



Oncology at a Glance

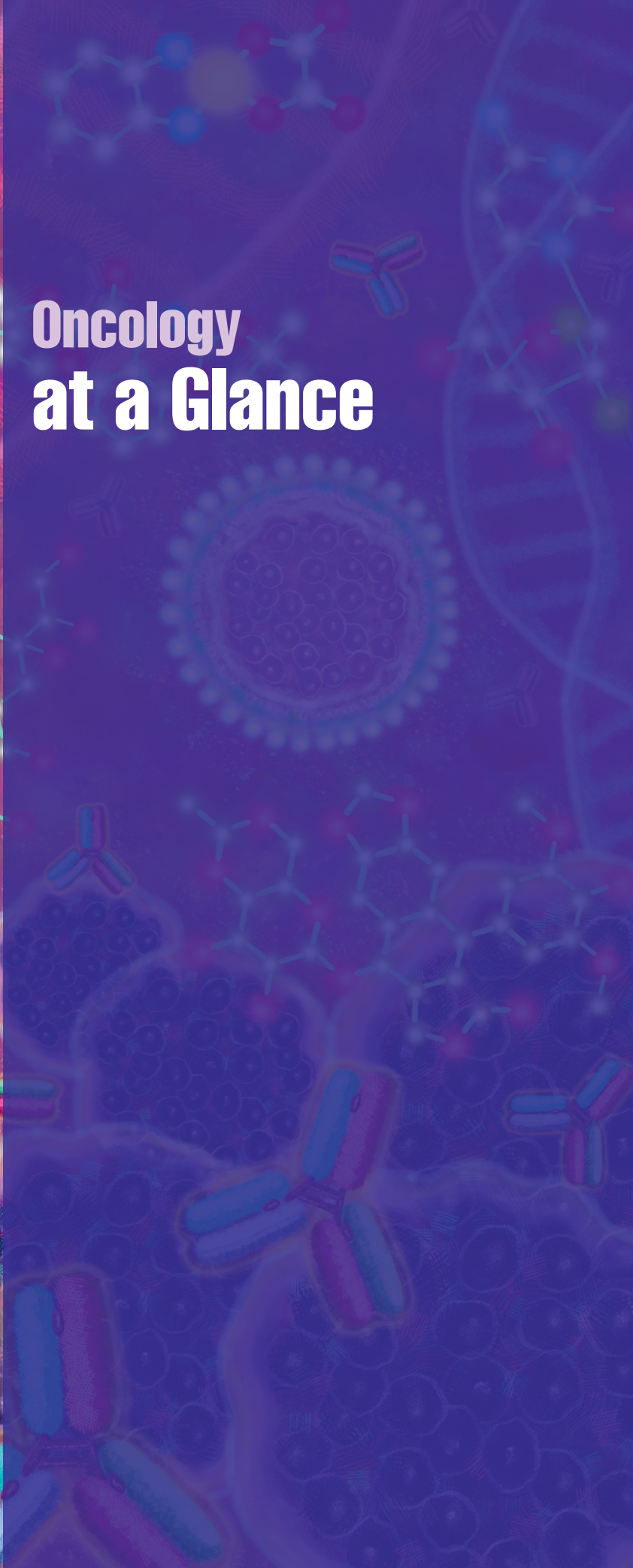
Second Edition

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Oncology at a Glance





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Second Edition

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The image was created with layers of cross hatching, soft glow, and paper texture brushes, complemented with double-stranded helix DNAs in the middle ground with matching range of colours in the background. The foreground has dark blue cells in the lower right corner, depicting cancer cells and symbolising the heinous

and malicious nature of these feared cells. There are a few light and bright-coloured spiked immune cells floating around demonstrating their gatekeeping and combatant nature. The cancer cells are seen secreting tumour-specific antigens, whilst the immune cells are secreting cytokines. Biological agents and immunotherapy are key systemic anti-cancer treatments, which have been depicted by numerous circulating antibodies, representing monoclonal antibodies and checkpoint inhibitors. Lastly, there are chemical structures of agents from the six key chemotherapeutic classes; taxanes (Docetaxel), topoisomerase inhibitors (Etoposide), antimetabolites (Gemcitabine), alkylating agents (Ifosfamide), anti-tumour antibiotics (Epirubicin), and platinum (Oxaliplatin).

