



# **CANCER ASSOCIATION OF NAMIBIA WO 30**

## **FACT SHEET – 2015**

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# CANCER ASSOCIATION OF NAMIBIA

## WO 30

### FACT SHEET

#### 1. History

The late Dr AB May founded the Cancer Association in 1968 and reported to the National Cancer Association of South Africa. In 1978 the Association became independent from South Africa and changed its name to the Cancer Association of Namibia. Since then all funds raised and collected remains in Namibia.

#### 2. Mission

The Cancer Association of Namibia, in cooperation with the community, fights cancer and its consequences country wide to the benefit of all Namibians by supporting research; health education and information; care and support services.

#### 3. Aims and Objectives

It is the distinct aim of the Cancer Association of Namibia (CAN) to educate the general public regarding the prevention, early detection and dangers of cancer. CAN renders a welfare service to all cancer sufferers according to established criteria.

**Education** and supplying information is an ongoing process. By way of our annual program and on invitation, we raise awareness in different sectors of the community, i.e. schools, farm communities, religious denominations, women organizations, corporate exhibitions and CAN fundraisers.

The Namibian Media (electronic and written) is highly supportive of our services & activities and continuously give extensive coverage thereof.

Talks on various radio and television stations are regularly given with the emphasis on the impact of lifestyle and health.

Leaflets on all aspects of the 11 different cancers are distributed at every possible opportunity with the main focus on prevention and early detection. Some leaflets are available in two languages and we anticipate to print more leaflets in indigenous languages.

**Welfare** is at the core of serving the cancer patients of Namibia. CAN offer its care and supportive services, not only to patients, but also to their families. The Association also provides, free of charge, equipment in the form of hospital beds, commodes, wheelchairs, oxygen, morphine pumps and more.

Items such as colostomy bags/urostomy products, prosthesis, nappies and nutritional supplementary products (Ensure, Life Gain, E-Pap) are sold at cost price to cancer patients,

The Association, strictly following the criteria set by the Board of Trustees, financially assists patients without a medical aid as well as those with no/or low income.

**Research** is costly. The Association yearly sets funds aside so that we can support research. In 2003 CAN presented the first ever Namibian Cancer Register to the Ministry of Health and Social Services. This Register will be updated as an ongoing project, and

results published every 3-4 years. The second Cancer Register was published in 2009. The most updated Namibian Cancer Registry will be published in 2016.

#### **4. Governing Body**

CAN is governed by an Executive Council, elected from the broad public at an Annual General Meeting every second year. It comprises of a President, a Vice-President, Honorary Treasurer and 5 additional members. Mr Rolf Hansen, the Chief Executive Officer, oversees the functioning of all 26 sub-committees (all volunteers) throughout Namibia. *Grant Thornton Neuhaus* presents annual financial statements.

#### **5. Staff Compliment**

The Head Office (90 John Meinert Street, Windhoek West, telephone 061-237740, [www.can.org.na](http://www.can.org.na) or [help@can.org.na](mailto:help@can.org.na) ) has secured the professional services of the Chief Executive Officer, a Registered nurse an Accountant and Project Coordinator with support staff. They are responsible for managing all the aspects of the day-to-day operations.

A matron and two domestic workers take care of managing the interim home, Acacia House (94 John Meinert Street, Windhoek West).

Hundreds of volunteers across the country assist CAN in executing its enormous tasks.

#### **6. Achievements**

CAN is proud of its many achievements which include the purchasing of several properties to maximize its service to the people of Namibia; Reach-for-Recovery Group supporting women who suffered mastectomies (1978); presenting the first mammogram machine to the Ministry of Health and Social Services (1991); the opening of Acacia House after extensive renovations to the original building (1986); supplying the Children's Ward at the State Hospital with a television/VCR and a fully automatic washing machine to make the lives of the children and the staff more bearable; and the publication of a Cancer Register (2002).

The above are all measurable in terms of capital layout. The moral support and physical assistance the staff has given to thousands of cancer patients over the years cannot be measured. Taking into account that approximately 3000 new cancer patients are diagnosed annually, one shudders under the tremendous task of the Association.

