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MSD Sponsored Symposium Sessions Proposal

Advancing access to innovative cancer care – evidence from middle-income settings

World Health Assembly | Geneva, Switzerland | May 23, 2023

Context

The MSD Oncology Policy Grants Program, launched in 2019, aims to (1) identify evidence-based and forward-looking health policy recommendations which will result in long-term improved health outcomes for cancer patients; and (2) create a community of discourse between MSD teams, policymakers, payers, patients and other key stakeholders to drive access to innovative cancer therapies through the amplification of research at global health conferences.

MSD Oncology Policy Grants Program seeks to engage with both London Global Cancer Week (LGCW) and Chatham House across two milestones in 2023, to further strengthen their partnership and develop a comprehensive dialogue related to key priorities for the policy group, with no mention of or focus on commercial products. LGCW and Chatham House are optimal co-hosts given their credibility, influence and global reach. LGCW is committed to providing a comprehensive picture of the rising global incidence of cancer and charting the path to ensure that everyone is able to receive the cancer services they need, including in lower and middle-income countries (LMICs). Chatham House has been a trusted partner of the MSD Global Oncology Grants program, supporting the implementation of successful external engagements, and is a partner of the LGCW.

Given the convergence of global health leaders – including key policymakers and policy influencers – at the World Health Assembly (WHA) high-level meetings, representatives from government, industry, civil society and academia gather alongside to advance discussions around priority health areas, including oncology. To this end, the MSD Oncology Policy Grants Program is hosting a moderated panel at the 76th annual WHA to amplify the program's 4th cohort of research in partnership with Chatham House and LGCW. The session will foster a meaningful discussion between grantees, experts and patient advocates on improving access to innovative cancer care in middle-income settings, leveraging policy evidence from Latin America (Colombia) and South Africa as case examples.

To build upon the conversation at WHA, a second proposed engagement is a moderated discussion at LGCW 2023, also in partnership with Chatham House and LGCW. LGCW is an international forum aimed at highlighting the contributions that the UK makes in the fight against cancer worldwide and will provide an optimal forum to discuss cancer prevention and treatments in LMICs. Ultimately the event approach will be informed by the WHA dialogue and further iterated upon as the panel approaches. At this stage, the proposed event will leverage research of the 4th cohort, with a focus on driving patient-centered policy to improve access to cancer care, with a focus on access to care in limited settings, improving health literacy, and addressing global challenges (e.g., COVID, mitigation due to war in Ukraine). Learnings will be leveraged from Lebanon, Morocco and Poland complimented by insights from patient advocates. This event will ignite a conversation around access to policy care in lower resourced settings and highlight policy solutions to overcome challenges related to access of care.

World Health Assembly

Concept

Session Title: Advancing access to innovative cancer care – evidence from middle-income settings

Session Subtitle: Public Policy, frameworks and health technology assessment: the quality of and access to cancer care in middle income settings, including Latin America and South Africa

Session overview:

The cancer burden in low-and -middle income countries (LMICs) is growing, especially in middle income countries (MICs). It is predicted that 75% of global cancer deaths will occur in middle income countries by 2030.^{1,2,3} For example, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer, there is a growing cancer burden in both Colombia and South Africa, with over 175,000 new cancer cases estimated in each focus country by 2040, an over 60% increase as compared to 2020.⁴ Access to effective treatment is also a challenge in MICs – key barriers include inadequate funding and health services infrastructure.⁵

To date, middle-income countries have made unequal progress towards developing and implementing adequate National Cancer Control Plans (NCCPs) because of inadequate funding and lack of transparency.⁶ Cancer surveillance plans, the foundations for cancer control, are often lacking in MICs.^{7,8} As well, Health Technology Assessments (HTAs) in emerging markets have received growing investment and are a priority to include in formal costing plans.^{9,10} Advancing dialogue related to HTAs is critical to ensure evidence-based decision-making in response to the growing cancer burden.¹¹

¹ [High-burden Cancers in Middle-income Countries: A Review of Prevention and Early Detection Strategies Targeting At-risk Populations | Cancer Prevention Research | American Association for Cancer Research \(aacrjournals.org\)](#)

² [Global cancer statistics 2018: GLOBOCAN estimates of incidence and mortality worldwide for 36 cancers in 185 countries - Bray - 2018 - CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians - Wiley Online Library](#)

³ [Estimating the global cancer incidence and mortality in 2018: GLOBOCAN sources and methods - Ferlay - 2019 - International Journal of Cancer - Wiley Online Library](#)

⁴ [Cancer Tomorrow \(iarc.fr\)](#)

⁵ [High-burden Cancers in Middle-income Countries: A Review of Prevention and Early Detection Strategies Targeting At-risk Populations | Cancer Prevention Research | American Association for Cancer Research \(aacrjournals.org\)](#)

⁶ [Cancer Control in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: Is It Time to Consider Screening? | JCO Global Oncology \(ascopubs.org\)](#)

⁷ [The evolution of the population-based cancer registry - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

