How to Reduce Worldwide Cancer Inequities for Women

Globally, women face distinct barriers to reducing their risk of cancer as well as to obtaining a timely diagnosis and treatment if they develop the disease, according to findings from a Lancet Commission. In general, women are more likely than men to face financial catastrophe due to cancer and are less likely to have the knowledge and power to make informed decisions about their health care, the report noted. Women also perform most unpaid caregiving for people with cancer.

The article noted that 1.5 million premature deaths from cancer among women could be avoided with prevention and early detection strategies, and that an additional 800 000 deaths could be avoided “if all women everywhere could access optimal cancer care.”

New recommendations in the Lancet Commission report call for sex and gender to be considered in the development of all cancer-related policies and guidelines. “Patriarchy dominates cancer care, research, and policy making,” the authors wrote. “Those in positions of power decide what is prioritised, funded, and studied.”

– Emily Harris

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Note: Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.