

**Summary of relevance and outcomes of attending the
International Agency for Research on Cancer-50th year conference in June 2016 at Lyon, France.**

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Description of International Agency for Research on Cancer(IARC) 50th year conference

The conference was organized to celebrate 50 years of IARC's contribution to the cancer research. The theme of the conference was "Global cancer: occurrence, cause and avenues of prevention". The conference was conducted at the Centre de Congrès, Lyon, France from June 7th to 10th, 2016. There were over 1000 participants and had cutting edge research presentations from all over the world through 33 sessions. These sessions covered all streams of research in cancer field from cellular mechanisms to prevention and mortality reduction. In a nutshell this was a monumental conference in knowledge exchange between forerunners of the field and beginners from all over the world.

Relevance of the conference to my research area

My project investigating life-course trajectories of tobacco and alcohol consumption and risk of head and neck cancers(H&NC) stratified by human papillomavirus infection status in two countries (Canada and India) is the first initiative in this field. My motivation to choose this field of investigation for my PhD was formed from my experiences working as a dentist in a tertiary care center in home country (India). During my working period there, I had the opportunity to understand the impact of this disease on patients and the population. IARC being in the front line of the war against cancer in developing countries, it is natural to any beginner in the field to visit the institution and learn from conference of such caliber.

The theme of the conference was "Global cancer: occurrence, cause and avenues of prevention". My research area address each of these themes as follows (i) Global cancer occurrence: In my project I present, compare and discuss the incidence and mortality related to HNC in two countries (Canada & India) with different human development index; (ii) Cancer causes: my research is directed towards identifying life periods where behavioral risk factors (e.g.: Tobacco & alcohol consumption) have higher risk of developing H&NC compared to other periods; (iii) Avenues of prevention: our life course investigation on etiologies of H&NC has the potential to identify novel multi-faceted prevention strategies throughout the life of an individual.

Outcomes from the conference

I am at the last phase of my PhD training; getting acquaintance with fellow researchers and exchanging ideas is a crucial element needed to springboard my carrier forward. The conference was the perfect opportunity for the same. I met with pioneers in the field of cancer research. For example, I had the opportunity to present my work to and discuss future steps with Sir. Richard Peto (well known for his contribution to establish smoking as a cause of lung cancer), Dr. Rengaswamy Sankaranarayanan (seminal figure in cancer screening & prevention), and Dr. Martyn Plummer (influential researcher in Bayesian inference in cancer epidemiology). I also had the opportunity to discuss future collaborations with the largest international head and neck cancer consortium – INHANES.

During the conference, I was invited to participate in a networking dinner with scholars from developing countries to exchange knowledge and discuss future collaborative actions directed towards cancer prevention and care in underdeveloped and developing countries.

In conclusion there is no doubt that attending the conference was one of the best exposure I got, to the international scholars in the field, till this point in my training. I strongly believe that the conference will be a turning point in my carrier and I wish to convey my wholehearted gratitude towards NCOHR for supporting me.