

Agenda Item 5.7 Medicines, Vaccines and Health Products: Cancer Medicines

Global Health Council, supported by AAP, NCD Child, and GHTC supports on-going efforts to support equitable access to medicines, including enhancing availability of cancer treatment for children and youth. We call for improved financing, expanded research and development—inclusive of cancer medicines—and through the inclusion of cancer medicines on the Essential Medicine List for Children. We commend the WHO for prioritizing essential medicines for children, including medicines for cancer treatments and palliative care.

We encourage WHO to support a comprehensive approach to improving access to essential health technologies that includes cancer medicines and palliative care. We note that a holistic approach considering all aspects impacting affordability, acceptability, availability, and quality is the best means to improve equitable access and promote innovation.

We propose that cancer treatment be included within universal health coverage (UHC) to ensure that cancer treatment is not left behind in the push to achieve UHC. We urge WHO to prioritize cancer prevention by promoting expanded access to HPV vaccine in all countries. We also recommend access to palliative care and pain relief for children with cancer, as essential components of cancer treatments in children. New research and development of cancer medicines will be enhanced with country-specific data through comprehensive cancer registries that includes information about cancer patients of all ages. These data will also identify priority concerns for both research and clinical practice. Barriers to care are overcome when approached holistically, addressing availability, acceptability, and sustainability.

WHO can leverage the expertise of innovative structures to secure sustainable access commitments, to accelerate the development of essential health technologies for all conditions, including cancer and palliative care.