⁸ [Cancer Incidence in Five Continents: Inclusion criteria, highlights from Volume X and the global status of cancer registration - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

⁹ [Full article: How Least Developed to Lower-Middle Income Countries Use Health Technology Assessment: A Scoping Review \(tandfonline.com\)](#)

¹⁰ [Evolution & Influence of HTA in Emerging Markets - Value in Health \(valueinhealthjournal.com\)](#)

¹¹ [Health Technology Assessment in High, Middle, and Low-income Countries: New Systematic and Interdisciplinary Approach For Sound Informed-policy Making: Research Protocole - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

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Also gaining momentum on the global stage, is the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) agenda a conversation from which neither MICs nor cancer care should be excluded.¹² Given the rising cancer burden and challenges in access to care, cancer care services must be included in policy reforms to realize UHC and ensure all patients have access to and can afford the care they need.¹³

With these unique environmental and policy-related factors in mind, we will convene diverse stakeholders in a moderated discussion that will explore varying perspectives on access to cancer innovation in middle-income countries and the critical importance including cancer care services in UHC reforms. The discussion will explore key policy levers, learnings to date, gaps and calls to action. Grantees will contribute meaningfully and share insights learned as part of their research. Specifically, we expect insights from grantee research to focus on:

- Public policies to improve care and treatment of oncologic diseases in Colombia: This research seeks to analyze, evaluate and design models of relationship, financing schemes and coordination mechanisms that, aligning incentives, allow for efficient use of resources to improve the opportunity for care and quality of patients' lives (Daniel Santiago Medina Gaspar's research)
- Environment and capacity of patient and citizen actors to contribute to HTA processes, policy development and HTA institutionalism in South Africa (Debjani Mueller's research)
- Legal frameworks and policies to advance innovative approaches to cancer care in South Africa: This research focuses on feasibility and desirability of a dedicated South African Cancer Act as a means to ensure equitable cancer care services across the continuum for the entire population (Salome Meyers's research)

Format:

This 90-minute moderated discussion will include opening remarks from Chatham House and MSD to briefly set the stage on the key themes and topics of grantees' research. The moderator will introduce the panel of experts, patient advocates and grantees. This will be followed by discussion among the panelists, using targeted questions to promote engagement and organic flow. The moderator will then incorporate participant Q&A. To close the session, LGCW will be invited to the stage by the moderator and offer closing remarks.

Objectives and Expectations

1. Contribute to the global policy dialogue by elevating evidence and debate on how financing schemes, HTA processes, legal frameworks and policies can advance access to innovative cancer care
2. Advance the global policy dialogue related to UHC by underscoring the importance of including cancer care services in UHC reforms to accelerate progress towards universal health coverage
3. Provide tangible calls to action to increase access to innovative cancer care in middle-income markets
4. Promote multi-disciplinary/cross-sector collaboration and policy action
5. Through this dialogue, MSD will:
 - a. Advance a shared policy agenda and mobilize external champions around it

¹² [Universal Health Coverage Overview \(worldbank.org\)](https://www.worldbank.org/)

¹³ [CA3 UniversalHealthCoverage.pdf \(cancer.org\)](https://www.cancer.org/)



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- b. Position the Company as a thought leader in cancer policy
- c. Elevate research from the 4th cohort of the MSD Oncology Policy Grants Program
- d. Strengthen the Company's relationships with Chatham House and London Global Cancer Week

Speakers

Moderator:

- Rob Yates, Executive Director, Centre for Universal Health, Chatham House

Opening remarks: [TBC – one speaker to be selected]

- Mary-Ann Etiebet, MD, MBA, AVP, Health Equity, MSD
- Jenelle Krishnamoorthy, Vice President, Head of Global Public Policy and International Affairs at MSD

Panelists:

- Daniel Santiago Medina Gaspar, Adjunct Research Professor EAFIT University, Colombia
- Debjani Mueller, Board of Directors, Health Technology Assessment International (HTAi), South Africa
- Salome Meyer, Independent Consultant, Cancer Prevention and Control Focus, South Africa
- Alfredo Polo, Capacity Development Director, City Cancer Challenge
- Aline Silveira Silva, Researcher, Patient Advocate and Partner, Project Co-Lead & Steering Committee Member of the HTAi Patient and Citizen Interest Group (HTAi PCIG)

Closing remarks:

- Dr. Susannah Stanway MBChB MSc FRCP MD, London Global Cancer Week Steering Group, Founder and Co-chair of the RM/ICR Cancer Control in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Collaborative Group

Proposed Agenda* | May 23, 2023

- 0:00 – 0:02 | Welcome and introductory remarks (Moderator)
- 0:02 – 0:08 | MSD remarks (TBC)
- 0:08 – 0:10 | Chatham House kicks-off panel (TBC)
- 0:10 – 0:54 | Panel discussion (moderator, grantees and panelists)
- 0:54 – 1:24 | Audience Q&A
- 1:24 – 1:30 | Closing Remarks

**Length of event to be confirmed based on final venue availability*

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