



WEDNESDAY
MARCH 29, 2017

MIAMI DADE COLLEGE
MIAMI, FLORIDA

Concordia Roundtable Summary

This roundtable discussion on cancer prevention in Latin America was held in Miami, Florida as part of the Global Health & Emergency Response Pipeline, including members of Concordia's Cancer Collaborative.

PREVENTION, SCREENING & EARLY DETECTION: THE CANCER BURDEN IN LATIN AMERICA

Our medical understanding of cancer today is unprecedented, yet it continues to be a leading cause of death globally. According to the Pan American Health Organization, cancer accounted for 1.2 million deaths in the Americas in 2008; this number is projected to increase to 2.1 million in 2030. The case for prevention is clear: approximately one third of cancer cases could be prevented by educating citizens to avoid key risk factors. However, the challenges of prevention, screening, and early detection are compounded for those who live in less developed countries in the region. Healthcare disparities within and between countries are exacerbated by limited resources, which pose severe challenges to citizens and public health systems seeking effective solutions. Collaboration between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors is necessary to discover viable solutions and deploy resources efficiently to save lives across the Western Hemisphere.

This roundtable session addressed inequalities in cancer care in the region, identified challenges to and opportunities for effective preventive measures, and facilitated collaboration among cancer experts from around the world to improve the patient experience in Latin America. Cervical, breast, colorectal, and gastric cancers were prioritized by participants for this discussion given that interventions for these types of cancer are likely to be the most implementable and impactful.

Co-Chairs:

Nancy Brinker, Cancer Advocate, Global Consultant & Founder, Susan G. Komen

Jorge Gomez, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Public Health, Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health, University of Arizona

Assembly Chair:

Eric T. Rosenthal, Special Correspondent, MedPage Today

Participants:

- Dr. Alejandro Corvalan, President, Grupo Oncológico Cooperativo Chileno de Investigación (GOCCHI), Chile
- Dr. Lucía Delgado Pebé, Head of the National Cancer Control Program, Ministry of Health, Uruguay
- Dr. Rolando Herrero, Section Head, Prevention and Implementation Group, International Agency for Research on Cancer, WHO
- Dr. Julia Ismael, Scientific Director, National Institute of Cancer, Argentina
- Dr. Raul Murillo, Director, Centro Javeriano de Oncología, Hospital Universitario San Ignacio; Former Director, National Cancer Institute, Colombia
- Dr. Luiz Santini, Former Director-General, National Cancer Institute of the Ministry of Health of Brazil



ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION SUMMARY

1. There is a difference between cost-effectiveness and affordability of interventions. While an intervention may be cost effective, many lower income countries are not able to afford the initial investment and implementation of certain programs.

- **Potential solution:** This is where partnerships can play a big role: collaboration between the public, private and nonprofit sectors can be used to pool resources and make programs more sustainable. Connections between NGOs, corporate foundations and established government agencies have been extremely successful.

2. Access to health care is a key challenge in Latin America. There are large differences between national health systems and disparities in coverage. This reality will greatly impact how we address the cancer burden in countries across Latin America.

- **Potential Solution:** Cooperation between the public and private sectors will be key in improving access to vaccinations, screening, and treatment. The use of mobile screening and treatment centers has been an effective intervention to improve access and adherence to screening and treatment plans for those living in remote areas.

3. Political will to implement interventions is essential for any meaningful action, but it is very difficult to secure. This is in part due to the long-term nature of health outcomes (it takes years to see the impact of interventions) and a lack of data to track progress.

- **Potential Solution:** Improving screening registries could help to better track the social and economic benefits/costs of early detection. We also need to bring economists to the table when discussing health policy. Early detection will help to decrease cancer's burden on the economy, and once a strong economic case can be made for policymakers, it may be easier to garner the political will for investment in cost-effective interventions.

Next Steps:

Participants have each been assigned one type of cancer and are developing proposals for interventions or projects that Concordia can seek to encourage through its future programming. Concordia plans to continue the conversation and momentum from this discussion at the 2017 Annual Summit on September 18th and 19th in New York City.

For more information, or to get involved, please contact Concordia's Programming Manager, Aisling Casey at acasey@concordia.net.

