

HUMAN RESOURCES FOR TREATING NEW CANCER CASES IN TURKEY

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to describe the human resources needed in Turkey to treat new cancer patients. The population of Turkey is approximately 74.51 million (37.15 million men and 37.36 million women) and the estimated number of new cancer cases in Turkey for the year 2012, based on GLOBOCAN data (<http://globocan.iarc.fr/>) for Turkey as a whole was 147964 (85821 in men and 62143 in women) (Table A).

The five most common cancers in Turkey are (1) urological (bladder, kidney, prostate and testis), (2) lung, (3) breast, (4) head and neck (lip, oral cavity, nasopharynx, other pharynx, larynx and thyroid) and (5) hematological malignancies (Hodgkin lymphoma, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, multiple myeloma and leukemia).

Table A: The ten most frequently occurring cancers in Turkey for men and women based on 2012 GLOBOCAN data.

Cancer	BOTH SEXES		MEN		WOMEN	
	Incidence	Rank	Incidence	Rank	Incidence	Rank
All cancers excl. non-melanoma skin cancer	147964		85821		62143	
Urological	28719	1	25702	1	3017	8
Lung	24489	2	21170	2	3319	7
Breast	15230	3			15230	1
Head and Neck	14048	4	5953	5	8095	2
Hematological	12828	5	7485	3	5343	4
Colorectal	11930	6	6889	4	5041	5
Stomach	10120	7	5938	6	4182	6
Gynecological	7873	8			7873	3
Brain, nervous system	4488	9	2087	7	2401	9
Pancreas	3174	10	2015	8	1159	10
Esophagus	2536	11	1395	10	1141	11
Liver	2227	12	1537	9	690	13

Newly diagnosed cancer patients need pathology, surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy. The number of oncologists needed is based, therefore, on the number of patients requiring pathology, surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy (Table B). This number is estimated from the percentage of patients requiring surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy for the top ten cancers in both men and women.

For developing countries the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recommends training Radiation/Clinical Oncologists who can prescribe both radiation and chemotherapy for the common solid cancers, instead of separate medical and radiation oncologists. Hematological malignancies are treated primarily by hematologist-oncologists. The number of specialists needed is based upon the number of cancer patients but each city, in order to ensure coverage if one person leaves or goes on vacation, must have at least 2 surgical oncologists, 2 radiation/clinical oncologists, 2 hematologist oncologists, etc.

Table B: Number of Oncologists needed for Turkey's 2 most populous cities based on 2013 population estimates (<http://citypopulation.de/>) and 2012 GLOBOCAN data for new cancer cases.

	Population	New Cancer Cases	Hematologist Oncologists	Surgical Oncologists	Radiation / Clinical Oncologists	Urologic Oncologists	Gynecologic Oncologists	Neuro-Oncologists	Pathologists
Istanbul	13820334	27446	5	30	138	11	3	2	55
Ankara	4474305	8886	2	10	45	4	2 [¥]	2 [¥]	18

[¥]At least 2 are needed in each city.

In addition to oncologists, support staff such as onco-pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, oncology nurses and palliative care specialists is also needed. Many cancer patients require hospitalization for diagnosis, treatment and/or complications, therefore an adequate number of oncology beds will be needed. The number of oncology nurses, onco-pharmacists and pharmacy technicians needed is based upon the number of beds occupied daily by cancer patients while the number of palliative care specialists is based on the number of new cancer cases per year (Table C). The oncology nursing staff for each 24-bed oncology unit (operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) comprises of one head nurse and a nurse specialist as well as 13 nurses working 8 hour shifts, 5 days per week.

Table C: Number of Oncology Units, Nursing and Pharmacy Staff needed for Turkey's 2 most populous cities based on 2013 population estimates and 2012 GLOBOCAN data for new cancer cases.

	New Cancer Cases	Maximum # of beds/day	# of 24 bed oncology wards	Onco-Pharmacists	Onco-Pharmacy Technicians	Palliative Care Specialists	Oncology Nursing Staff other than Radiation Oncology Nurses
Istanbul	27446	528	22	88	132	55	330

Ankara	8886	171	8	32	48	18	120
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Since many cancer patients require radiotherapy, appropriately equipped facilities will be needed along with radiation oncology staff (Tables D and E). Radiation oncology staff includes radiation therapy technicians, medical physicists, Linac engineers and radiation oncology nurses in addition to radiation/clinical oncologists. The minimum radiation therapy equipment requirements are at least one of each: Linac, brachytherapy unit, CT simulator, treatment planning computer and dosimetry/quality assurance package.

Table D: Radiation Therapy Staff needed for Turkey's 2 most populous cities based on 2013 population estimates and 2012 GLOBOCAN data for new cancer cases.

	New Cancer Cases	Radiation / Clinical Oncologists	Radiation Therapy Technicians	Medical Physicists	Linac Engineers	Radiation Oncology Nurses
Istanbul	27446	138	198	66	17	66
Ankara	8886	45	64	22	6	22

Table E: Radiation Therapy Equipment needed for Turkey's 2 most populous cities based on 2013 population estimates and 2012 GLOBOCAN data for new cancer cases.

	New Cancer Cases	Linacs / Co 60 Megavolt Units	# of Brachytherapy units	# CT simulators	# of treatment planning computers	# of dosimetry/QA package
Istanbul	27446	33	17	17	17	17
Ankara	8886	11	6	6	6	6

NOTE: Guidelines from the IAEA of the United Nations were used to calculate the radiation therapy equipment and staff needed in the setting of a developing country. Guidelines from the Oncology Nursing Society were used to calculate the number of nurses needed. Several other specialty societies were also requested to provide guidelines but in most cases there were none, therefore colleagues active in those fields were consulted for estimating the number of staff needed.