#### **7. Support Groups**

*Reach-for Recovery* – is a breast cancer support group consisting of volunteers, all of whom were diagnosed with breast cancer and survived. Reach for Recovery supports cancer patients and their families irrespective of culture, religion, race or social standing order. Our mission is to diligently strive to reduce the mortality rate and combat the social stigma associated with breast cancer.

*\*Visit schools to raise awareness*

*\*Train volunteers*

*CHICA Namibia (Children with Cancer in Namibia)* – We foster increased public awareness and bring knowledge of childhood cancer warning signs to the general public. Alongside, offering emotional and financial support to enhance quality of life of patients and their families. We render financial support when required according to established criteria.

## 8. Projects

Childhood cancer; early warning signs to the general public. A number of projects started off small, but with the continued support and dedication of certain businesses and the Namibian public, it has grown tremendously into proud and successful national projects.

### January

- Sunsmart Awareness Month

### February

- Sunsmart Awareness Month (since 2005)
- World Cancer Day (since 2008)
- World Childhood Cancer Day (since 2007)
- Roche Shave/Spray-A-Thon
- Cancer Ball (new as from 2016)

### March

- Health & Nutrition Month
- Tie down Cancer (new as from 2016)

### April

- CHICA Golf Day (since 2007)

### May

- Lung Cancer Month
- World No Tobacco Day

### June

- Men's Health Awareness: Prostate & Testicular cancers
- Sanlam Golf (since 1994)
- Bank Windhoek Cancer Apple Project (since 2001)

### July

- Colorectal Cancer Month
- Boot Out Cancer Day (since 2011)

### August

- Cancer Prevention Week
- Sanlam Cancer Golf Challenge (since 1994)

### September

- Women's Health Awareness Campaign: Cervical Cancer
- Yellow and Gold in the Fight Against Childhood Cancer (since 2015)
- International Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

### October

- International Breast Cancer Awareness
- Hats, Roses & Champagne Brunch (since 2005)
- Pink Day (since 2008)
- Praying in Pink (since 2010)

### November

- Sunsmart Awareness month
- Movember Campaign (since 2008)
- Christmas Memories Concert (since 2006)

### December

- Sunsmart Awareness Month in co-operation with Standard Bank Namibia (since 2005)

\* Sanlam Breast Cancer & PAP Smear Clinics (since 1992)

## PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

### **Apple Project**

"Eat Healthy. Live Healthy. Prevent Cancer"

The main objective of this project is to reach all Namibian learners with the message "*prevention is better than cure*" by following a healthy lifestyle in order to reduce the risk of developing cancer. Bank Windhoek, together with the Cancer Association of Namibia, would like to take this message even further by fostering a sense of responsibility, towards their own health.

For an N\$5,00 donation, learners will receive an apple and a bookmark containing important information and tips on how to live healthily and prevent cancer.

Bank Windhoek became the main sponsor of this project in 2001 and to date has raised more than N\$11 million for the Cancer Association of Namibia. Herewith the statistics for apples sold over the past years:

Year	Apples Sold	Amount Raised
2002	172 000	N\$209 000
2003	262 000	300 000
2004	400 000	410 000
2005	430 000	470 000
2006	680 000	700 000
2007	832 000	700 000
2008	420 000	750 000
2009	550 000	N\$1 million
2010	650 000	N\$1,250 000
2011	760 000	N\$1,400 000
2012	874 000	N\$1,326 000
2013	900 000	N\$1,133 000
2014	900 000	N\$1,800 000
2015	673 112	N\$2,600 000

To encourage schools to participate in the Bank Windhoek Cancer Apple Project, Bank Windhoek awards a financial prize to the winning schools. The top three schools who purchase the most apples in the pre-primary, primary and secondary categories will each receive prize money. To give even the smallest school a chance of winning, the ratio between the number of apples purchased and the number of pupils will be calculated.

