World Child Cancer USA is a US based charitable organization that is part of the World Child Cancer global brand that works to increase access to diagnosis, care and treatment for children with cancer in low and middle income countries. Childhood cancer is very treatable and survivable. Survival rates throughout the Developed World surpass 80%, however in developing countries survival rates are only about 10%.

World Child Cancer USA - welcomes WHO commitment to take bold action and accelerate the progress to reduce the premature mortality from NCDs in line with the SDG3. However we want to express our concern as we believe that the draft outcome document of Montevideo Conference does not address the unique need of children and young people affected by NCDs. Indeed it specifically excludes children dying from these diseases by only referring specifically to those over 30.

The Montevideo Conference indicates that many environmental issues increase the cause of NCDs. These environmental issues can certainly increase childhood cancers. Over 300,000 children worldwide develop cancer each year, most of them living in developing countries. As mentioned earlier, childhood cancer is curable but the availability of appropriate treatment is profoundly unequal: Not only do we believe that there is a moral argument to address the disparity of childhood cancer care across the world, but we have also collected strong evidence from our work in Mexico, The Philippines, Vietnam and Ghana along with the other projects throughout Africa and Asia, that childhood cancer can be treated successfully at a relative low cost – representing a cost-effective intervention that can bring very high public health returns from investment.

Additionally, we strive to provide robust family support for childhood cancer patients as these young people are fully dependent upon their family members to get treatment and care. Additionally, unlike many of the NCDs mentioned, many of these children are inflicted by cancer due actions outside of their control.

We endorse the actions proposed in the paper which are appropriate and could be effective – but it is vital that you do not overlook the needs of children dying unnecessarily from NCD’s in significant numbers. We therefore ask for a specific reference to children affected by NCDs in the Montevideo Declaration in order to recognize their unique needs and lay the basis for finding shared solutions.

Ben Drotar
Executive Director
World Child Cancer - USA
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