



A city perspective for stakeholder engagement

Cross sector collaboration for improved cancer care in Low-and Middle-Income Countries

The City Cancer Challenge Foundation (C/Can) supports cities around the world as they work to improve access to equitable, quality cancer care.

C/Can accelerates efforts on the ground by supporting stakeholders in cities to collectively identify and address gaps in healthcare systems. This multisectoral methodology ensures cities take a more unified approach to cancer care which, while rooted in local capacities, has the potential to strengthen the national healthcare system.

Stakeholder engagement is an essential component to ensure the sustainability and ownership of cancer care projects that result from cities working with C/Can. Once a city joins the network, there is an initial period of stakeholder mapping, followed by the creation of a governance framework.

Local cancer care providers are responsible for prioritising the most urgent care gaps and each decision that leads to project development and initial implementation. The goal is that projects continue to evolve and advance beyond C/Can's collaboration with cities.

14

cities are currently part of C/Can's global network

454

city institutions are involved in the initiative

1645

healthcare professionals have taken part in capacity development trainings

63

global **partners** and donors



“Engaging the right partners is key to achieving impact in cities. Public and Private collaboration, as well as placing patient needs at the forefront, are essential to driving successful interventions and achieving meaningful outcomes.

Isabel Mestres, CEO, City Cancer Challenge

C/Can's best practices for effective stakeholder engagement.

1. Establishing a City Manager as a local presence

“It's the continuous job of a C/Can city manager to engage with our stakeholders over time, building lasting partnerships and mutual trust that supports them to drive change forward.”

Natia Verd zadze, C/Can City Manager for Tbilisi

Having a designated city manager who has detailed knowledge of the local cancer landscape is the most vital component of successful stakeholder engagement. It remains at the centre of their work, and their commitment to build relationships with those working in the healthcare space at a local, regional and national level is a multiyear process throughout C/Can's time working with a city. While managing city coordination, they are continuously driving the process on-site and communicating updates.



City Managers often have to balance the processes and pace of their city, with the expectations of international donors. Being truly locally led means that the approach to improving cancer care in a city must be flexible and adapted to the needs identified through the stakeholder engagement process. There is no 'one-size fits all' timeline when using a locally led approach.

2. Having an open stakeholder mapping process led by local professionals



“In Rosario, we have bridged gaps between the private and public sector and created a space for collaboration across our local health system. This will help us to effectively tackle common challenges.

Leandro Duarte, C/Can City Manager for Rosario



The C/Can city process begins with an open stakeholder mapping, which charts the key players in cancer care and health across sectors, professions and the full cancer care journey, from diagnostics to palliative care. Local professionals lead on this process and detail every organisation that should participate in the identification of cancer care gaps and planning of solutions, outlining the dynamics.

C/Can acts as a neutral convenor, giving participants an equal platform and fostering multisectoral collaboration for a unified vision of improved care in the city.



Stakeholders in Rosario, Argentina, gathered to vote on which local institutions should form the City Executive Committee.

3. Creating governance structures at a city level

“In Cali, we have a formal committee of 250 local professionals who define the city and regional cancer care agenda as a collective.

Carmen Rosario Palta, Project Manager for Cancer Care, Pro Pacifico, C/Can's sustainability partner



Following the stakeholder mapping process, C/Can supports the city with the creation of defined governance structures, with signed agreements to clarify the commitment and participation required from city institutions.

This includes:

A City Executive Committee responsible for the local C/Can decision making process.

A multidisciplinary technical committee working in four key focus areas:

- Management and Quality
- Core diagnostic services
- Core treatment services
- Community access and patient-centred care

The City Executive Committee drives the C/Can process and decides on the prioritisation of cancer care projects, based on a needs assessment which city institutions have contributed to. Creating task forces with a specific goal, and assigning responsibilities to technical experts ensures the sustainability of the C/Can initiative and projects beyond its work with a city.



A multisectoral committee of 250 local, regional and national leaders in health now cooperate for cancer care decisions in Cali and the Valle de Cauca Region in Colombia.

Prior to a city joining the C/Can network, a Memorandum of Understanding is signed between local health authorities who can execute policy change and cancer care organisations who led the application process to join, subject to local context. The legal framework promotes multisectoral collaboration before work begins with a city.

4. Investing in local leadership skills and capacity development



“I learnt the power of connection and speaking up. I learnt that we are all leaders and leadership is a journey. As women leaders, we have a unique opportunity to bring about meaningful change in the cancer space.

Dr Helena Musau, Ag.HOD/ Consultant
Clinical Oncologist, Nairobi, Kenya

C/Can supports local health professionals and technicians by embedding leadership and specific development programmes to gain directive skills, and build responsibility for project implementation. This includes individual programmes, leadership workshops, project management training and online opportunities for capacity development, also resulting in increased engagement with a city's progress.

C/Can also provides access and networking opportunities across its network of international partners, as well as visibility to local healthcare professionals on a global platform.



Multidisciplinary Cancer Care Management
Course in Leon, Mexico

Training courses and development opportunities have proved vital to the success of an initiative in the city, as stakeholders are not remunerated for their involvement with C/Can. Technical leaders and healthcare professionals have consistently shown to be the best ambassadors to drive progress forward.

5. Adapting to changes in political landscapes



“Improved access to cancer care medicines is a priority and common goal of the Paraguayan Ministry of Health and City Cancer Challenge.”

Maria Teresa Barán, Minister of Health for Paraguay.



Election cycles and the potential for political instability are always taken into account before accepting a city into the C/Can network, and efforts are made to speak to multiple political parties as part of the stakeholder engagement process.

Members of the City Executive Committee act as representatives of their institution, so efforts must be made to re-engage stakeholders following an election period. Agreements with local governments depend on the contexts where C/Can works. There are some city authorities who are open to signing Memorandums of Understanding beyond their political tenures, whereas others must be renewed following an election.



Meeting with the Minister of Health in Paraguay, Asuncion.

Having strong political will behind a city joining the network is vital, but equal efforts to engage technical experts and local professionals are prioritised, so that the initiative is resilient to political change.

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