YOUNG GLOBAL ONCOLOGY
Student Initiative for Global Oncology & Global Health

Introduction to Global Oncology by Dr. Oliver Henke & Presentation of YGO

CALENDAR
🕐Date: 09.11.2026 at 19:00 CET
💻Participants: 30 Enthusiasts
🎤Guest Speaker: Dr. Oliver Henke

KEY TAKEAWAYS
- Presentation with advanced-stage cancer is a major challenge, requires better education of providers and the public
- Infection-triggered cancers are twice as common in sub-Saharan Africa
- Effective measures to reduce inequalities in cancer care need to be further developed and expanded

SUMMARY

Our first public meeting began with the question “What is Global Oncology?” and the answers from the group addressed aspects such as access to cancer care, epidemiology, international affairs and equality.



The introduction to Global Oncology by Dr. Oliver Henke, an oncologist in Tanzania and a pioneer in Global Oncology in Germany built on this and demonstrated the urgency of the topic with devastating numbers and statistics.

He talked about **late-stage presentation** of patients with cancer in progressed stages and the vicious cycle that derives from poor treatment outcomes in incurable stages leading to mistrust of the healthcare system and late presentation in the clinic. In addition to low health literacy, more challenges in cancer treatment are limited financial resources of both patients and providers, weak infrastructure with long journeys to specialised clinics, and access to radiation as well as specialised and palliative treatment options.

The global inequality in cancer treatment outcomes is also driven by a **health data gap** including cancer genome and epigenome data, with only 0.016% of cancer publications worldwide addressing cancer genetics in African populations.[1]

Dr. Henke further expanded on the topic of **Tropical Oncology** which focuses on infection-triggered cancer entities caused by oncogenic viruses like HPV, EBV, HBV and cancer-inducing bacterial and parasitic infections e.g. bilharziasis which make up 30% of all cancer cases in sub-Saharan Africa, roughly twice the global share.[2]

Measures to fight inequalities in cancer care taken by the countries and supported by international health care workers include patient education, infection prevention and strict treatment protocols, selection of more affordable staging and diagnostic methods, trials with telemedicine and long-read sequencing (Oxford Nanopore) to facilitate fast diagnostics. However, there is still a long road ahead to global equality in oncology.

1 Rotimi et al., “A Review of Cancer Genetics and Genomics Studies in Africa” Front Oncol. 2021
2 Rumgay et al., “Global burden of cancer attributable to infections in 2024: a worldwide incidence analysis” Lancet Oncol. 2026