

# Community Outreach Programme

## Breast Care International (BCI) and Peace and Love Hospitals



**OVERVIEW:** Women in Ghana, especially those in villages and deprived communities, have low awareness of BC and often do not have easy access to early detection methods. This initiative aims to reduce the rate of late-stage BC diagnosis by travelling to these communities to offer education, breast examination, advice and support (including for patients with ABC/mBC).



### Area of focus:

ABC/mBC awareness & promotion of earlier diagnosis



### Target population:

All women in Ghana, especially in villages with limited access to care

**Objectives:** Educate deprived communities about BC and increase community awareness in order to help downstage BC at diagnosis

### Unmet needs addressed:

- Low education and awareness of BC and associated religious/cultural taboo leading to late-stage diagnosis
- Limited access to and opportunity for breast examinations

### Key components:

- HCPs and patient representatives travel on a bus to remote communities (churches, schools, etc.) to provide:
  - Educational presentations and Q&A sessions
  - Breast examinations and advice (including encouraging patients presenting with ABC/mBC to seek treatment)

### Challenges:

- Proving that there was a problem with BC in Ghana in order to secure the initial funding
- Reaching people to advertise the outreach programs, which was overcome via the radio and church networks
- Encouraging women to talk about BC, which is considered extremely taboo and to be a spiritual disease

**Outcomes:** The outreach programmes have resulted in an increased number of women seeking care for BC, presenting with early stage BC, and BC survivors, and a decreased number of women refusing treatment

**Development:** 150 members (permanent and volunteer) across two offices independently plan programmes

**Cost:** >€30,000 (currently funded by individual donors and organisations)

**Timeline:** Ongoing since 2002

**Targeted to reach:** >300 patients



### For more information:

**https:** <https://breastcareinternational.org/bci-community-outreach-program/>

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Based on written submission from Beatrice Wiafe Addai, BCI, 2020. The Hard-to-Reach ABC/mBC Communities Toolkit was developed as a collaboration between Pfizer Oncology and the ABC Global Alliance, with funding and support provided by Pfizer. ABC Global Alliance members and Pfizer colleagues were invited to submit breast cancer community-based initiatives that address specific needs of underserved patient populations with advanced/metastatic breast cancer. Initiatives were evaluated against criteria determined by a steering committee with members from both Pfizer and the ABC Global Alliance. Initiatives were selected for inclusion in the toolkit to highlight best practices in addressing the unique needs of this patient population. All organizations who submitted their initiatives for consideration have provided permission for the initiative information to be included in the toolkit and shared publicly. Pfizer and the ABC Global Alliance bear no responsibility for the contents of the toolkit.

| Ethnic, religious, indigenous/native populations and/or other historically marginalised groups | Younger patients | Older patients | Men | LGBTQ+ patients | **Low health knowledge patients** |  
 | Patients who lack an adequate caregiver or support system | Patients who mistrust conventional treatments | **Low income patients** |  
 | Patients a long distance from a specialist centre | Patients with uncontrolled comorbidities | Mental health patients |