WDzjhbw)

## Covering a Baseline for Research Knowledge



Participants of the GIA Fundamentals of Biomedical Research Part 1 course

In response to many similar topic requests from our partners, BVGH recently organized and led a 5-lecture digital training program on the Fundamentals of Biomedical Research Part 1, now available on BVGH Learn. The course, which was designed for professionals in low- and middle-income countries, attracted 984 participants from 79 countries globally. Experts from the University of Washington, University of British Columbia, DNDi, Wellcome Trust, and Baylor College of Medicine covered topics prioritized by BVGH partners, including diagnostic development, identifying and securing research funding, and the biomedical research landscape.

GIA Fundamentals of Biomedical Research Part 2 launched in January and will focus on literature reviews, protocol development, laboratory management, research ethics, statistical analysis, manuscript writing, and publication.

Register for Part 2: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_pISmBcviRFWzkntfIB4Wfw](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_pISmBcviRFWzkntfIB4Wfw)



## Upcoming AAI Digital Trainings

Stay tuned for more information about BVGH's upcoming digital training programs. If you would like to receive invitations to our courses, kindly submit this brief form: <https://forms.gle/VgWjcN6Eb4oiG8Da7>

- **Cancer Surgery (French)**
  - Registration available now: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_DbY7NJ0mTsary0AIAOQprA#/](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_DbY7NJ0mTsary0AIAOQprA#/)
- **Best Practices in the Systemic Treatment of Cancer Part 2 (English and French)**
  - Registration available for the English course now:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_MsTj5HYgSqe2Nf8WDzjhbw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MsTj5HYgSqe2Nf8WDzjhbw)

## New Courses on BVGH Learn

See below to find out which of BVGH's previous trainings have been added to the platform over the past two months. If you would like to be notified as soon as new courses are added to BVGH Learn, you can follow us on our socials at [X](#), [BlueSky](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#). To access these courses, please go to <https://bvghlearn.org>.

- 2025 AAI & ASCP Basic Pathology of Common Cancers (English)
- 2025 AAI & ASCP Pathology Techniques (French)
- 2025 AAI Best Practices in the Systemic Treatment of Cancer Part 1 (French)
- 2025 GIA Fundamentals of Biomedical Training Part 1 (English)

## Join the Fight

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

## Thank you to our AAI Partners



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