Challenges in Cancer Care in Africa.

- Challenges are many and varied
- One of the challenges is lack of trained human resources in the field of cancer generally and specifically in medical physics.

Source: Globocan

- Population: 973,627,000
- Growth: 2.8% per annum
- In 2008, 437,000 deaths were due to cancer
- 22 out of 52 African countries have no radiotherapy facilities
- Megavoltage machines: 277
  - 50 cobalt 60 and 189 Linacs
- Brachytherapy machines: 38
- 54 Conventional Simulators
HR Challenges in Cancer Care – Tanzania as an example

Source: Globocan

- Population: 45 million people
- New cancer pts/year: 45,000
- Teletherapy units: 2 cobalt 60 machines – requirement: 46 units
- Radiation Oncologists: 14 – requirement: 84
- Medical physicists: 2 – requirement: 45
- Radiotherapy Technologists – requirement: 144

A situation like this is alarming and calls for urgent action.

The problem is loud and clear - Is there anything that AAPM can do?

YES

- The above figures speak for themselves.
- Training is required to fill the gap.
- Africa needs assistance to train the required human resources.
- For medical physicists, I would like to request AAPM to explore the possibility of scaling up ongoing global training initiatives such as VUCCnet, AVU, AMPERE and CARE.

What should African countries do to ensure success?

- Address Organizational obstacles which hinder health care delivery – mismanagement, corruption, accountability and transparency.
- Recognize that cancer is a major public health issue and put it in the national health agenda.
- Prepare National cancer Control Plans and bankable project proposals to fund the projects in the plan.
- Invest adequately in cancer treatment facilities, infrastructure and IT.
What should African countries do to ensure success? - cont.

- Invest in Research and development
  - Convince development partners to fund cancer
  - Improve infrastructure for e-learning and other innovative learning approaches
  - Maximize the use of mobile technology.
  - Put in place mechanisms which train and retain trained staff
  - Express appreciation and goodwill to collaborators

SUMMARY

- African countries face a lot of challenges in providing cancer services
- Collaboration between National Governments and other players who have good intention to help is essential to improve cancer care in Africa.
- Sustainability of any realized improvement hinges on national government’s political and economic commitment – The resolve to make change happen.

CONCLUSION

- I beg each one of us in the audience as individuals and as members of AAMP to see what YOU can do to make a contribution in addressing cancer care globally – YES YOU CAN.

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THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

ASANTE SANA - END