

Cancer is an increasingly heavy public health problem on the populations and the health care systems all around the globe, due to demographic, environmental and care cost reasons [1]. Population-based cancer registration is a very efficient tool to generate accurate data for epidemiological research and public health interventions [2].

A literature review was conducted to assess the status of cancer registration in Lebanon and to describe cancer dynamics over the past 50 years.

In Lebanon, cancer registration was conducted once in 1966 with the first population-based data collection [3] and was repeated almost thirty years later in 1998 [4]. In 2002, a National Cancer Registry (NCR) started to capture the incident cases of cancer from all areas of the country and to publish periodic national cancer reports with limited performance.

Cancer incidence in Lebanon has doubled both in men and women. Among men, prostate cancer is now topping the list of most common sites after a huge increase in screening practices over the years. Lung and bladder cancers, both tobacco-related cancers, have maintained almost the same rankings as second and third most common types since 1960s.

Breast cancer has remained the most common cancer among Lebanese women since the 1960s. Colorectal cancer moved from the fourth rank in the 1960s to second in recent data sets. Lung cancer has newly appeared on the list and has become the third most commonly diagnosed cancer among women since 2007. Bladder cancer showed a huge increase to the fifth rank in 2007.

Top listed cancer sites in Lebanon are linked to preventable behaviors or have efficient screening tools. Reinforcing the implementation of the Tobacco Control Law 174 is a must. A national cancer control plan should be established and resources should be allocated for preventive and screening programs.

References

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