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Namibia National Cancer Registry “2010 – 2014 Cancer Incidence Report”

The Cancer Association of Namibia (WO30) is proud to present the “Cancer Incidence in Namibia 2010 – 2014” report the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Service, Hon Juliet Kavetuna on 26 April 2017.

Data plays an integral role in planning of health care practices and in fighting cancer this is no different. As association we are proud to be the national administrators of the Namibian National Cancer Registry (NCCR) and we thank the Namibian public for supporting CAN in this role too.

A special word of thanks to Mr Morten Ervik of the International Atomic Research Centre, all medical practitioners, medical and treatment establishments and volunteers who have supported data collection.

We would also like to thank the African Cancer Registry Network (AFCRN) for their continued support on cancer reporting in not only Namibia, but Africa as a whole and in specific AstraZenica Pharmaceuticals and Rössing Uranium Mine for supporting this programme.

Research results

A total of 11 248 malignant neoplasms were recorded among the Namibian population during this five-year period, of which 5 125 were in males (45.6%) and 6 123 in females (54.4%). With ‘other skin’ neoplasms excluded, there were 10 559 people with malignant neoplasms; 4 787 males (45.3%) and 5 772 females (54.7%). Of this number, 353 (3.3%) were in children below the age of 15.

Overall, the incidence of all cancers including non-melanoma skin in males was 153.8 per 100 000 and 146.3 per 100 000 in females. Excluding non-melanoma skin cancers, the incidence of cancer overall in males was 144.2 per 100 000 and was 138.7 per 100 000 in females. This represents an increase in incidence in both sexes compared to the previous reporting period (2005-2009) while the ranking of the most common types of cancer remained similar with the

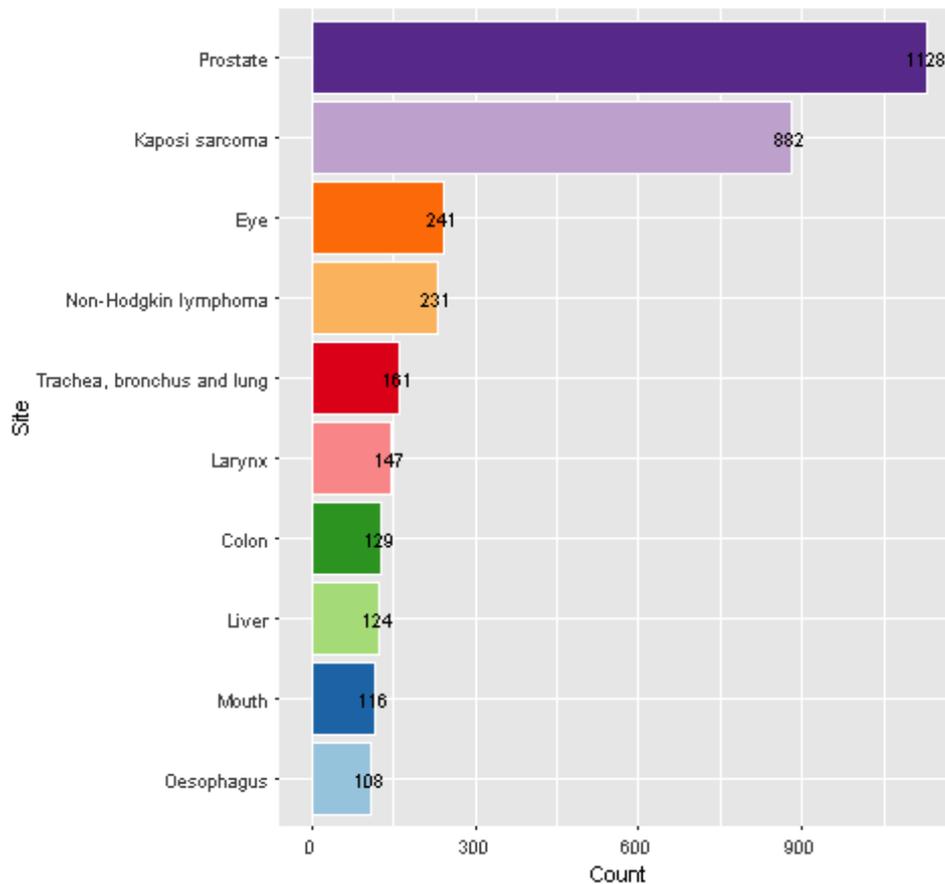
exception of a notable increase in the HIV-associated cancers (Kaposi sarcoma, Non-Hodgkin lymphoma and Eye cancer).

