

American Cancer Society Announces Partners for Cervical Cancer Prevention Behavior Change Communication Program in Kenya and Uganda

September 4, 2017– The American Cancer Society (ACS) Prevention and Early Detection program leverages partnerships with local cancer organizations to empower women and girls in low- and middle-income countries to prevent cervical cancer and detect it early with a focus on increased coverage of the HPV vaccine. Our aim is to work with cancer partners to engage and coordinate efforts with a diverse set of stakeholders including government, media, vaccine organizations, and primary, adolescent, and community health settings.

ACS is pleased to announce the selection of partners in Kenya and Uganda who will lead behavior change communications programs to tackle the burden caused by cervical cancer. The Uganda Women's Cancer Support Organization (UWOCASO) will support a coalition with the Uganda Child Cancer Foundation, Health AID Uganda, Cancer AID Organisation and Friends Crew Africa. Women 4 Cancer Early Detection and Treatment (Women 4 Cancer) in Kenya will leverage the skills and experience of organizations drawn from the Kenya Network of Cancer Organisations [KENCO]. Together, these organizations will adapt and create locally relevant cervical cancer prevention communication strategies aimed at measurable behavior change. Content and media formats will be developed with the technical assistance and guidance of ACS and the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs using their P Process, a tool for planning strategic, evidence-based health communication programs.

Cervical cancer remains widespread in Uganda and Kenya, where the incidence rate is about three times the world average. Often diagnosed late partly because of the stigma caused by the fear of contagion and the close association with HIV status, cervical cancer is also the leading cause of cancer deaths among women in Kenya and in Uganda. While an HPV vaccine rollout is planned in both countries, a great deal of confusion appears to exist among the population about the relationship between HPV – and the vaccine – and cervical cancer.

Women 4 Cancer Early Detection and Treatment is dedicated to addressing the stigma associated with cervical cancer through educative communication campaigns, early cervical cancer testing, and improvement of cancer recovery rates.

UWOCASO is dedicated to fighting cancer by empowering women at risk or living with cancer, their families and communities through the provision of appropriate and evidence-based cancer information, practices, awareness, supportive care and advocacy.

We are delighted to have an opportunity to collaborate with our new partners who will drive behavior changes in cervical cancer prevention. We look forward to sharing their experiences with the broader community and build on their successes. For more information, please contact:globalcancerprevention@cancer.org.