

Pre Conference Workshop On Science of Global Cancer Disparities

Reducing the disparities in cancer outcomes demand a concerted approach from the scientific Community. Incremental progress will only lead to worsening of the looming epidemic of cancer in Africa. African countries are moving through a rapid transition from an acute infectious disease dominated health care system and environment to one in which chronic diseases such as cancer are now significant and approaching a public health crisis. Africans are disproportionately impacted by cancer deaths due to excessive exposure to chronic infections like HBV and HCV - hepatitis B and C viruses (liver cancer), HPV - human papilloma viruses (cervical cancer), HIV - human immunodeficiency virus (Kaposi sarcoma and lymphomas), EBV - Burkitts Lymphoma and *Helicobacter pylori* bacterium (stomach cancer). Rapid advances in cancer immunotherapy and vaccine development should accelerate progress and provide a historic opportunity to reverse and potentially eradicate these cancers on the continent.

In addition, advances in the use of genomics have identified differences in the tumor biology and genomics landscape of common cancers including breast, colon and prostate cancer that are ripe for translation in the clinic. Beyond interventions to build capacity to improve quality of cancer care in Africa, initiatives to rapidly reduce the cancer mortality gap in Africa should focus on accelerating progress in precision health care in a manner that delivers the right drugs at the right time for the right patient. This workshop focuses on examples of research teams that are making strides in gaining a better understanding of the biologic and genetic differences that can be used to tailor cancer prevention and treatment in African populations. Community Oncologists in Africa will be increasingly called upon to facilitate and encourage clinical trial participation in African patients and should be supported in this endeavor by academic partners with resources to support genomics research. There should be further research on trial designs that lead to clinically significant findings for patients in African countries.

This workshop will focus on interventions to reduce disparities and improve health equity through rigorous science and leadership at the patient, provider, payer, and community level to drive system change.