The data collected by the NNCR consists of 31 788 cancer cases recorded from 1969 to 2014. Between 1969 and 1994, the number of cases recorded per year ranged from 1 to 402. Data from 1989 to 1994 was analysed in the first report (Koehler, 1997). Active registration of both pathology-based and clinical cases was only started in 1995. A total of 5 141 cases¹ were recorded in the period from 1995 to 1998, approximately 1 285 cases per year. In 1999 only 534 cases were recorded, thus these data were not included in any of the reports. The subsequent report covered the period from 2000 to 2005 and included 5 009 cases, an average of approximately 834 cases per year (Carrara et al, 2009). This was followed by a report covering the period 2006 to 2009 during which a total of 6 363 cases, an average of 1 591 cases each year, was analysed (Carrara et al, 2011).

The current report represents the most complete and reliable reflection of cancer incidence in the Namibian population between 2010 and 2014. A total of 11 248 malignant neoplasms were recorded among the Namibian population during this five-year period, an average of 2 250 cancers per year, an increase of almost 40% on the previous reporting period.

Leading cancers among males

The most frequent cancer among men between 2010 and 2014 was prostate cancer (23.6%, ASR 37.6), followed by Kaposi sarcoma (18.4%, ASR 22.0), Non-Hodgkin lymphoma (4.8%, ASR 6.3), cancers of the eye (5.0%, ASR 6.2), lung / trachea / bronchus (3.4%, ASR 5.9), larynx (3.1%, ASR 5.3), colon (2.7%, ASR 4.2), liver (2.6%, ASR 4.0), mouth (2.4%, ASR 3.9) and oesophagus (2.3%, ASR 3.9).

