

## NCG Membership

NCG membership has risen to 325, comprising of 315 National and 5 International Centres. A total 296 cancer centres, 18 NGOs/ patients group, 4 Research and Technical / technological Institutions and 7 professional societies are the current NCG members. During 2023 we welcomed 18 National and 2 International centres as members.

## Message from NCG

Welcome NCG members to December issue of NCG Newsletter. This issue provides a snapshot of progress and activities of the NCG in 2023. The NCG has new website and is accessible at <https://www.ncgindia.org>.

## NEW MEMBERS (National)

- Amala Institute of Medical Sciences, Amala Cancer Hospital Society, Thrissur, Kerala
- BhaktiVedanta Hospital and Research Institute , Dist. Thane, Maharashtra
- Kalyan Singh Super speciality Cancer Institute and Hospital, Lucknow, UP
- Krishna Multispeciality Hospital and Trauma Care, Visnagar, Gujarat
- Lucknow Institute of Cancer, Lucknow, UP
- Medella-Karkinos Oncology Institute (Karkinos Healthcare Pvt. Ltd), Agarpara, Kolkata West Bengal
- Medica Superspecialty Hospital, Medica Hospitals Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata West Bengal
- Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Head and Neck Institute of India Super Specialty Hospital, Mumbai, MH
- S S Hospital and Research Centre, Kankarbagh, Patna, Bihar
- Shankus Hospital Pvt Ltd. (Shankus Medicity), Mehasana, Gujarat
- Shubham Cancer Centre, (Cancer Associates Consultant Cancer Centre), Ahmedabad, Gujarat
- Srimati Jayaben Mody Hospital, Ankaleshwar, Gujarat
- Sparsh Hospitals, Bangalore, Karnataka
- Swami Vivekanand Cancer Aspatal (A Unit of Shri Ramkrishna Seva Trust), Darbhanga, Bihar

## NEW MEMBERS (International)

- Urology Centre, Combined Military Hospital, Dhaka, Bangladesh

## Overview of 2023 Activities

### NCG Virtual Tumor Boards (VTB)

The NCG VTB has been a pioneering initiative to improve the quality of care for patients with cancer. The VTBs are conducted using a web-based platform to bring together multidisciplinary team of experts to collaboratively work on treatment decisions for complex clinical situations in cancer. This innovative approach not only aids in optimizing patient-specific treatment plans but also foster a culture of collective learning among oncologists.

In the year 2023, a total of 125 VTB sessions were conducted across 10 different programs where a total of 262 cases were discussed. These programs covered a wide spectrum of cancer specialties, emphasizing the comprehensiveness of the approach taken by the NCG-VTB. This collaborative approach led to optimized treatment decisions for diverse range of cancer cases.

Future Directions:

The success of NCG VTB in 2023 sets the stage of further expansion and refinement of the program. The future focus will include:

- Introducing additional specialty-specific VTBs to cater to a broader range of cancer types
- Implementing technological enhancements for an even more seamless and interactive virtual collaboration

### NCG Research

In 2023, 5 new studies (SCCoUP Study -Head and Neck Ca, PMRT-NNBC Study-Breast Ca , InPOG-HL-19-03-Childhood Classical Hodgkins Lymphoma Study and Ca Cervix Audit, OOPe Study) were approved for NCG funding and the first instalment was released. In collaboration with ICMR, a joint funding call for proposals was announced in the year 2023 to support large practice changing trials, Ninety monitoring visits were conducted in 2023 by NCG CRO personnel for NCG funded and supported studies.

### NCG Learning

Since the launch of the NCG E-Learning Portal(ncgeducation.in) in the year 2019, we are successfully running 18 courses. In the year 2023, we are running more than 8 courses were added with over 2798 participants. The courses are:

i) **EQUIP India** : Over 284 participants, and 139 successfully completed the course. Link for the course: <https://ncgeducation.in/course/view.php?id=33>

ii) **NCG CTN** : Over 260 participants. This course is to create awareness of all aspects related to conduct of clinical research. The course modules cover regulations, guidelines, and roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in clinical research. Link for the course: <https://ncgeducation.in/course/view.php?id=58>

iii) **Target Volume Delineation Webinar Series –120 participants.** : This course is organized by Regional Cancer Centre, JIPMER, Puducherry. A collection of lectures delivered by expert radiation oncologists from India and is designed for postgraduate students of radiation oncology to improve their contouring skills. Link for the course: <https://ncgeducation.in/course/view.php?id=49>

iv) **Cancer Education and Cervical Cancer Screening** : These are video-based tutorials. The tutorials are targeted towards medical and para-medical professionals. These video-based tutorials need to be

combined with practical hands-on training in order to develop the clinical skills. The training is essential whether one intends to initiate clinic-based cancer awareness and screening or community-based awareness and screening. 639 participants have enrolled only for this module. Link for the course: <https://ncgeducation.in/course/view.php?id=35>

**v) Medical Physics Online Course :** 286 participants enrolled for this module. Target audience - Doctors. Link for the course: <https://ncgeducation.in/course/view.php?id=50>

**vi) IMPACT HN :** Target Audience - medical professionals who care for patients affected with cancers of the Head and Neck. The objective of this program is to facilitate the delivery of comprehensive, empathetic, and proportionate oncological care. Link for the course: <https://ncgeducation.in/course/view.php?id=56>

**vii) Masterclass IMPACT HN 2021 :** It is a four-day intensive Masterclass of IMPaCT HN. This course is designed to ensure practice skills to treat patients comprehensively and alleviate their health-related suffering across the care-continuum. Link for the course: <https://ncgeducation.in/course/view.php?id=61>

