



Federal Ministry of Health

Upgrade Oncology

... Strengthening the capacity of Cancer Treatment through Training in Oncology in Nigeria

Eligibility Criteria for Application or Nomination of U.S. based Oncology Pharmacists for the Upgrade Oncology Pharmacy Training in Nigeria.

Background: What is the underlying problem?

Nigeria is a major contributor to the overall cancer burden on the African continent with 115,950 new cases of cancer and 70,327 cancer deaths in 2018 and 124,815 new cases of cancer and 78,899 cancer deaths in 2020. Nigerians also have one of the world's poorest 5-year cancer survival rates. The vision of this project is to change this narrative. Quality cancer treatment requires medical professionals who are specialists in oncology screening, diagnosis, pharma-oncology, medical/ oncology, surgery, radiotherapy care, palliative and survivorship. In the past, we have created cancer awareness and have realized that most of the people who reach hospitals for cancer treatment after screenings, do not usually get the best and optimal cancer treatment and care. Many doctors and other professionals cannot afford to travel abroad for the required cancer treatment training; hence, they rely solely on online resources which are not entirely beneficial to their practice. Thereby, causing poor treatment outcome to the cancer patients they care for in Nigeria.

What is Upgrade Oncology?

To change the above narrative, **Project PINK BLUE – Health & Psychological Trust Centre**, initiated “**Upgrade Oncology: U.S. – Nigeria Science & Technology Exchange Program**” in 2018 with the goal of strengthening the capacity of the Nigerian oncology workforce through training in diverse oncology areas in partnership with Fulbright Specialist Program and U.S. Mission in Nigeria.

What have we done with Upgrade Oncology?

In 2018, the Upgrade Oncology focused on medical oncology training for clinical oncologists in Nigeria. The project was *funded by U.S. Embassy in Nigeria* in partnership with Federal Ministry of Health. The training was facilitated by two Fulbright specialists: Dr. Tracey O’Connor MD, *medical oncologist, Rosswell Park Cancer Institute, Buffalo, New York, USA* and Dr.

Mike Martin MD, *medical oncologist, University of Tennessee, Memphis, TN, USA*. The training provided forty-four (44) Nigerian clinical oncologists with updated knowledge on medical oncology, with focus on breast, prostate, leukemia, childhood, colorectal cancers and pregnancy in cancer patients. We had doctors from 11 university teaching hospital and some private facilities in Nigeria. *Please see the official release from U.S. Embassy in Nigeria.*

What are we doing this year?

This year, we are working with ACT Foundation, U.S. Mission Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Health, International Society of Oncology Pharmacy Practitioners (ISOPP), Oncology Pharmacy Practitioners Association of Nigeria (OPPAN), West African Postgraduate College of Pharmacists, Bio Ventures for Global Health and some pharmaceutical companies to bring two U.S. board certified oncology-pharmacists from the United States to Nigeria to provide the oncology-pharmacy training in Nigeria.

What we want?

We are inviting eligible U.S. based oncology pharmacists who are willing to share their knowledge, skills and expertise with oncology-pharmacists in Nigeria; to apply or be nominated to become a trainer in the Upgrade Oncology programme. The trainers will be honoured with the Fulbright Specialist award to travel to Nigeria for the hands-on face-to-face and virtual training in oncology pharmacy.

What will I do in Nigeria?

The selected two U.S. based oncology pharmacists will do the following (pre, training and post training):

- i. The two selected U.S. based oncology pharmacists will arrive Nigeria to provide oncology pharmacy training. The training will focus on clinical oncology-pharmacy, pediatric oncology pharmacy, aseptic techniques in chemotherapy, application of biosimilars, oncology pharmacotherapy and hematology pharmacy. The training for the Nigerian oncology-pharmacy practitioners will take place in cancer hospital that has a bio-safety cabinet.
- ii. The selected U.S. based oncology pharmacists will work with the Upgrade Oncology Steering Committee, West African Post-Graduate College of Pharmacists, Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN), Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Nigeria Medical Association, Oncology Pharmacy Practitioners Association of Nigeria, and International Society of Oncology Pharmacy Practitioners to review oncology-pharmacy fellowship curriculum and develop the training curriculum for the Upgrade Oncology Pharmacy training.

Who will fund my trip to Nigeria?

Through the funding support from the U.S. Department of State, Fulbright Specialist Program and the U.S. Mission in Nigeria, the two selected oncology pharmacists will receive funding support to cover their flight, accommodation and a moderate stipend for feeding and other needs like visa reimbursement.

Who can apply or be nominated?

To apply or be nominated, U.S. based oncology pharmacists are required to meet the following eligibility criteria before they would be selected by the Upgrade Oncology Steering Committee, West African Postgraduate College of Pharmacists and Federal Ministry of Health.

The eligibility criteria are as follows:

1. Only U.S. citizens are eligible to apply or be nominated to join this programme.
2. Only oncology pharmacists are eligible to apply or be nominated.
3. Only board-certified pharmacists are eligible to apply or be nominated.
4. Pharmacists who teach or are academics/professors of oncology pharmacy in universities or research institutes are eligible to apply or be nominated.
5. Pharmacists who provide oncology-pharmacy care and services like reconstitution, oncology clinical trial at oncology centres or research institutes are encouraged to apply.
6. The potential U.S. based oncology pharmacists must be passionate on improving the skills and knowledge of the Nigerian oncology pharmacists from 24 universities of 19 states in Nigeria.

How do I apply?

To apply or nominate, the oncology pharmacists should send their curriculum vitae to Ms Gloria C. Okwu gloria.okwu@projectpinkblue.org

Do you need more information about Upgrade Oncology?

Please visit our YouTube page or click on the link below to watch the 2018 Upgrade Oncology video:

(<http://bit.ly/UpgradeOncology2018Video>).

For the 2018 Upgrade Oncology report, please click (<http://bit.ly/UpgradeOncologyReport2018>).

Please see the official release from U.S. Embassy in Nigeria

(<http://bit.ly/UpgradeOncology2018PressStatement>).

For more information, please call +234 or email gloria.okwu@projectpinkblue.org You can request for a meeting to get additional information or to support, partner or collaborate with us on this programme.