Preface



Oncology is a discipline that embraces a number of scientific fields. It is at the cutting edge of technology with regard to developments in therapeutic approaches. It is a stimulating and intellectual challenge to not only deliver the therapies of today but to research and develop the treatments of tomorrow. Research is embedded within the specialties and reflects the origins within academic departments. The delivery of high quality chemotherapy and radiotherapy services is an important political target and there has been considerable financial investment by the government in expanding cancer services in the UK.

For the undergraduate medical student, oncology can be overwhelming and often the exposure to patients with cancer can be quite fragmented in the undergraduate curriculum. Most student rotations will focus on the diagnostic processes as patients with cancer present to general medical and surgical firms, possibly as acute admissions or via outpatients with a variety of presenting symptoms. Other schools will provide specific rotations in the oncology department and this text is to provide the core knowledge to underpin such a learning experience.

The clinical practice of oncology is the application of a foundation of sciences including; *anatomy*, to interpret radiological imaging; *physiology*, for the impact of a multisystem disease; *pharmacology*, to design, deliver and monitor systemic anticancer treatments; *molecular biology*, for the development of viable targets of therapy and to understand the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, genetic risk and resistance to therapy; *cell biology*, the process of metastasis, vascular invasion, and microenvironment of the tumour and how this can affect outcome and approaches to therapy; *pathology*, to recognise the features of a disease that can affect all systems of the body.

Oncology is therefore the clinical application of the knowledge of science that underpins so much of clinical medicine and does so in a very evidence-based manner. This requires clarity of understanding, a fastidious approach to investigation of the patient to obtain a diagnosis and effective communication with the patient, their family and others within the multidisciplinary team. There are frequent challenges as sometimes the investigations do not produce a definitive answer and yet a clear plan of management is required for the benefit of the patient.

For many, oncology seems like a depressing specialty and yet there is so much reward for those involved in the care of complex patients. The satisfaction of demonstrating clinical improvement after the intellectual challenge of getting the right diagnosis, planning the right treatment, given the context of the patient and their disease, having communicated understanding to the patient to explain what is likely to happen in the future and having had opportunity to address their concerns and fears, is a reward for

many clinicians involved in the management of patients with complex problems, especially those with cancer.

The origins of **Medical Oncology** as a specialty lie in the management of haematological and paediatric malignancies. It began as a small research orientated specialty and clinical research remains an important feature of the specialty. Over the last 20 years, enormous developments have taken place in the medical management of cancer, particularly in the development of therapies for common solid tumours. Today, Medical Oncology is a broad-based clinical specialty. It ensures that for common cancers, state-of-the-art therapies of established efficacy are delivered on a national basis, within a framework of care, tailored for the patient as an individual. Medical oncologists increasingly see patients at the beginning of their cancer journey for consideration of adjuvant and neoadjuvant therapies. They work as part of a multidisciplinary team and are able to advise on all aspects of oncological treatment including its integration with surgery and radiotherapy as well as having the skills to deliver specialist medical therapy.

Clinical Oncology arose from the discovery of radiation and therapeutic irradiation but most practitioners also deliver chemotherapy. In recent years there have been considerable technological advances in the delivery of radiation treatment with intensity modulation, photon therapy and stereotactic radiotherapy and some consultants focus on delivering specialised radiotherapy only.

New anticancer treatments are constantly in development by clinicians that are working at the interface between the clinic and the scientific foundations of knowledge. There is therefore opportunity for individuals to develop an academic career as a clinician scientist, with an interest in translational research that interfaces the scientific laboratory with the clinic.

This book is aimed at undergraduate students that will encounter patients with cancer throughout their clinical training and junior rotations. In some centres there may be minimal opportunity to study within the oncology departments as clinical experience may be gained with the teams that refer patients to a multidisciplinary team, rather than with the oncologists that deliver the subsequent treatment.

In some medical schools, students will have opportunity to undertake a student selected component (SSC). This is a period that allows personal learning outcomes to be defined and for individual students to explore either the depth or breadth of oncology practice. During one such period an informal discussion about learning resources resulted in the concept and idea of this book. A student focus group was used to identify the topics for inclusion and considerable attention was given to what is important for an undergraduate. Therefore some topics are left out by intention as they were not relevant to such an audience.

We have made considerable effort to ensure that this text remains appropriate for students and delivers the core knowledge required. We are grateful to the student reviewers for their attention to detail and for providing constructive comments that have improved the content and allowed the project to remain focused.

This book is not a detailed reference text about cancer but instead has been written to provide a basic foundation of

knowledge to underpin successful clinical training in cancer medicine for undergraduates of medicine and for others working in oncology such as junior doctors and allied health professionals, to provide an understanding of the principles of treatment approaches used for common cancers in oncology practice.

