

# **Novartis broadens access to innovative medicines, leverages data & digital for enhanced cancer care in PH**

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- In observance of National Cancer Awareness Month, Novartis is pleased to share our latest initiatives to help improve cancer care in the country.

Novartis continuously finds ways to help improve the quality of care for Filipino patients living with cancer, which is one of the leading causes of illness and death in the Philippines. Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Filipino women, and the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the country. Seven out of ten cancer deaths occur in low- to middle-income countries which include the Philippines.

“On National Cancer Awareness Month, it’s essential that we focus on cancer and help close the care gap. At Novartis, we are committed to bringing more medicines to more people, no matter where they are, and will continue to support the efforts of the government, healthcare professionals and patient communities to ensure that where someone lives does not determine the outcome of a cancer diagnosis,” said Mr. Joel Chong, Country President, Novartis Healthcare Philippines, Inc.

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## **Promoting awareness on breast cancer**

Novartis joined forces with the Department of Health (DOH), cancer patient support group ICanServe Foundation, and Philippine Hospital Association to promote awareness on breast cancer through the dissemination of a series of patient education videos.

“Kamay Gabay, Sariling Salat sa Suso” is a series of 4-minute animated Breast Self-Examination (BSE) tutorial videos in Cebuano and Tagalog. It aims to teach Filipino women how and when to do BSE in relation to age-associated early detection guidelines for breast cancer; and raise awareness on the importance of regular BSE to facilitate early detection and prompt treatment of breast cancer.

“Advanced Breast Cancer (ABC) Videos” is a series of 3-minute videos in English, Cebuano, and Tagalog that provide patient education on hormone receptor positive, human epidermal growth factor receptor-2 negative (HR+/HER2-) advanced breast cancer. It aims to raise awareness on the different types of metastatic breast cancers with key message that not all breast cancers are the same; and highlight the importance of determining the specific type of metastatic breast cancer in targeted treatment planning.

Novartis in partnership with Hi-Precision Diagnostic launched its PIK3CA Testing Program to highlight the burden of breast cancer in the Philippines and the central role that PIK3CA mutation plays in breast cancer

progression. PIK3CA is the most commonly mutated gene in HR+/HER2- breast cancer; approximately 40% of patients living with HR+/HER2- breast cancer have this mutation. PIK3CA mutations are associated with tumor growth, resistance to endocrine treatment and a poor overall prognosis.

## **Increasing access to cancer medicines in low- and lower middle-income countries**

Novartis was the first company to sign up as a partner for the Access to Oncology Medicines (ATOM) Coalition, a new global partnership launched in May 2022 to increase access to quality-assured essential cancer medicines in low- and lower middle-income countries (LMICs) and to help countries develop the capacity for their proper use. We were also the first company that has offered an innovative, on-patent medicine for ATOM.

An initiative of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), the ATOM Coalition will build on UICC's network of member organizations in selected countries as well as on the range of global and country-level public and private sector partners with expertise in implementing cancer-focused access programs. This will amplify the effectiveness of ATOM Coalition partners and enable countries to increase access to diagnostics and essential cancer medicines.

The ATOM Coalition partners seek to build a sustainable operating model that facilitates access over time, as breakthroughs occur, to new medicines that can have a significant health impact in LMICs, whilst ensuring that today's effective medicines are more widely available across those countries in a sustainable manner.

## **Innovative access programs for cancer patients**

Novartis helps patients gain access to innovative cancer medicines through our various patient support programs. Our JUMP Program supports access to Novartis treatment for myelofibrosis and polycythemia vera in patients resistant to or intolerant of hydroxyurea. Our toward Treatment-Free Remission for chronic myeloid leukemia Patient Assistance Program (TFR PAP) helps patients gain access to a well-established treatment for chronic myeloid leukemia (CML).

## **Data-digital project to support breast cancer control program**

Novartis supported the ICanServe Foundation and local healthcare software startup Dashlabs in developing the [Circle of Life](#) Data and Digital Infrastructure project, the pilot of which was recently launched in Taguig City.

Circle of Life is designed to support the Ating Dibdibin breast cancer control program in ICanServe Foundation partner cities by generating analytics that can help identify gaps in cancer care and enhance monitoring and evaluation. This can empower the local government to make data-driven decisions and use the data to support their request for healthcare-related funding at the local and national levels.

"I believe with good data we can eventually overcome every barrier to quality and timely care for breast cancer. Data and knowing how to interpret it can help us identify problems, including those challenges that have yet to surface, but will. Data can guide us to design targeted interventions and solutions. Nowadays, it's a necessary investment in saving lives," said Ms. Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala, Founding President of ICanServe Foundation and Vice President for Internal Affairs of Cancer Coalition Philippines.

1. 2015 Philippine Cancer Facts and Estimates, Philippine Cancer Society and Department of Health
2. <https://www.worldcancerday.org/>
3. <https://www.novartis.com/stories/boosting-access-cancer-care-where-its-needed-most>
4. [https://www.uicc.org/sites/main/files/atoms/files/ATOM%20Press%20Release\\_Post%20Launch\\_220520.pdf](https://www.uicc.org/sites/main/files/atoms/files/ATOM%20Press%20Release_Post%20Launch_220520.pdf)
5. <https://www.novartis.com/news/media-releases/novartis-kisqali-adds-one-more-year-survival-benefit-broadest-set-patients-including-those-aggressive-hrher2-advanced-breast-cancer>
6. <https://www.novartis.com/ph-en/news/media-releases/doh-partners-icanserve-pha-novartis-promote-breast-cancer-awareness-through-patient-education-videos>
7. <https://www.novartis.com/ph-en/news/media-releases/novartis-philippines-launches-pik3ca-testing-program-breast-cancer>

## About Novartis

Novartis is reimagining medicine to improve and extend people's lives. As a leading global medicines company, we use innovative science and digital technologies to create transformative treatments in areas of great medical need. In our quest to find new medicines, we consistently rank among the world's top companies investing in research and development. Novartis products reach more than 750 million people globally and we are finding innovative ways to expand access to our latest treatments. About 105 000 people of more than 140 nationalities work at Novartis around the world. Find out more at [www.novartis.com](http://www.novartis.com).

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