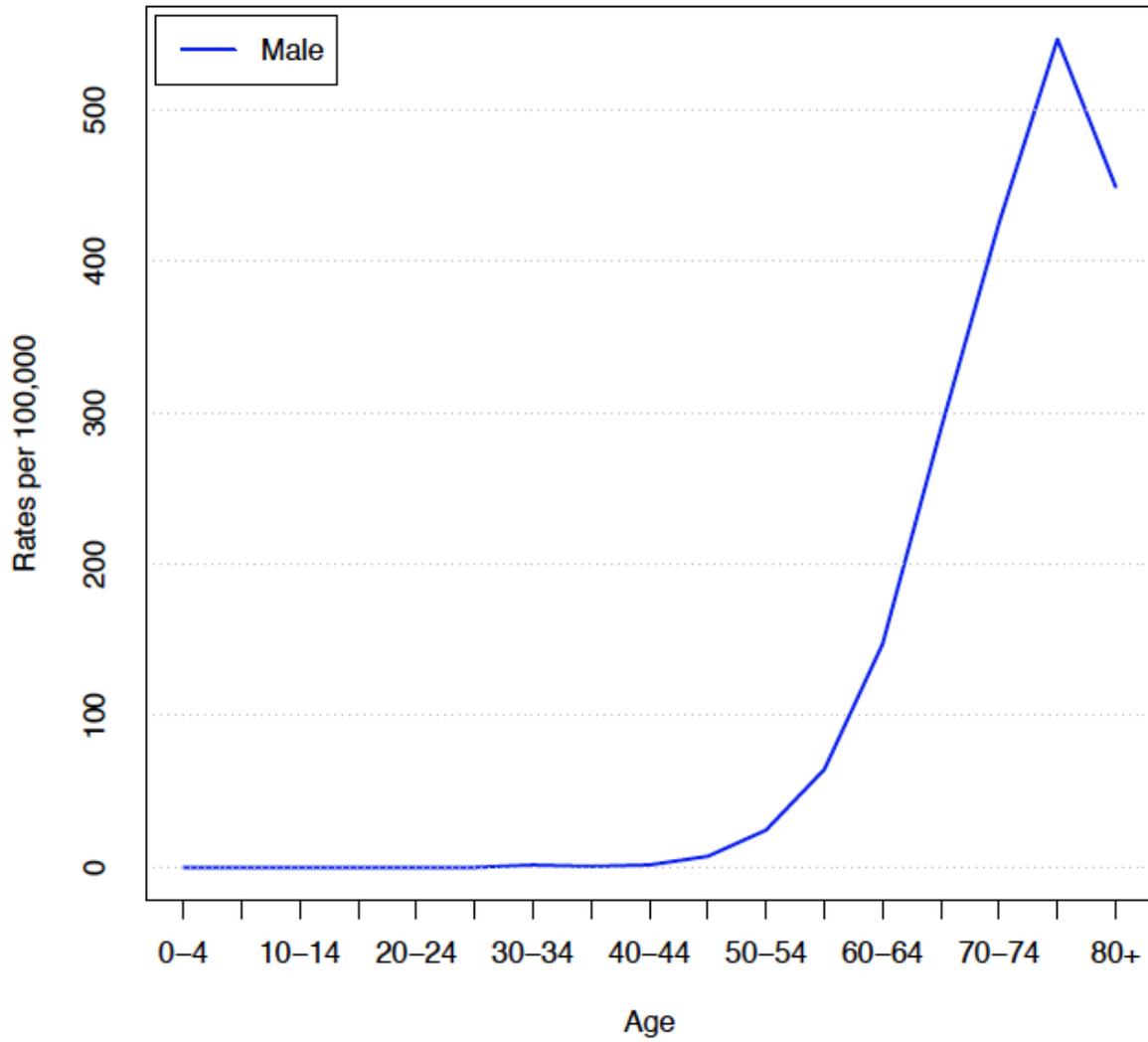


Bar Chart showing Top 10 Cancers in Namibia (2010-2014), excluding C44, Male

Prostate cancer

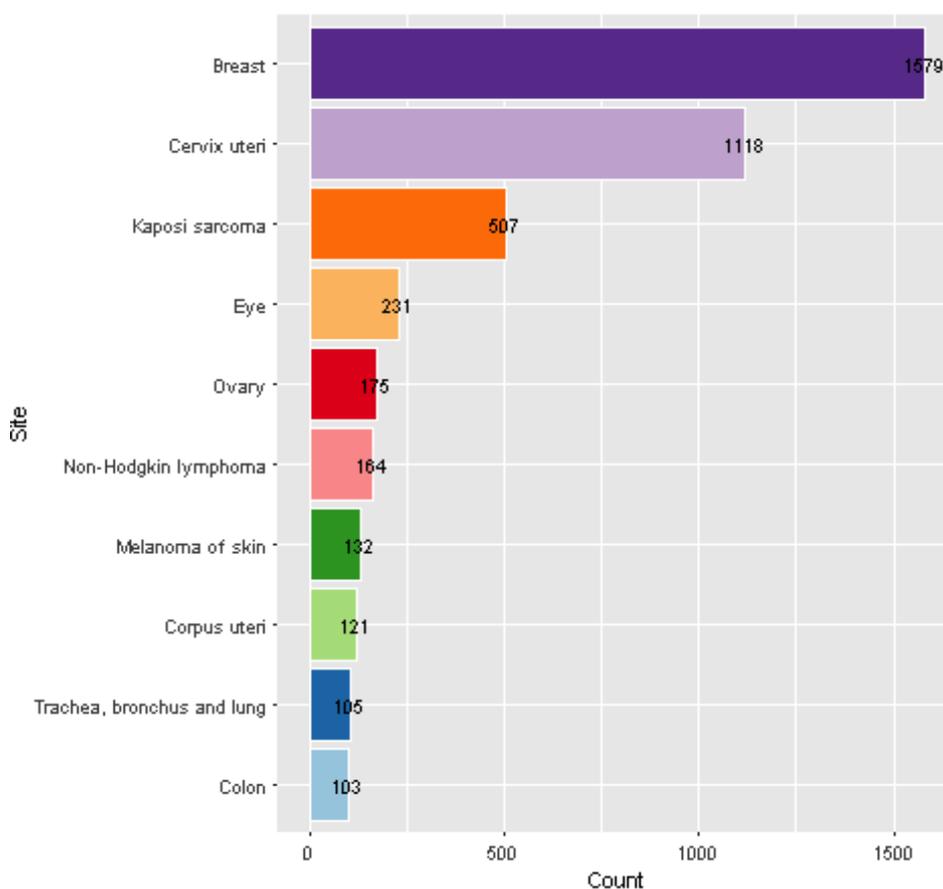
Cancer of the prostate was the most common cancer among males during the period beginning in 2010 and ending in 2014. A total of 1 128 cases were reported, comprising 23.6% of all male cancers. The annual ASR for prostate cancer was 37.6 per 100 000, an almost two-fold increase compared to the previous reporting period (ASR 23.5). Incidence increased with age from 1.6 per 100 000 at age 30-34 to 546.5 per 100 000 for men aged 75-79.

