

Media Advisory

Key findings on lung cancer screening from IARC/WHO, new insights into cancer risk and susceptibility, and the impact of current conflicts on cancer control, are among the highlights of the World Cancer Congress in Hong Kong, 24–26 September 2026

Tuesday 8 September 2026 (Geneva, Switzerland) — The [World Cancer Congress](#), organised by the Union for International Cancer Control ([UICC](#)) and hosted by the Hong Kong Anti-Cancer Society ([HKACS](#)) will take place in Hong Kong, China, from 24–26 September 2026, bringing together the global cancer community to discuss scientific advances, policy innovations and practical solutions aimed at reducing the burden of cancer worldwide.

An official opening press conference (hybrid) on Thursday 24 September will feature **key findings on lung cancer screening from IARC**, the WHO cancer research agency, from the upcoming IARC Handbook on Lung Cancer Screening and published the same day in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, alongside new updates on the **implementation of Australia's national lung cancer screening programme**.

The Congress will also feature new research and discussions on the scientific advances, policy innovations, and health system challenges shaping the future of cancer control. Topics include the **impact of conflict on cancer care** and **emerging insights into cancer risk factors and susceptibility**, particularly for lung cancer, as well as artificial intelligence, precision oncology, access to treatment, cervical cancer elimination, and sustainable financing for cancer services worldwide.

The biennial event is expected to attract over 2,000 cancer professionals, public health officials, civil society representatives, scientists, and people with lived experience.

Dr C.H. Leong, President of the Hong Kong Anti-Cancer Society; **Ulrika Årehed Kågström**, President of UICC; **Prof. Lo Chung-mau**, Secretary for Health, Hong Kong SAR Government; and **Elizabeth Mittendorf**, President of ASCO, are among the speakers at Congress.

Select scientific highlights to be presented at the Congress:

- **New projections of the future global lung cancer burden attributable to waterpipe smoking**, providing one of the first long-range estimates of elevated cancer risk for this form of tobacco use, often perceived as less harmful than cigarettes and growing in popularity, particularly among young adults.
- **Discovery of a lasting biological “scar” from smoking associated with elevated lung cancer risk years after smoking cessation**, identifying blood protein signatures that may help explain why some former smokers remain at increased risk.
- **New research linking sleep disruption patterns to elevated breast cancer risk**, using genomic, metabolic and behavioural data to better understand how sleep may influence cancer development.
- **Large-scale evidence linking accelerated biological ageing to increased cancer risk**, identifying biological pathways linked to inflammation, immune dysregulation and

tissue changes that may help explain why some people develop cancer earlier than others.

- **New research suggesting broader tumour screening could improve detection of inherited cancer risk**, identifying Lynch syndrome, an inherited condition linked to colorectal and several other cancers, in a wider range of tumour types than is currently recognised and highlighting previously undescribed genetic variants in India.
- **New evidence linking smoking and vaping to lower participation in colorectal cancer screening**, highlighting missed opportunities for prevention and early detection among higher-risk populations.
- **A comprehensive international assessment of colorectal cancer mortality in younger adults**, showing that rising case numbers may be translating into increasing death rates in multiple countries.
- **New research examining the impact of conflict** on cancer diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes, drawing on studies from Palestine and Ukraine that highlight both the disruption of cancer services and the resilience of health systems during humanitarian crises.

Programme highlights:

- **The global challenge of lung cancer**, including how political commitments can be translated into action on prevention, screening, and early detection.
- **How artificial intelligence could transform early detection and diagnosis**, while addressing concerns about equity, implementation, and access.
- **The future of precision oncology**, including whether rapidly advancing technologies can realistically benefit patients beyond the world's wealthiest health systems.
- **How countries can strengthen and finance cancer services**, particularly amid workforce shortages, constrained resources, and rising demand for care.
- **The opportunities and risks posed by commercial forces, misinformation, and digital media**, from tobacco and alcohol marketing to cancer myths spread online.
- **Progress towards eliminating cervical cancer**, including how partnerships, vaccination, screening, and sustainable financing are reshaping prevention efforts worldwide.
- **The role of patients and survivors in shaping cancer policy, research and care**, and how the experience of people affected by cancer is increasingly influencing decision-making.