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Lindsay Henna

Abbreviations



5-HIAA	5-hydroxyindoleacetic acid	cTNM	clinical classification of stage
5-HT	5-hydroxytryptamine (serotonin)	CTZ	chemoreceptor trigger zone
5-HTP	5-hydroxytryptophan	CUP	carcinoma of unknown primary
ACCS	acute common core stem	CVA	cerebrovascular accident
ACE	angiotensin converting enzyme	CXR	chest X-ray
ACTH	adrenocorticotrophic hormone	DCIS	ductal carcinoma in situ
ADH	antidiuretic hormone or vasopressin	DLT	dose-limiting toxicity
ADT	androgen deprivation therapy	dMMR	deficient mismatch repair
AFP	alpha foeto-protein	DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
ALK	anaplastic lymphoma kinase	DRR	digitally reconstructed radiograph
ALL	acute lymphoblastic leukaemia	DVT	deep vein thrombosis
AML	acute myeloid leukaemia	EBV	Epstein-Barr virus
AOS	acute oncology service	ECM	extracellular matrix
ARCP	annual review of competency progression	ECOG	Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group
ATG	antithymocyte globulin	EGFR	epidermal growth factor receptor
aTNM	autopsy classification of stage	EM	electron microscopy
ATP	adenosine triphosphate	EMA	epithelial membrane antigen
BCC	basal cell carcinoma	EMT	epithelial-mesenchymal transformation
BCG	Bacillus Calmette–Guérin	ENT	ear nose and throat
BEP	bleomycin, etoposide, cisplatin chemotherapy	ER	oestrogen receptor/emergency room
BMT	bone marrow transplant	ERCP	endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography
BP	blood pressure	ESMO	European Society for Medical Oncology
BSO	bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy	ESR	erythrocyte sedimentation rate
CACS	cancer anorexia and cachexia syndrome	eV	electron volt
CAR T	chimeric antigen receptor T-cell therapy	FAP	familial adenomatous polyposis
CCT	certificate of completed training	FBC	full blood count
CD	cluster of differentiation	FDG	fluorodeoxyglucose
CDK	cyclin-dependent kinase	FGF	fibroblast growth factor
CEA	carcinoembryonic antigen	FIGO	International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics
CHART	continuous hyperfractionated radiotherapy	FISH	fluorescent in-situ hybridisation
CHRPE	congenital hypertrophy of the retinal pigment epithelium	FIT	faecal immunochemical test
CIN	cervical intraepithelial neoplasia	FNA	fine needle aspiration
CINV	chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting	FOB	faecal occult blood
CIS	carcinoma in-situ	FSH	follicle stimulating hormone
CLL	chronic lymphocytic leukaemia	G-CSF	granulocyte-colony stimulating factor
CML	chronic myeloid leukaemia	GCT	germ cell tumour
CMT	core medical training	GFR	glomerular filtration rate
CNS	central nervous system	GI	gastrointestinal
COCP	combined oral contraceptive pill	GIST	gastrointestinal stromal tumour
COX	cyclooxygenase	GU	genitourinary
CR	complete response	Gy	Gray
CRP	C-reactive protein	HAD	hospital anxiety and depression scale
CSF	cerebrospinal fluid	HBV	hepatitis B virus
CT	computed tomography	HCC	hepatocellular carcinoma
CTC	common toxicity criteria	hCG	human chorionic gonadotrophin
ctDNA	circulating tumour DNA	HCV	hepatitis C virus
CTLA4	cytotoxic T-lymphocyte antigen 4	HGF	hepatocyte growth factor