### **World Cancer Day**

Each year the World Cancer Day is the highlight of The International Union Against Cancer (UICC) World Cancer Campaign, which aims to put cancer on the global agenda and to scale up awareness of the fight against cancer, which in many countries, still takes a back seat to other public health priorities.

World Cancer Day allows the Cancer Association of Namibia opportunity to raise public awareness through the media on a national level.

Namibians should pay close attention to this very important message.

- We have to make the necessary lifestyle changes which are in our control, and try to prevent cancer.
- Know the early warning signs of cancer
- Go for screening tests
- Fear, ignorance and complacency lessen the survival rates.

The 2009/2010 topic communicated internationally by the UICC and the Cancer Association of Namibia for the prevention of cancer, is to encourage an energy balanced lifestyle, based on a healthy diet and physical activity with emphasis on "I love my healthy active childhood" thus once again concentrating on the health of children.

Dietary factors, physical inactivity, overweight and obesity are estimated to account for approximately 30% of cancers in western countries, making diet and physical activity second only to tobacco as a preventable form of cancer. This proportion is thought to be about 20% in developing countries and is projected to grow.

"Energy balance" is defined as a balance between energy intake, in the form of food and drink, and energy output, in the form of physical activity. An imbalance between energy intake and energy expenditure lead to weight gain or loss.

### **Risk Factors**

- Being overweight can lead to cancer later in life.
- Regular exercise
- Stop smoking – prevent 1000's of new cancer cases yearly
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily

To reduce the burden of cancer early detection is imperative – know the warning signs of cancer.

- A lump or thickening in the breast or elsewhere.
- Unusual bleeding or discharge
- Change in normal bowel or bladder habits
- Hoarseness or cough
- Indigestion or difficulty in swallowing

- Change in a wart or a mole
- Sudden loss of weight

Why do we delay to go to a doctor?

- Fear
- Ignorance
- Complacency

We urge each individual to take control of factors that can possibly prevent cancer.

### **World Childhood Cancer Day**

The International Union Against Cancer (UICC) will for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year put emphasis on the **“importance of the quality of life of children.”**

Today’s Children; Tomorrow’s World

The emphasis on the previous years were:

- 2006 My Child Matters
- 2007 Today's Children, tomorrow's World
- 2008 Give children and young people a smoke free environment - *“I love my smoke free childhood”*
- 2009 Encourage an energy-balanced lifestyle, based on healthy diet and physical activity *“I love my healthy childhood”*
- 2010 The campaign message globally consists of four key concepts:
  - ❖ Provide a smoke free environment for children (“no smoking in homes”)
  - ❖ Encourage an energy-balanced lifestyle (regular physical activity and low-fat diet, avoid obesity)
  - ❖ Learn the facts about vaccinations (HBV & HPV)
  - ❖ Teach your children to be sun-smart
  - ❖ Being overweight or obese

In 2015 the Cancer Association of Namibia launched the first ever “Yellow and Gold in the Fight against Childhood Cancer” campaign in Africa right here in Namibia. This project forms part of a global campaign to create awareness and raise support in the fight against various forms of childhood cancers that affect our young fellow countrymen and –ladies.

Being overweight or obesity can lead to cancer later in life we want to encourage kids to balance food and drink choices and highlight the importance of physical activity.

The Cancer Association of Namibia calls on families, parents, health professionals, educators and policy makers to promote health and a healthy lifestyle thereby preventing cancer.

We promote:

- Live an energy balanced life:

The prevalence of overweight and obesity is rising dramatically among adults and children around the world. According to the World Health Organization one out of every ten school-age children is overweight.

**Dietary factors, physical inactivity, overweight and obesity are estimated to account for approximately 30% of cancers in western countries, making diet and physical activity second only to tobacco as a preventable form of cancer. This proportion is thought to be about 20% in developing countries and is projected to grow.**

**“Energy balance” is defined as a balance between energy intake, in the form of food and drink, and energy output, in the form of physical activity. An imbalance between energy intake and energy expenditure lead to weight gain or loss.**

- Second –hand smoke is a health hazard for you and your family. There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke. Give your child a smoke-free childhood

“Stop Smoking: Smoke Kills”

- Our message is:

- a) Love your smoke free childhood
- b) Love being Sunsmart
- c) Love being healthy
- d) Love being active

### **Message**

The Cancer Association of Namibia publishes different adverts in different languages in the local newspapers on how children should protect themselves against cancer.