Invited speakers include:

- **Dr C.H. Leong**, President, Hong Kong Anti-Cancer Society, China
- **Ulrika Årehed Kågström**, President, UICC, and Secretary-General, Swedish Cancer Society
- **Zainab Shinkafi-Bagudu**, President-elect, UICC, Nigeria
- **Cary Adams**, Chief Executive Officer, UICC, Switzerland
- **Prof. Lo Chung-mau**, Secretary for Health, Hong Kong SAR Government, China
- **Dr Jie He**, Director, National Cancer Center of China (*not available for interviews, speaking at Plenary on first day*)
- **HE Dr Barr. Chioma Uzodimma**, First Lady of Imo State, Nigeria, and Chairperson, First Ladies Against Cancer

- **Ruihua Xu**, Vice-Chairman, China Anti-Cancer Association
- **Elizabeth Mittendorf**, President, ASCO, USA
- **Stephen Grobmyer**, Institute Chief, Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi Cancer Institute, UAE
- **Jeff Dunn**, Immediate Past President, UICC and Chief of Mission, Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia
- **Cesaltina Ferreira Lorenzoni**, President, African Organisation for Research and Training in Cancer (AORTIC), Mozambique
- **Zhu Jiejing**, dancer and breast cancer survivor.

Experts are also available from organisations co-founded by UICC, including City Cancer Challenge (C/Can) on strengthening cancer services at city level; the McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer on legal and regulatory approaches to cancer control; the NCD Alliance on noncommunicable disease policy and advocacy; and the ATOM Coalition on improving access to cancer medicines.

What: World Cancer Congress

When: 24–26 Sept. 2026 – **Press conference:** Thurs. 24 Sept. at 1.40pm–2.20pm HKT
(connection and speaker details to follow next week)

Where: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), Hong Kong, China

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Media Registration

Accredited media are invited to register at:

<https://www.uicc.org/world-cancer-congress-2026-press-accreditation-form>

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To request embargoed abstracts, arrange an interview, or other information:

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About the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)

The Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) is the largest and oldest international cancer organisation dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer around the world. Founded in 1933, UICC has more than 1,100 members in over 170 countries and territories. Its membership base includes the world's major cancer leagues and societies, research institutes, treatment centres, hospitals, public health agencies and patient support groups. UICC also boasts more than 70 strategic partners.

UICC enjoys consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC) and has official relations with the following institutions: WHO, IARC, IAEA, UNODC. UICC is a founding member of the NCD Alliance, the McCabe Centre for Law & Cancer and the International Cancer Control Partnership (ICCP). UICC established the City Cancer Challenge Foundation in January 2019 and the Access to Oncology Medicines (ATOM) Coalition in 2022.

UICC's mission is both to unite and support the cancer community in its efforts to reduce the global cancer burden, promote greater equity and ensure that cancer control remains a priority on the global health and development agenda.

www.uicc.org

About the Hong Kong Anti-Cancer Society

Founded in 1963, by Professor John HO Hung-chiu, it is the oldest non-profit cancer organisation in Hong Kong. For over 60 years, HKACS has remained committed to preventing, fighting, and curing cancer. In addition to providing medical assistance, free in-patient care services, and comprehensive support, HKACS keeps pace with medical advancements by offering up-to-date cancer education and holistic care. We walk hand-in-hand with patients and caregivers throughout their cancer journey, empowering them in the fight against cancer. For more information, please visit www.hkacs.org.hk

About the World Cancer Congress

The World Cancer Congress unites the global health and cancer community with a multidisciplinary programme that features the latest successful interventions in cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care.

It is the only conference of its kind that brings together patient groups, the private sector, UN organisations and health and cancer NGOs from around the world.



The first International Cancer Congress was held in Madrid in 1933. It led to the foundation of the International Union Against Cancer in 1935, renamed the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) in 2010. The last edition took place in Geneva, Switzerland in 2024.

www.worldcancercongress.org