Pediatric Hematology-Oncology in Countries with Limited Resources

Daniela Cristina Stefan
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Editors

Pediatric Hematology- Oncology in Countries with Limited Resources

A Practical Manual

Editors

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*Dedicated to all those looking after children with cancer,
whose efforts and hopes never die despite facing challenges in
resource limited countries*

*Dedicated to my husband, Valentin, and my 2 daughters, Dora
and Sabina, who are everything to me*

Daniela Cristina Stefan

Dedicated to my family, to whom all I owe

*Dedicated to all children with cancer and their parents, who
continue to inspire all I do*

Carlos Rodriguez-Galindo

Foreword

Close to 200,000 children and adolescents are diagnosed with cancer every year worldwide; of those, 80 % live in low- and middle-income countries, which account for 90 % of the deaths. Thus, the burden of pediatric cancer is clearly shifted towards countries with limited resources, making the tragedy of childhood cancer even more unjust.

In September 2000, heads of state and government gathered at the United Nations headquarters for the Millennium Summit and set down the millennium declaration, a series of priorities for peace and security, reduction of poverty, environmental protection, and human rights. This resulted in the Millennium Development Goals; by 2015, with everyone's effort, the world would achieve measurable improvements in those critical areas of human development. Importantly, reduction of child mortality is a Millennium Development Goal, and the world is on its way to fulfilling it. More recently, in September 2011, a high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly was dedicated to the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases, including cancer, thus calling for action by global health agencies and governments. A major challenge is now on the table: cure all children with cancer, wherever they are and build hope and a future for them, whatever it takes.

This will require a tremendous effort on the part of high-, middle-, and low-income countries, if we are all to work together to achieve this goal. Building pediatric cancer programs will become imperative, and developing nations will need guidance on how to develop their capacity, adapt and design treatments, and learn the process. Very tight collaborations between centers in both ends of the spectrum will be needed and examples of very successful twinning partnerships are seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. But documenting what we have learned in this process and how we can provide guidance for those programs under development is key. In this book we have assembled a group of experts in the field to share their knowledge and help us understand the intricacies of diagnosing and treating childhood cancer when so many resources are lacking. We wish there was enough room to share the experiences of so many in the Americas, Europe, Oceania, Asia, and Africa who tirelessly work every day to make a better world for children with cancer and their families. To all of them, and to all the children who suffer every day, this book is dedicated.

Tygerberg, South Africa
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