

Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services



Women's Health Program:



REPORT OF CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH/WORLD CANCER DAY, 2022

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SECITON 1

INTRODUCTION

According to global perspectives, cervical cancer is viewed as the fourth most frequently diagnosed cancer and fourth leading cause of cancer related deaths among women. In the year 2020 alone, cervical cancer recorded 604,000 new cases and 342,000 deaths worldwide (The GLOBOCAN 2020). In West Africa where Cameroon is found, the age standardized incidence and mortality rate stands at 23 and 16.6 per 100000 respectively. The month of January is recognized globally as “**Cervical Cancer Awareness Month**”. During this period, personnel involved directly or indirectly in cervical cancer prevention and management take out time to edify the public on disease burden, risk factors and prevention (screening and vaccination) using various means of communication (flyers, posters, t-shirts, brochures, media, group sensitization) to disseminate information to the population.

The global strategy for the elimination of cervical cancer by 2030 put forth by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2020 (strategy 90-70-90) focuses on;

- **Vaccination:** 90% of girls fully vaccinated with the HPV vaccine by the age of 15 years;
- **Screening:** 70% of women screened using a high-performance test by the age of 35 years, and again by the age of 45 years;
- **Treatment:** 90% of women with precancer treated and 90% of women with invasive cancer managed.

The Women’s Health Program (WHP) of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services (CBCHS) is the largest cervical cancer prevention program in Cameroon fully engaged in the strategy put forth by WHO as indicated above. WHP currently has 12 clinics which serve 8 of the 10 regions of Cameroon. Since its creation in 2007, it has screened over 120,000 women for cervical cancer using Visual Inspection with acetic acid (VIA) and HPV DNA testing, and vaccinated over 10,000 females with HPV vaccines (Gardasil and Cervarix). In 2022, WHP plans to expand vaccination for up to 50,000 girls aged 9 to 14years currently being implemented.

This year, WHP commemorated the cervical cancer awareness month under the theme “**WOMEN GO FOR YOUR SCREENING AND GET YOUR DAUGHTER(S) VACCINATED**” This report is a

summary of activities carried out in January 2022 marking the cervical cancer awareness month and the World cancer day (February 4th) by WHP of the CBCHS across the national territory.

SERCTION 2 ACTIVITIES

Activities marking the cervical cancer awareness month and the World Cancer Day carried out by WHP staff are summarized below

Sensitization

Several avenues were used to disseminate information on cervical cancer.

➤ Sensitization in churches

Various churches were visited within rural and urban settings with health talks focusing on cervical cancer burden, benefits of screening and vaccination. Different denominations were visited including: Baptist, Presbyterian, Catholic and Full Gospel reaching out to about 5000 persons.





Figure 1: Sensitization in churches

➤ Sensitization in Schools

Sensitization was done in schools with the approval of the school authorities reaching out to about 4000 pupils and students. A total 1023 consent forms were given to young girls to take for their parents/ guardians to consent before vaccination. The WHP visited over 20 primary and secondary schools across different towns in Cameroon during this cervical cancer awareness.



Figure 2: Sensitization in schools

➤ Sensitization in meeting groups

The WHP staff visited 13 women's groups with cervical cancer sensitization messages during this period. A total of 646 women were educated and encouraged to go for screening and ensure they take their daughters for vaccination.



Figure 3: Sensitization in Social groups

Sensitization in health facilities

Patient waiting areas and conference halls were used as avenues to intensify the sensitization of patients and health workers during this period. About 2000 health workers, patients and caregivers were educated.



Figure 4: Sensitization in the Health Facility



Figure 5: Sensitization in patient waiting areas

➤ Sensitization at the media

Different media were used to deliver health talks during this cervical cancer awareness month such as TV stations, Radio Stations (such as CRTV Bamenda, My media prime, Dan Broadcasting service , Dash TV (Douala)) and social media (Facebook and WhatsApp).

