



International Inner Wheel 2021-2022

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Dear National Representatives,

Greetings to all of you! I hope that you are all doing well and in the Pink of Health!

As you are aware, this year's Presidential Theme is "Pink First" and one of its four priorities is HEALTH. This is also in tune with our International Social Project of "Stronger Women Stronger World". In this connection, I would like to encourage all clubs around the world to launch their projects that will STOP CERVICAL CANCER among women and girls.

Worldwide, cervical cancer is the 4th most common cancer. Mortality is high due mainly to diagnosis at the late stages of the disease, as well as the frequently unavailable, inaccessible, or non-affordable treatment. Yet, cervical cancer is the only cancer that is preventable with early detection through screening and HPV vaccination.

Clubs may choose to implement the following activities:

- an extensive Awareness Campaign on the causes, symptoms, and prevention of cervical cancer
- actual in-center/clinic Cervical Screening or Testing of women who cannot otherwise afford the cost of cervical screening using the latest available high-performance procedure (AI-assisted VIA-Colposcopy)

Let me mention that in the Philippines, this campaign to eliminate cervical cancer has been adopted this IW year as a National Directed Project. It was started by IWC Central Makati of District 383 and the project was dubbed as "WHEEL CAN CERV". (see attached materials)

It has been discussed that this project be done by all the clubs on the first 10 days of January 2022 as part of celebrating our Inner Wheel Day.

Please disseminate this information to all the districts and clubs under your jurisdiction and encourage a unified effort of the Pink First Clubs around the world to achieve our goal of Strong Women, Stronger World.

In friendship and service,

Ebe Panitteri Martines

President 2021-2022 -International Inner Wheel



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Attachment 1: Summary Status of Cervical Cancer in the Philippines

On November 17, 2020, we made history together.^[1] Despite a pandemic, the World Health Organization launched a global strategy to eliminate a cancer.^[1] And for the first time ever, 194 nations across the globe united and have resolved to eliminate cervical cancer.^[1]

Worldwide, Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women. Nearly 600,000 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2018, and more than half died from this disease.^[2]

In the Philippines, Cervical cancer is the 2nd most common cancer among Filipino women. Annually, it is estimated about 7,897 new cases every year and about 4,052 die from the disease.^[3] 4,052 cervical cancer deaths per year translates to almost 11 Filipina dying to cervical cancer every day. But what is Cervical Cancer and how can we help eliminate this disease?

Cervical cancer is a type of cancer that occurs in the cells of the cervix — the cervix is the lower part of the uterus that connects to the vagina, or the entrance to the uterus from the vagina.^[4] Almost all cervical cancer cases are linked to HPV, or the HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS infection, an extremely common virus transmitted through sexual contact.^[2]

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the world.^[5] It is estimated that about 85% of the people will get an HPV infection sometime in their lifetime.^[6]

This virus can be spread from one person to another person through anal, vaginal, or oral sex, or through intimate skin-to-skin touching during sexual activity. Majority of patients with HPV infections do not have symptoms, or ASYMPTOMATIC, yet they can spread the infection to you even without the visible signs or symptoms.^[7]

Like HPV Infections, Cervical cancer often presents no symptoms in its early stages, which is why it is often referred to as a "silent killer."^[8] In a study by Domingo, et.al "Epidemiology, prevention and treatment of cervical cancer in the Philippines", majority of cases, or 52% of patients seeking consultation at PGH are on their late stages - Stage 3, whereas one fourth are on Stage 2.^[9]

On that same study, the overall 5-year survival rate was low at 44% and mortality rate was 1 per 10,000 women.^[9] This means that more than half of women, or 1 in every 2 patients diagnosed to have cervical cancer will die in the next 5 years.

The high mortality rate was attributed to the fact that 75% of women were diagnosed at the late stage of disease with treatment being frequently unavailable, inaccessible, or non-affordable.^[9]

Reasons for the late stages at presentation include - the lack of symptoms of during the early stages of cervical cancer that would propagate patients to see a doctor, the lack of awareness on cervical cancer prevention, and the lack of an organized cervical cancer screening program.^[9]

The Good news is: Cervical cancer can be prevented. No woman should die from a preventable disease. To eliminate cervical cancer, the World Health Organization encourages all countries to achieve three key goals... the 90 - 70 - 90.^[10]

Ninety. 90% of girls fully vaccinated with the HPV vaccine by the age of 15;^[10]

Seventy. 70% of women screened using a high-performance test;^[10]

Ninety: 90% of women with pre-cancer must be treated and that 90% of women with invasive cancer must be managed.^[10]

Source:

- (1.) <https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2020/11/17/default-calendar/launch-of-the-global-strategy-to-accelerate-the-elimination-of-cervical-cancer>
- (2.) https://www.who.int/health-topics/cervical-cancer#tab=tab_1
- (3.) <https://gco.iarc.fr/today/data/factsheets/populations/608-philippines-fact-sheets.pdf>
- (4.) <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/cervical-cancer/symptoms-causes/syc-20352501>
- (5.) [https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/human-papillomavirus-\(hpv\)-and-cervical-cancer](https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/human-papillomavirus-(hpv)-and-cervical-cancer)
- (6.) <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/vaccine/six-reasons.html>
- (7.) <https://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/stdfact-hpv-and-men.htm>
- (8.) <https://moweryclinic.com/5-must-know-facts-about-cervical-cancer/>
- (9.) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2676501/>
- (10.) <https://www.who.int/initiatives/cervical-cancer-elimination-initiative>

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