

## Governments! Remember Cancer Too!

The incidence and prevalence of cancers within a society significantly contribute to the burden of diseases. In 2022, the World Health Organization (WHO) conducted a survey encompassing 115 countries, a majority of which exhibited inadequate funding for cancer services. The survey findings indicated a substantial number of new cancer cases (approximately 20 million), cancer-related deaths (9.7 million), and a population of approximately 53.5 million individuals with a five-year survival rate post-diagnosis. However, only 39% of the surveyed countries allocated appropriate resources toward principles of cancer management, resulting in a considerable burden on individuals affected by cancer.<sup>[1]</sup> Given the escalating trend of cancer prevalence and the growing disability-adjusted life years index in communities and that cancer diseases are the most important causes of years-life-lost, it is imperative to implement strategies that optimize budget allocation for cancer-related initiatives.<sup>[2,3]</sup>

While lung, breast, colorectal, prostate, and stomach cancers are generally recognized as the most common globally (excluding skin cancers),<sup>[4]</sup> the specific order of cancer prevalence varies across different geographical regions due to cultural, belief, dietary, and socioeconomic disparities.<sup>[5]</sup> For example, in Iran, stomach cancer prevails as the most common cancer among men, whereas breast cancer followed by stomach cancer is predominant among women. Stomach cancer also represents the leading cause of death due to cancer for both genders in Iran.<sup>[6]</sup> Multiple factors have contributed to the rise of stomach cancer from the fifth position in the WHO report to a higher rank in Iran.<sup>[1]</sup> These factors may include an aging population, a high prevalence of *Helicobacter pylori* infection, smoking, gastroesophageal reflux, and excessive salt consumption.

Cervical cancer serves as another exemplification, being the most prevalent cancer among women in sub-Saharan countries due to prevalent public health issues, despite being the eighth most common cancer globally.<sup>[6]</sup> As a result, it is strongly recommended that governments in each geographical region carefully consider potential risk

factors associated with the most common cancers and invest in comprehensive measures to mitigate or modify these factors, ultimately alleviating the burden imposed by cancer.

### Ethical considerations

Human or animal has not been involved in this work and just present authors' opinions, so ethical issues were not applicable.

### Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

### Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

**Amir Hossein Tabatabaie, Negar Amiri,  
Iman Hafizi-Rastani**

*Research and Development Headquarters, Petroleum Industry Health Organization, Shiraz, Iran*

#### **Address for correspondence:**

*Dr. Amir Hossein Tabatabaie,*

*Research and Development Headquarters, Petroleum Industry Health Organization, Eram Blvd., Shiraz - 7143837877, Iran.*

*E-mail: amirhosseintbt@gmail.com*

**Received:** 03 Apr 24 **Accepted:** 09 May 24

**Published:** 28 Nov 24

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	<b>DOI:</b> 10.4103/ijpvm.ijpvm_94_24

**How to cite this article:** Tabatabaie AH, Amiri N, Hafizi-Rastani I. Governments! Remember cancer too! *Int J Prev Med* 2024;15:59.

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