

# Struggles of Cancer Treatment in Yemen: The National Oncology Center in Wadi Hadramout

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## Short Communication

Despite being a major cause of mortality around the world, cancer is considered as among the most preventable and treatable chronic illnesses [1]. According to some estimations, the incidence rates of cancers are heading up progressively to reach up to 15 million new cases in 2020, developing countries are the most accountable once [2]. However, in 2000, more than 10 million new cases and over 7 million cancer deaths worldwide [3]. In developing countries, cancer incidence rates reached 53% while 56% of deaths. The future trends are alarming especially for developing countries, as the expected increase of the incidence rates is 73% and 29% for the developed countries [4].

Yemen is currently struggling with major obstacles to overcome political instability and economic underdevelopment to face the challenges of a globalized world. As a matter of fact, this highly affect individuals' ability to pay for health services thus rendering healthcare facilities nearly unaffordable [5]. Moreover, Expenditure on health in Yemen is considered to be the lowest in the Middle East particularly and the world generally [6].

Hadramout now a day is considered as one of the most stable and safe areas in Yemen and the largest governorates of it in terms of geographical and natural wealth point of view. Wadi Hadramout; one of the two parts (a hilly near the coast and inhaled valley) of Hadramout- where more than 700 thousand people are served only by 104 specialized physicians (local and foreign) in addition to 126 general practitioners (one Physician per 2846) according to the last estimations produced by the (Office of Ministry of Public and Health, 2016) [7]. Covering this broad geographical space with the huge number of people a single oncology center (The National Oncology Center); established in 2013 as a registry center, then in 2015, the work turned to receive cases for screening, treating and follow-up as non-profit center, as the majority of the cases are within the limited-income. Despite the vital position of the center, the government does not provide a constant financial coverage even the salaries of the working team. Financially, the center relies on the charity and local organizations funds to ensure the operating budget to continue the non-profit services. However, adding to the political instability of Yemen, the fluctuating economic situation along with the sharp shortage of the out sources funds, the center is facing a huge struggle in persisting providing the free services (clinics, chemotherapies, medications, lab works, and mammograms),

the head of the center claimed. The closure of the center is an absolute consequence, as there is no financial cover and support of services provided by the center. As an urgent solution, the representative of government provided approximately 2300 dollars only [8].

In a daily flow, the center opens the doors for approximately of detection and screening, treating and follow up. Around a thousand cases are seen monthly from Wadi Hadramout and the neighboring areas in addition to other governorates of Yemen. In 2016, the center received 222 new cancer cases, in comparison to 183 new cases in 2013. In 2013, the mortality percentage of the registered cases reached 37% while the percentage declined to reach only 10% in 2016 [9]. Despite the overall satisfaction of the center's services and outcomes, it faces major struggles that might shorten or even witch off the provided free-services. The small-sized building of the center does not provide enough space for the increased number of cases, consequently, a delay of providing treatments of some cases is an unfortunate unsolved struggle. The extreme shortage of the team is one of the main dilemmas struggling and holding back the services offered for a huge number of patients. The whole team is a total of 15 members (oncologist, nurses and technicians), two of whom are officially employee while the rest are on contractor-based. As well, the team lacks the proper training.

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