HHV	human herpes virus	PEFR	peak expiratory flow rate
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus	PEG	percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy
HNPCC	hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer	PET	positron emission tomography
HOA	hypertrophic osteoarthropathy	PFS	progression-free survival
HPV	human papilloma virus	PJP	Pneumocystis jirovecii pneumonia
HRT	hormone replacement therapy	PLAP	placental alkaline phosphatase
HTLV-1	human T-cell lymphotropic virus-1	PMB	postmenopausal bleeding
ICP	intracranial pressure	pMMR	proficient mismatch repair
ICPi	immune checkpoint inhibitor	PR	progesterone receptor/per rectum/partial response
IDA	iron deficiency anaemia	PS	performance status
IGF	insulin-like growth factor	PSA	prostate-specific antigen
IHC	immunohistochemistry	PT	prothrombin time
IL	interleukin	PTH	parathyroid hormone
IMRT	intensity modulated radiotherapy	PTHrP	parathyroid hormone-related polypeptide
IQ	intelligence quotient	pTNM	pathological classification of stage
IV	intravenous	PTT	partial thromboplastin time
IVC	inferior vena cava	PV	per vagina
JVP	jugular venous pressure	PVC	polyvinyl chloride
LCIS	lobular carcinoma in situ	RCC	renal cell carcinoma
LD	longest diameter	RECIST	response evaluation criteria in solid tumours
LDH	lactate dehydrogenase	RNA	ribonucleic acid
LEMS	Lambert–Eaton myasthenic syndrome	RR	relative risk
LFT	liver function tests	rTNM	recurrent classification of stage
LH	leutenising hormone	SCC	squamous cell carcinoma
LHRH	luteinising hormone releasing hormone	SCF	supraclavicular fossa
mAb	monoclonal antibody	SCLC	small cell lung cancer
MALT	mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue	SCT	stem cell transplant
MAP	mitogen-activated protein	SD	stable or static disease
MDT	multidisciplinary team	SIAD	syndrome of inappropriate antidiuresis
MEN	multiple endocrine neoplasia	SIRT	selective internal radiotherapy
mIBG	meta-iodobenzylguanidine	SPECT	single photon emission computed tomography
MMF	mycophenolate	SpR	specialist registrar
MMR	mismatch repair	SVC	superior vena cava
MR/MRI	magnetic resonance imaging	SVCO	superior vena cava obstruction
MRCP	magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography	TACE	trans-arterial chemoembolisation
MSCC	malignant spinal cord compression	TCC	transitional cell cancer
MSU	mid stream urine	TENS	transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation
MTD	maximum tolerated dose	TGF	transforming growth factor
mTOR	mammalian target of rapamycin	TIL	tumour infiltrating lymphocyte
NAFLD	non-alcoholic fatty liver disease	TKI	tyrosine kinase inhibitor
NER	nucleotide excision repair	TLS	tumour lysis syndrome
NET	neuroendocrine tumour	TNBC	triple negative breast cancer
NHL	non-Hodgkin lymphoma	TNF	tumour necrosis factor
NHS	National Health Service	TSH	thyroid stimulating hormone
NK-1	neurokinin-1	TSP-1	thrombospondin-1
NOS	not otherwise specified	TURBT	transurethral resection of bladder tumour
NSAID	non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug	TURP	transurethral resection of the prostate
NSCLC	non-small cell lung cancer	TYA	teenager and young adult
NSE	neurone-specific enolase	U&E	urea and electrolytes
NSGCT	non-seminomatous germ cell tumour	UICC	Union for International Cancer Control
NTRK	neurotrophic tyrosine receptor kinase	UK	United Kingdom
OS	overall survival	UMN	upper motor neurone
PARP	poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase	US	United States
PCOS	polycystic ovarian syndrome	UTI	urinary tract infection
PD	progressive disease	UV	ultraviolet
PD-1	programmed cell death 1	VAT	video-assisted thoracoscopy
PDGF	platelet-derived growth factor	VEGF	vascular endothelial growth factor
PD-L1	programmed cell death ligand 1	VIP	vasoactive intestinal polypeptide
PE	pulmonary embolism	WHO	World Health Organization