Age-specific incidence rates per 100,000 in 2010 – 2014
Prostate (C61)



Leading cancers among females

The predominant cancer in women was breast cancer (27.3%, ASR 40.2), followed by cancers of the cervix (19.4%, ASR 27.2), Kaposi sarcoma (8.8%, ASR 10.1), eye (4.0%, ASR 4.8), ovary (3.0%, ASR 4.3), colon, Non-Hodgkin lymphoma (2.8%, ASR 3.4), corpus uteri (2.1%, ASR 3.3) and lung / trachea / bronchus (1.8%, ASR 2.9) cancers.

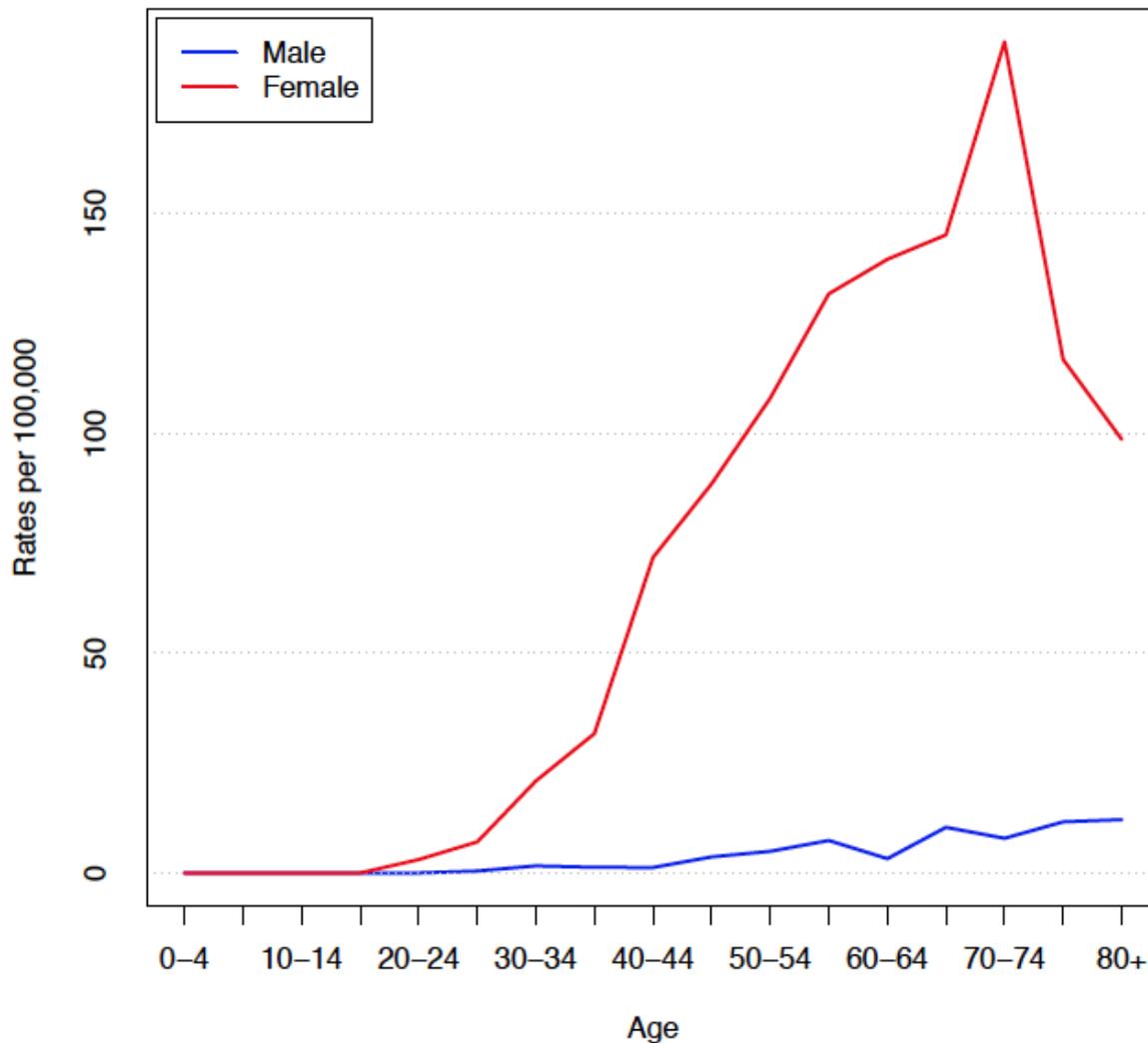


Bar Chart showing Top 10 Cancers in Namibia (2010-2014), excluding C44, Female

Breast cancer

Breast cancer was the most common cancer among Namibian women between 2010 and 2014. A total of 1 579 cases were reported, comprising 27.4% of all female cancers. The ASR for female breast cancer was 40.2 per 100 000; a significant increase from 26.1 in the previous reporting period. The annual incidence increased with increasing age, peaking at 189.1 per 100 000 in women 70-74 years of age.