We highlighted the dangers:

- The sun – protect your skin
- Smoking – to get away from a person that is smoking
- Healthy eating – to avoid chocolate and sweets

We show how a child can protect him/herself against the dangers by illustrating understandable pictures:

- Wear a hat, sunglasses, sun block
- To leave when someone is smoking near him or her or in the car to turn down the windows for fresh air.

We encourage the healthy lifestyle by showing:

- To eat healthy – fruit and vegetables
- To play outside – encouraging exercise

We also targeted the teenagers by illustrating:

- It is not cool to smoke
- There's nothing healthy about a tan
- Avoid chocolates and sweets – as obesity increases the risk of getting cancer
- Encourage exercises

### **Shave/Spray-A-Thon**

Shave or spray your hair and support the fight against cancer and show you care. CAN host a shave/spray-a-thon day due to public demand. The public becomes increasingly more aware of the disease and what it entails and has become very involved in assisting our Namibian cancer sufferers. One of our biggest problems is the financial impact on the cancer sufferer.

CAN does not receive any financial assistance from the Namibian Government to assist the cancer patients. CAN would like to assist more patients than at present.

### **World No Tobacco Day**

Raise awareness.

### **Men's Health Awareness: Prostate & Testicular Cancers**

Raise awareness.

### **Sanlam Golf**

Raise funds and awareness.

### **Colorectal Cancer Month**

Raise awareness.

### **Cancer Prevention Week**

Raise awareness.

### **CHICA Golf Day/Night Game**

CHICA (Children with Cancer in Namibia) Namibia is a support group for children with cancer and it falls under the umbrella of the Cancer Association of Namibia. This organization, which is not government funded, consists of volunteers, some of whom are parents of children suffering from cancer. Our aim is to provide assistance to children with cancer, from the time of diagnosis, recognizing the inevitable disruption to family life when a child faces vigorous and often lengthy treatments for cancer.

Funds raised will be directly for benefit of the children and their families. This will be in form of financial assistance for accommodation and traveling costs if the patient and family need to travel to Windhoek in order to receive the necessary treatment. We would also like to assist those families who do not have the benefit of a Medical Aid.

Our organization would like to focus the attention of our community on children with cancer in Namibia and create an awareness of the necessary steps that can be taken in living a healthy lifestyle, as well as making the public aware of the warning signs of cancer since *"early detection is the key to saving a life"*.

### **Boot Out Cancer Day**

The UICC's (International Union Against Cancer) message of "Cancer can be prevented too" by just changing your lifestyle; specifically targeting the youth. The Cancer Association of Namibia is selling shoelaces and vibrant colored socks with the messages "Boot Out Cancer". The Association requests the Namibians to wear their "tekkies"/ office shoes, safety boots or uniform shoes on the day. The message: By walking just 30 minutes a day, you can become a healthier individual.

### **Hats, Roses & Champagne Brunch**

Hats, Roses & Champagne Brunch is hosted by the Cancer Association of Namibia for the tenth year (2015) to celebrate October - International Breast Cancer Month. The Cancer Association invites women and ladies in the corporate environment to attend this breakfast where the Cancer Association of Namibia raises awareness about breast and cervical cancer and raise funds for the breast and cervical cancer prevention efforts. The funds raised at this event are used for breast cancer and cervical cancer prevention.

### **Pink Day**

This day allows all Namibians, male and female, young and old to demonstrate their supporting the prevention of Breast cancer. All Namibians are invited to wear pink t-shirts and to make a donation to the Cancer Association of Namibia.

### **Christmas Memories Concert**

This concert is hosted by the College of the Arts to raise funds for cancer.

### **Sunsmart Awareness Month**

Skin cancer awareness.

