

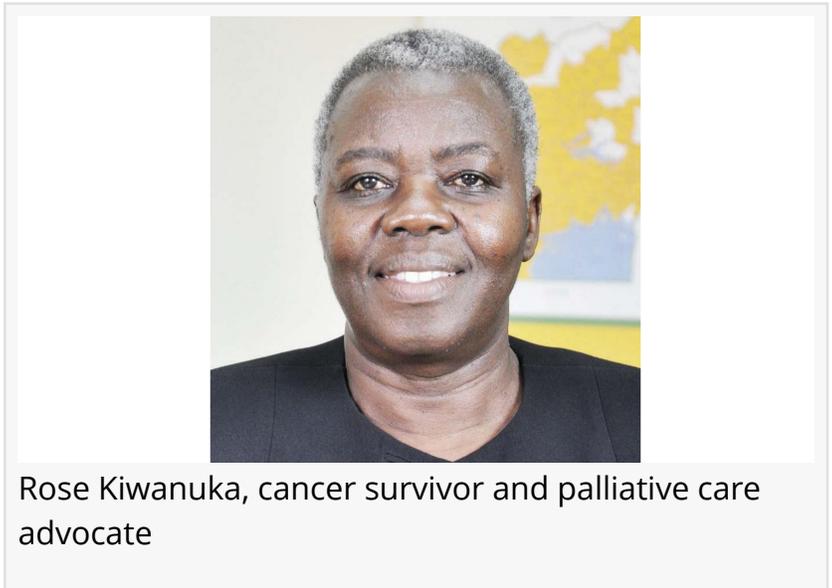
World Cancer Day: Cancer Pain Ravages Lives amidst Pandemic Challenges

Nearly 2 of every 3 people diagnosed with advanced cancer around the world do not have access to essential medicines for relief of moderate to severe pain.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA, UNITED STATES, February 3, 2021

/EINPresswire.com/ -- When 60-year old Rose Kiwanuka, was diagnosed with advanced cancer three years ago in Kampala, Uganda, she needed two things.

Relief from intolerable pain in order to eat and sleep, and emotional support. As a retired nurse and national palliative care advocate, she was confident that she had access to both those services while seeking cancer treatment.



“

I felt the world had crumpled on me. I needed people to talk to, to support me, to explain what was happening. To relieve my pain. So palliative care has been playing a very big role in my life.”

Rose Kiwanuka, cancer survivor and palliative care advocate

The situation with Covid-19 has changed that for others in her country and other low- and middle-income settings.

Kiwanuka recalls a patient with advanced breast cancer traveling for a full day by bus, or 500 kilometers, to receive two weeks’ worth of morphine as she suffered from severe pain.

“Where are patients like this going now?” Kiwanuka asks. “No where. They are suffering in pain without care at home.”

The goal of palliative care for cancer is to [relieve suffering, be it physical, psychological, social, or spiritual](#). An

important component of palliative care is the reduction of pain to a level that allows for a quality of life that is acceptable to the patient, according to the World Health Organization.

Mounting pressures on cancer patients to access treatment amidst Covid-19 restrictions have been complicated by the frequent diversion of medical staff, essential medicines, and protective equipment to the coronavirus response.

“Whilst we are fully appreciative and understand the need for governments and hospitals to focus their efforts on the COVID challenge...we must build back better to deliver outstanding cancer treatment and care, including palliative care,” said Dr. Cary Adams, CEO of the Union for International Cancer Control in a statement for World Hospice & Palliative Care Day.

Fears of Covid-19 contagion have resulted in [cancelled or delayed hospital visits among cancer patients](#), many of whom have suppressed immune systems. These factors combined affect the health outcomes for cancer patients and amplify the need for palliative care to address the needs of cancer patients worldwide.

Addressing this requires innovative clinical outreach approaches.

According to James Cleary, MD, Director of the Walther Center in Global Palliative Care & Supportive Oncology at Indiana University Simon Cancer Center, telemedicine interventions have proven especially effective to address the palliative care needs and isolation that cancer patients are experiencing worldwide, as many avoid seeking in-person medical care.

Telemedicine interventions have also overcome the barrier of rising public transportation costs, as more patients can be reached with palliative care without need for long distance travel.

“Palliative care is an essential approach that ensures the cancer patient in need of pain relief remains prioritized and central, especially during a pandemic,”



Palliative care provides an added layer of support that benefits every person living with a cancer diagnosis.



“The global response to Covid-19 is showing us that palliative care is a cornerstone to any health system. A person diagnosed with cancer should receive essential pain medicines and the full spectrum of palliative care support services regardless of where they live,” said Cleary.

For Kiwanuka, palliative care has been a life-giving approach when most needed, at the point of diagnosis and throughout her treatment.

“When I was diagnosed with cancer, I felt the world had crumpled on me. I needed people to talk to, to support me, to explain what was happening. To relieve my pain. So palliative care has been playing a very big role in my life,” she said.

The Walther Center in Global Palliative Care & Supportive Oncology at Indiana University’s School of Medicine and IU Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center is working to address the issue of equitable access to palliative care worldwide.

- To learn more about the Walther Center visit: <https://walthercenter.iu.edu/>
- To schedule interviews with technical experts in oncology and palliative care, contact Dr. Barbara Hastie at bhastie@iu.edu or (317) 278-4006.
- For more information on World Cancer Day visit: worldcancerday.org

Dr. Barbara Hastie

Walther Center in Global Palliative Care

+1 317-278-4006

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/535219181>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2021 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.