**Age-specific incidence rates per 100,000 in 2010 – 2014
Breast (C50)**



Childhood cancers

A total of 357 cancer cases were recorded in children (defined as a person below the age of 15) during the five-year period from 2010 to 2014, of which 52.1% were male. Excluding other skin cancers, 353 cases were recorded among children (ages 0-14). The joint most common cancer in male children was kidney cancer and Non-Hodgkin lymphoma (27 cases in each, 14.8% of the total in each), followed by eye cancer (19 cases, 10.4%), brain cancer (16 cases, 8.7%), lymphoid leukaemia (15 cases, 8.2%) and Kaposi sarcoma (13 cases, 7.1%).

Among female children there were 24 cases (14.2%) of eye cancer, 18 cases (10.7%) of kidney cancer, 17 cases (10.1%) of Non-Hodgkin lymphoma, 16 cases (9.5%) of brain cancer and 13 cases (7.7%) of Kaposi sarcoma.

The Namibia National Cancer Registry

The Namibia National Cancer Registry (NNCR) is a combined project between the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS) and the Cancer Association of Namibia (CAN) with data analysis done by IARC.

This collaboration started in 1995 and this report is the fifth published report. The NNCR aims to provide a database of information that will ultimately lead to improved cancer prevention and control among the Namibian population.

The main goals of the NNCR are:

- To monitor the incidence of cancer among the Namibian population on an ongoing basis;
- To use observed cancer trends to predict future cancer patterns in Namibia;
- To provide information on the burden of cancer in different regions and among different ethnic groups in Namibia;
- To monitor the effects of cancer prevention programs, early detection or screening, treatment and palliative care;
- To provide information that will serve as a basis for research into cancer causes specific to the Namibian population.

Case finding relies upon receipt of registration forms, completed by nursing staff in the admissions unit of the Dr A.B. May Cancer Centre, Namibia Oncology Centre (NOC) and copies of pathology reports from various state and/or private laboratories.

Currently, there is no active case finding and minimal follow-up in Namibia, unless conducted by staff of the Cancer Association of Namibia on an ad-hoc basis.

Lack of funding in this regard hampers this part of the project, as only the Cancer Association of Namibia and some donors who agree on the urgency of data pertaining to incidence reports cover costs relating to the NNCR.

The Association remains actively engaged in creating awareness, educating and supporting Namibians in the fight against cancer. A key element of the war on cancer is supporting data collection and presentation of a cancer incidence report in Namibia.

Commitment on all levels and from all stakeholders remains pivotal in making an impact on this journey of change.

Change plays a cardinal role, because a change in attitude, breaking the stigma and developing better national plans to combat diseases, is part of our mission to rid our communities of non-communicable diseases like cancer.

How do we eradicate it, if we do not know what we are up against?

The Cancer Association of Namibia, as administrator of the Namibia National Cancer Registry, is therefore proud to present the fifth 'Cancer Incidence in Namibia Report (2010 – 2014)'. This document should ideally be read along with the previous published reports (1995 – 1998; 2000 – 2005; and 2006 – 2009).

From commentary, you will quickly realize that there is still much work to be done to ensure we provide data of a world-class standard from Namibia in terms of cancer reporting. It is also evident that as time goes by, case reporting, active case finding and case updating does enjoy more attention.

Data collection is a very time-consuming and a costly process and, as a welfare organisation, we underscore the urgency of public and stakeholder engagement – not only in data support, but for funding as well. Since the Association remains committed to fighting cancer and to making an impact on our communities, the national cancer registry must remain a priority at all costs!

I trust that this publication will serve as a guide to all parties involved in decision-making, advocacy and responsible citizenry (both private and corporate) to support the advocacy on cancer and in so doing, reduce the incidence of this disease that remains the leading cause of death worldwide.”

Rolf Hansen, Chief Executive Officer of the Cancer Association of Namibia.

Electronic copies are available at canreg@can.org.na

Printed book copies are available for N\$250 at the Cancer Association of Namibia, 90 John Meinert Street, Windhoek West.

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