Scientific foundation of oncology



Part 1

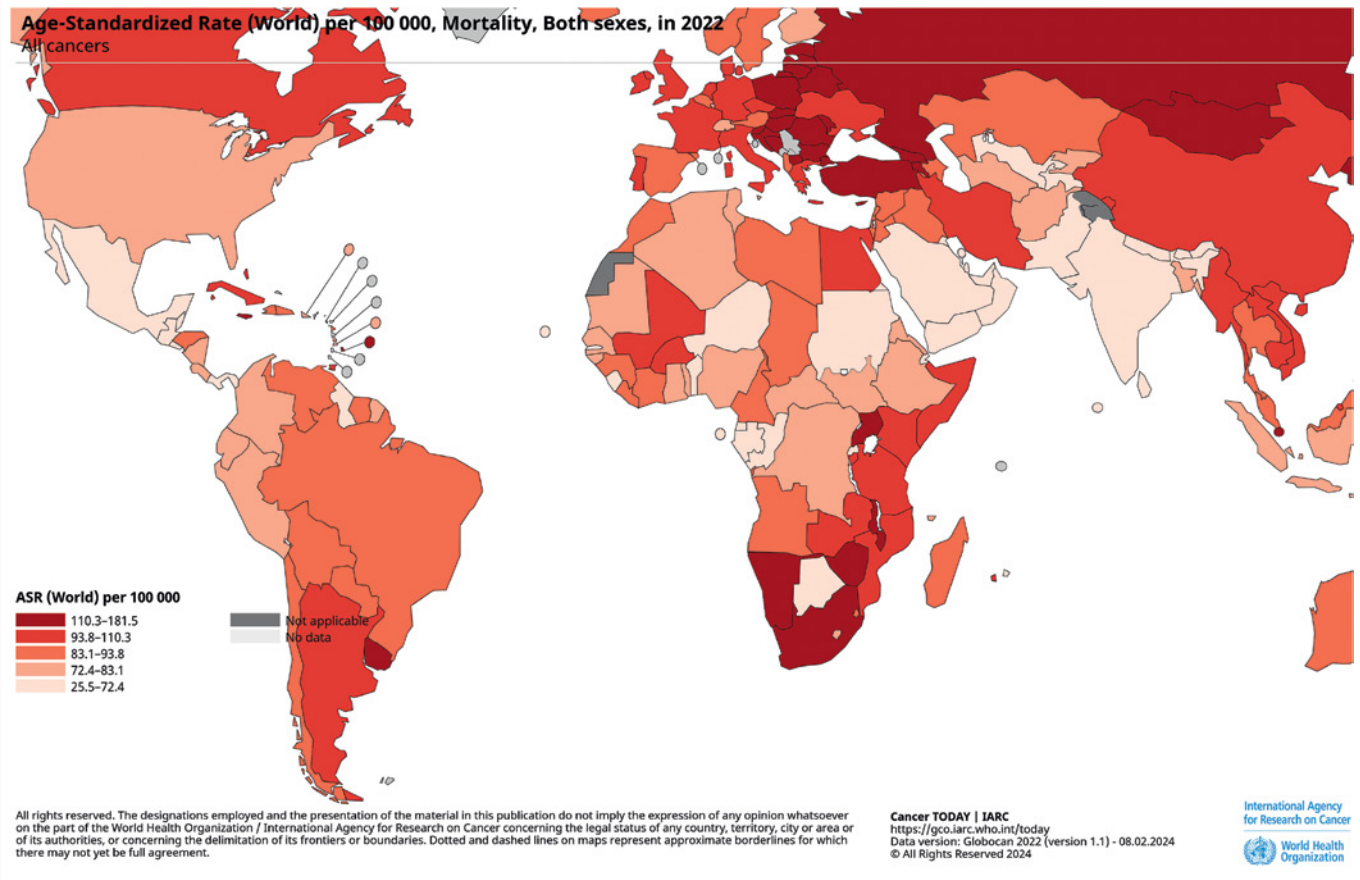
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1

The global burden of cancer

Figure 1.1 Age-standardised mortality rate (world) per 100 000 (both sexes in 2022) (World Health Organization / <https://gco.iarc.fr/today/en/dataviz/maps-heatmap?mode=population&types=1>)



The global burden of cancer

Cancer represents a significant economic burden for the global economy and is now the third leading cause of death worldwide. By 2050, it is projected that there will be 35 million new cancer cases and 18 million cancer deaths per year.

The developing world is disproportionately affected by cancer and in 2008 developing nations accounted for 56% of new cancer cases and 75% of cancer deaths (Figure 1.1). These deaths happen in countries with limited or no access to treatment and with low per capita expenditure on healthcare. In recognition of this, the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) conceived the World Cancer Declaration in 2008, with an update in 2013 showing there is progress in the majority of targets:

World cancer declaration (2013 update)

- 1 Strengthen health systems for effective cancer control
- 2 Measure cancer burden and impact of cancer plans in all countries

- 3 Reduce exposure to cancer risk factors
- 4 Universal coverage of HPV and HBV vaccination
- 5 Reduce stigma and dispel myths about cancer
- 6 Universal access to screening and early detection for cancer
- 7 Improve access to services across the cancer care continuum
- 8 Universal availability of pain control and distress management
- 9 Improve education and training of healthcare professionals

Developed and developing countries

Developing nations often do not have the funding, expertise or infrastructure to deliver effective cancer services. They may have limited or no cancer screening, few facilities and patients may have limited access to treatments and analgesia. The lowest-income countries have a survival rate of 25% compared to that of 56% in the wealthiest, discrepancies that have worsened following the COVID pandemic. Prevention is therefore a key strategy to reduce cancer deaths as it has the largest potential impact at the least expense.