Thirty (30) T-shirts were printed for WHP staff with messages related to cervical cancer screening and vaccination. WHP Mboppi partnered with Humanity at Heart to sensitize via DBS TV in Douala.



Figure 6: Sensitization in media houses

HPV Vaccination

Young girls aged 9 to 14 years were vaccinated in schools, churches and health facilities. A total of 610 girls had the opportunity to be vaccinated during this period.



Figure 7: HPV Vaccination

Cervical cancer screening

WHP intensified screening for cervical cancer in all its sites using various screening approaches such as VIA/VILI DC, HPV DNA testing or both. As a strategy to boost up cervical cancer screening uptake, low-cost screening campaigns were organized in some WHP sites like Mbingo Baptist Hospital and Bafoussam Baptist Health Centre. Furthermore, some sites like Etoug-ebe and Mboppi Baptist Hospital gave priority to women living with HIV positive by screening them for free given that they are at higher risk of HPV infection and cervical cancer. A total of 631 women were screened within this period.

Cervigrams Review

To assure quality of service delivery, weekly cervigram review was intensified in some WHP sites.

Partnership and collaboration

WHP collaborated with partners such as humanity at heart and PATCHA foundation in some of the activities within this period. Partnership with Humanity at Heart involved community mobilization

and referral for cervical cancer screening. A total of 76 women were screened as a result of this partnership.

World Cancer Day celebration

The activities of the cervical cancer awareness month were culminated with the commemoration of the world cancer day on the 4th of February 2022. The main activity of the day was health talks in various avenues focusing on the theme of this year's celebration “Close the Gap in Cancer Care”. WHP Mutengene in partnership with PATCHA foundation visited and provided pain medications for 16 cancer patients in the health facility.



Figure 8: World cancer Day Celebration

SECTION 3

STATISTICS

The table below summarizes the figures registered per site during the cervical cancer awareness month.

WHP CLINICS	TOTAL VIA/DC	TOTAL HPV TEST	BOTH HPV/VIA	TOTAL SCREENING	VIA/DC POSITIVE PRECANCERS	VIA/DC POSITIVE SUSPICIOUS	HPV POSITIVE	HPV VACCINATION
BBH	14	15	0	29	0	0	6	0
BHM	19	41	0	60	4	1	6	81
MBINGO	88	16	36	104	8	4	4	30
MBOPPI	66	68	13	134	6	0	35	30
NKWEN	120	8	0	128	1	4	22	231
ETOUG-EBE	16	34	0	50	1	0	14	75
BAFOUSSA M	44	3	11	47	6	1	7	108
EKOUMDOU M	16	14	1	30	0	0	2	52
KRIBI	5	3	2	8	0	0	1	0
BANYO	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	1
BONABERI	20	10	0	30	3	0	5	2
Kumba	7	2	2	9	3	0	2	16
TOTAL	418	214	65	632	32	10	104	626

Table 1: Cervical cancer screening and vaccination across WHP clinics January 2022

