

Background on World Cancer Day

About World Cancer Day – 4 February

World Cancer Day was established on the 4 February 2000 at the World Summit Against Cancer for the New Millennium in Paris, and the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) has been leading this global uniting initiative ever since.

The Day aims to promote research, prevent cancer, improve patient services, raise awareness and mobilise the global community to make progress in cancer care.

By raising worldwide awareness, improving education and catalysing personal, collective and government action, supporters of World Cancer Day are working together to reimagine a world where everyone enjoys access to the cancer prevention, treatment and care that they need.

Each year, hundreds of activities and events take place around the world, gathering communities, organisations and individuals in schools, businesses, hospitals, marketplaces, parks, community halls, in the streets and online.

2022-2024 Theme: Close the care gap

The current three-year campaign for World Cancer Day is about addressing the barriers that prevent people around the world from accessing the cancer care they need.

The first year (2022) of the ‘Close the Care Gap’ campaign was all about understanding and recognising the inequities in cancer care around the globe and their impact on public health:

- Inequity in cancer care costs lives.
- People who seek cancer care hit barriers at every turn.
- Income, education, geographical location, disability, and discrimination and assumptions based on ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability and lifestyle, are just a few of the factors that can negatively affect care.
- The gap affects everyone.
- These barriers, known as the “social determinants of health”, are not set in stone. They can be changed.

The second year of the campaign (2023) aimed at uniting the voices of friends, family, coworkers and communities in calling for change and taking action. It was also about celebrating real-world progress, not just in innovation and medical advances but even the humblest of actions that can have a significant impact: motivating neighbours to provide transport to cancer treatment for a fellow resident or ensuring that healthy and affordable food options are offered at the local school.

The third year of the campaign (2024) is about bringing attention to a higher level and challenging those in power and making sure that political leaders understand the public demand to prioritise cancer, create innovative strategies designed to confront inequity and invest resources to



achieve a just and cancer-free world. Leaders are being asked to eliminate health inequities by addressing their root causes, ensuring that everyone has access to quality health services when and where they need them.

For more information, visit www.worldcancerday.org/close-care-gap.