Access help available, at <https://ncgeducation.in/mod/page/view.php?id=217&forceview=1>

For any technical help contact: [rinisha.tmc@gmail.com](mailto:rinisha.tmc@gmail.com)

## **NCGEQAS program**

Surgical Pathology and histopathology practices in India are heterogeneous and are driven by patient affordability. The result of this is that test results are variable which can impact the treatment and the cancer outcomes. To ensure standardization in pathology diagnosis, the National Cancer Grid External Quality assurance (NCGEQAS) program is being run by the NCG. The NCGEQAS aims to standardize histopathology and oncopathology practices across the country with the motto of “Towards One practice for all”. Presently, we have enrolled 271 centers of whom 170 centers have enrolled for IHC EQAS, 221 for H& E and 185 for the TSP modules. NCGEQAS is the only affordable program for immunohistochemistry evaluation in the country. Our publication on improvement in infrastructure for breast biomarkers across the centres as a result of NCGEQAS has been published Archives of Pathology and Laboratory medicine 2023.

The results saw a dip in last year due to addition of many new centers in IHC EQA. The median pass rate in HER2 run in 2023 was 94% for test and 95% for interpretation results. For the ER EQAS cycle in 2023, 115 centers (76.1%) scored a 100% result while for PR, 78 centers (51.6%) scored a 100% result. Thirty-one (20.5%) centers had total concordance rate of 88.9%, while the remaining forty-two centers (27.9%) showed concordance rates of 88%. The miscellaneous run was done for round cell tumors and 91/105 (86.7%) centers had 100% pass rates. In the tissue processing run, 177 completed the process- 63 (35.5%) had very good results, 59% had good scores and only 9 centers had average scores. We are in process of analyzing quality of blocks for RNA and DNA across NCGEQAS to understand impact of processing on the same. In the two minimal data set reporting runs across 187 centers, a median of 11 / 12 points was reported indicating improved awareness of cancer reporting data sets. For the diagnostic EQAS, 73% had 100% pass rate in first run while in the second run 23% had 100% pass rate and 67% had 83% concordance.

A lack of External Quality Assurance Program (EQAS) in field of solid tumors in India, has led to formation of Molecular Pathology Quality Assurance Program (MPQAP) Proficiency Testing which was initiated in 2018 by the NCG with a purpose to provide external quality assessment to molecular diagnostic tests. The program offers services extending from pre-analytics, analytics and post analytics by Method based Proficiency testing (MBPT) that assess the skills of participating laboratory to detect genetic alterations and

differentiating false positive and false negative results. Further the program aims to implement guidelines in dealing with quality aspects of molecular testing and setup a forum to address the issues related to execution, analysis and reporting of molecular assays.

This program is free for NCG centers. The program covers nucleic acid quality check, FISH, molecular tests including PCR, RT-PCR, NGS, clonality assay and droplet digital PCR. A total of 6 cycles have been conducted in 2023 and the program has registered 48 participants. The program has applied for NABL accreditation. The staff has received prize for poster presentation and travel grant for presentation in international meetings.

### **NCG Virtual Library Information services**

The library continued to support information search services for NCG members. It conducted a total of 529 similarity checks (Plagiarism) and tutorials for search skills. The total number of journals indexed in Akshara discovery tool has risen to 18733. The subject wise coverage are -

Description	Total indexed Journals	Open access Journals
Health Science (Medical)	12905	8197
Nursing	686	397
Dentistry	728	550
Life Sciences	2853	1702
Pharmacy and Pharmacology	1561	1029
Total Count	18733	11875

Tutorials conducted in 2023

- OVID Journals - ease of searching
- Clinical Key - overview of CK features and effective searching tips
- Effective searching - PubMed tutorials, (Including CReDO pre-workshop webinar and Clinical research methodology workshop)

## NCG Publications

1. C S Pramesh, Manju Sengar, Sumedha Patankar, Girish Chinnaswamy, Sudeep Gupta, M Vijayakumar, Sanjeev Sood, Anil N Sathe, Venkatraman Radhakrishnan, Prasanth Ganesan, Krishna Mohan Mallavarapu & Rajendra A Badwe (2023): A National Cancer Grid pooled procurement initiative, India , [Bull World Health Organ](#). 2023 Sep 1; 101(9): 587–594. DOI <https://doi.org/10.2471%2FBLT.23.289714>
2. Tanuja Shet, Sonali Tambe, Nitin Phadatar, Poonam Panjwani, Sangeeta Desai, Manju Sengar, C S Pramesh (2023): External Quality Assurance helps improve infrastructure for testing breast biomarkers across a Lower- and Middle- Income country: our experience with Breast Biomarker Testing in the National Cancer Grid External Quality Assurance System in India. Arch. Pathol. Lab Med, Dec 2023 <https://doi.org/10.5858/arpa.2023-0260-OA> (e only)

## APPEAL

- Visit the list of centres on NCG website and verify your institutional details and revert for any changes / corrections at <https://www.ncgindia.org/hospitals-and-institutions/members>
- Do submit/update all membership details. Use Annexures (I, II, and III) and forward these to - [ncg@tmc.gov.in](mailto:ncg@tmc.gov.in) Annexures are available at <https://www.ncgindia.org/hospitals-and-institutions/membership-process>
- Do contribute to the column - “News from Members”- Share activities related to NCG mandate at your centre, and /or announcements of upcoming events, achievements of centres, and similar matters. We will be pleased to publish these in our next issue of e-newsletter.
- Write to us, if you wish to have a special webinar on how to search and / use databases, Akshara - NCG Discovery tool, and other resources