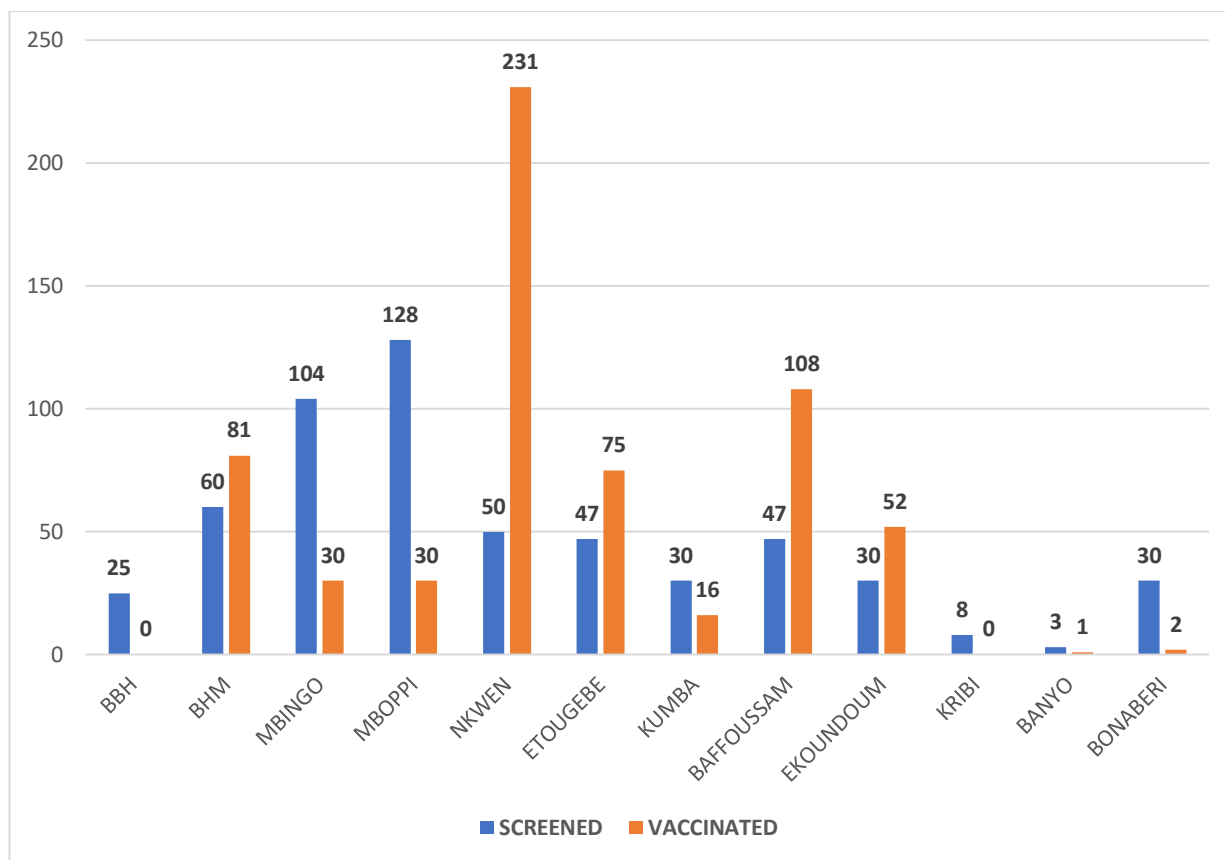


Figure 1 Chart representing total number of screened/vaccinated across WHP Sites

From the chart and table above, it shows that Mboppi screened the highest number of clients within this cervical cancer awareness month (134), followed by Nkwen and Mbingo while Nkwen vaccinated the highest number of girls (231). Overall, 632 women were screened and 626 young girls vaccinated with the Gardasil 4 HPV vaccine within this period.

Challenges

- The turn-out was below expectation despite sensitization as services had to be paid.
- Staff burnout was experienced in a site like Nkwen as there was work overload but limited personnel
- Most parents refused giving consent for their girls to be vaccinated despite the sensitization, education and no charge for vaccines as many of them were still skeptical about the vaccine.
- Some, groups and churches denied audience for WHP staff
- Some of the planned activities were not carried due the surge in Covid 19 cases in some areas.

Way Forward

- Source for funds to subsidize screening fee especially HPV DNA testing
- Continue to sensitize the public on the importance of cervical cancer prevention using existing health structures
- Partner with the EPI department to organize HPV vaccination outreaches and use existing health mobilizers for community mobilization
- Outreaches should be organized to widen screening coverage

Conclusion

WHP observed the cervical cancer awareness month and the world Cancer Day with great success. The strategy set forth by the WHO to eliminate cervical cancer by 2030 remains a strong vision across the world especially in Cameroon where disease burden is quite high. The WHP is making all efforts to see this dream become a reality. As such we solicit support from partners to continue to implement a successful cervical cancer screening program.

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