New global initiative for breast cancer has roots in Seattle
Two Seattle Cancer Care Alliance physicians spearheading “Breast Cancer Initiative 2.5”

SEATTLE – (Feb. 3, 2016) – World Cancer Day—Thursday, Feb. 4, 2016—is the web launch of a new global campaign to reduce disparities in breast cancer outcomes for 2.5 million women by 2025. Called Breast Cancer Initiative 2.5 (BCI2.5), the campaign is spearheaded by two internationally renowned breast cancer physicians based in Seattle, Washington: Julie R. Gralow, M.D. and Benjamin O. Anderson, M.D. Both physicians are part of Seattle Cancer Care Alliance and its partners, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and UW Medicine. To kick-off the campaign on World Cancer Day, BCI2.5 is launching its website, www.bci25.org, which will serve as a platform and resource for policy makers, clinicians and health advocates from across the world.

Breast cancer is the most prevalent cancer in women worldwide. Estimates suggest 5.8 million women will die from breast cancer by 2025, with a disproportionate number of these deaths occurring in low-resource settings around the world. Not only is BCI2.5 engaging partners from around the world to make breast cancer a global priority, the campaign is also leveraging expertise from Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, the University of Washington, Fred Hutch and other Seattle global health organizations, as its secretariat—the administrative functions of the global coalition—is based in Seattle, Washington.

“The world needs a roadmap to success to improve breast cancer outcomes. It’s complicated but doable. BCI2.5 can provide that framework to help ensure the right decisions are made in the right place,” said Dr. Benjamin O. Anderson, director of the breast health clinic at SCCA and co-chair of BCI2.5 secretariat.

“We have clear strategies for prevention, detection and treatment of cervical cancer,” said SCCA director of breast medical oncology and BCI2.5 secretariat co-chair Dr. Julie Gralow. “We can expect to see reductions in the burden of disease, but we lack the same clarity for breast cancer. It is clear that breast cancer is poised to become an increasing problem for women in low and middle resource countries. We need metrics, models and strategies to help ministries of health decide how to address breast cancer.”

Both Dr. Anderson and Dr. Gralow have extensive experience working with clinicians, advocates and policy makers in low and middle income countries. Dr. Gralow is also the Jill Bennett Endowed Professor of Breast Cancer and professor of global health at University of Washington School of Medicine. She is a member of Fred Hutch’s Clinical Research Division and founder of the Women’s Empowerment Cancer Advocacy Network (WE CAN). Dr. Anderson is also chair and director of the breast health global initiative and a joint full member of epidemiology at Fred Hutch, and professor of surgery and professor of global health at University of Washington School of Medicine.

BCI2.5 represents a new commitment to unite the global breast cancer community behind a common goal to make breast health a global priority and reduce disparities in breast cancer outcomes worldwide. The initiative began as a call for action in 2014, supported by the American Cancer Society, Susan G. Komen® and the Union
for International Cancer Control. Since that initial pledge, BCI2.5 has been engaging partners around the world, assessing need, identifying priorities and defining a strategy to meet this goal. Its consensus-based approach empowers regional champions to bring about change with the aid of BCI2.5 analytic, assessment and planning tools, educational materials and implementation science research methodology.

BCI2.5 delivers evidence-based technical expertise and a resource-stratified approach to improving breast health services and care at any resource level. The initiative is inclusive and encourages organizations, institutions and countries to connect and join the effort.

Higher breast cancer case fatality rates in low-resource settings have been attributed to a lack of awareness regarding the benefits of early detection and treatment, late stage diagnosis and limited access to appropriate care. To reduce this global disparity in breast cancer outcomes for 2.5 million women by 2025, BCI2.5 is exploring innovative ways to implement affordable, appropriate, acceptable and feasible evidence-based strategies. A key element of this initiative is identifying, documenting and fostering dissemination of new and innovative approaches to the delivery of breast health care developed in low-resource settings. This demands a collaborative effort that draws on the collective expertise and resources of individuals and institutions engaged in breast cancer care.

The BCI2.5 strategy consists of the following components: (1) outreach to raise awareness and build relationships with partner organizations, institutions and countries; (2) development and testing of analysis, assessment and implementation tools; (3) outcome tracking through a Global Breast Health Analytics Map (GloBAM); (4) situation analysis of existing and evolving breast health care systems; (5) forums and action plans; (6) BCI2.5 Master Courses; and (7) technical assistance and implementation science-based research to improve breast health care delivery at all points in the cancer care continuum.

BCI2.5 founding organizations: American Cancer Society, Susan G. Komen®, Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), Breast Health Global Initiative, Fred Hutch, Harvard Global Equity Initiative, National Cancer Institute Center for Global Health, Norwegian Cancer Society, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Women's Empowerment Cancer Advocacy Network (WE CAN).

More information is available at:
- Website: [www.bci25.org](http://www.bci25.org)
- Facebook: [facebook.com/BCI2.5](https://www.facebook.com/BCI2.5)
- Twitter: [@bci2_5](https://twitter.com/bci2_5)

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About Us

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance brings together the leading research teams and cancer specialists from Fred Hutch, Seattle Children’s and UW Medicine. One extraordinary group whose sole purpose is the pursuit of better, longer, richer lives of our patients. Based in Seattle’s South Lake Union neighborhood, SCCA has six clinical care sites, including a medical oncology clinic at EvergreenHealth in Kirkland, Washington; medical and radiation oncology clinics at UW Medicine/Northwest Hospital & Medical Center in Seattle, Washington, as well as Network affiliation with hospitals in five states. For more information about SCCA, visit [seattlecca.org](http://seattlecca.org).

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