## **Movember Campaign**

A combination of the words "Moustache and November"

It is an annual month-long event involving the growing of moustaches during the month of November. At the start of Movember guys register with a clean-shaven face.

The Movember participants, known as Mo Bros, have the remainder of the month to grow and groom their Mo, raising money along the way to benefit men's health – especially prostate cancer.

## **Sunsmart Awareness**

November/December/January/ February

## **9. Partnership between Cancer Association of Namibia (CAN) and Ministry Of Health and Social Services. Training of Registered Nurses in Pap Smear and Breast Examinations**

### **9.1 Introduction**

Cancer prevention and control has been part of the reproductive health program of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS). The ministry provides services aimed at promoting cancer prevention, reducing cancer risk, improving cancer detection, increasing access to health and social services, and reducing the stress of cancer. The reproductive organs self examination and screening programs have the potential to detect abnormalities that may be related to cancers at a less advanced stage. It enhances survival and quality of life for cancer patients and their families.

In view of the above and in order to ensure comprehensive awareness an increased uptake of services aimed at prevention and early detection of cervical and breast cancers in Namibia, the Reproductive health Unit of the Primary Health Care Directorate in the MoHSS, in partnership with the Cancer Association (CAN) has planned to train Registered Nurses from all 35 health districts commencing in February 2009 till 31 December 2009 with the financial and technical support of UNFPA as indicated in the Annual Work Plan (AWP) of MOHSS/UNFPA of 2009 for Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC).

### **9.2 Rationale**

The mortality rate, due to cervical cancer is the most common, followed by breast and prostate cancers in Namibia according to the MoHSS Health Information System data of 2003/4-2007/8. Cervical and breast cancers can be prevented and treated if detected early. A Pap smear examination is one of the procedures used to screen for cervical abnormalities in a woman while breast examinations are performed to detect abnormalities at an early stage. If any abnormality was detected through the screening and examinations, trained nurses will be able to refer those women effected for treatment. This will then reverse the situation of women dying of preventable cancers, namely cervical and breast cancers in Namibia.

## 10. **Acacia House**

### **Background**

Acacia House was established in 1986 with 9 beds at John Meinert Street, Windhoek West. The exclusive purpose of this interim house was to accommodate out of town cancer patients (mainly from rural areas) undergoing treatment at the Dr AB May Cancer Treatment Centre.

Ten years later, a serious lack of space developed and Acacia House was extended to accommodate 21 beds. Linen and towels are provided. Today patients stay in Acacia House free of charge, allowing one companion per patient at a cost of N\$100.00 per day.

Three wholesome meals are prepared daily and served to patients and companions. Patients are transported to and from hospital daily, also free of charge.

Acacia House offers sufficient space and quiet areas for privacy, reading and meditation. A pleasant lounge, with television, is available where patients can stay updated with current affairs or watch their favorite programs. Patients often stay in Windhoek for up to 6 consecutive weeks for their treatment, which is available in Windhoek only. Every effort is made to create a tranquil atmosphere which conducive to healing.

The acacia tree, due to its ability to grow a new branch if an old one was injured or removed, was chosen as a symbol indicative that there is always hope after contracting cancer.

Part of our public drive includes press conferences and project launches at Acacia House, so the public and the media can be exposed to the interim home.

### **Staff Compliment**

The entire home is managed by a matron with two assistants. Apart from their day-to-day responsibilities, these three staff members also give emotional and moral support when and as needed.

### **Annual Operational Cost**

The Cancer Association of Namibia cover Acacia House's running costs by way of fundraising projects, donations and kindhearted volunteers. The annual cost over the past financial year added up to N\$350 000.00. This includes groceries, cleaning materials, security services, City of Windhoek costs, staff salaries, fuel television, garden expenses and maintenance to the building.

## 11. **Closing**

Reflecting over its success, the generosity of the general public of Namibia can never be denied. If it were not for their positive and giving attitude towards the Cancer Association, no success would have been possible.

We thank and respect all our contributors and supporters. All contributions in whatever form, large or small, has made a visible difference to a cancer sufferer, somewhere, somehow.