EXPANDING ACCESS TO TREATMENT OF BURKITTS LYMPHOMA

CONTEXT: Burkitts Lymphoma (BL) is the most common childhood cancer in Tanzania. Estimates suggest that every year 700 new cases of BL occur in the country. Although this childhood cancer is highly chemosensitive and curable, prior to 2006 only 20% of children with BL could access treatment. Over the last three years the number of children accessing treatment and the cure rate have increased. Using project funds we have developed National Treatment and Supportive Care Guidelines for Burkitt’s Lymphoma along with educational materials which can be adapted for use in other countries. We intend to expand the success of the Burkitt’s lymphoma model - using media and community outreach in parallel to professional education - to other childhood cancers such as retinoblastoma, nephroblastoma, neuroblastoma and leukemia in Tanzania.

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT:

> Increase the number of BL children accessing treatment in Tanzania from 30% to 50% in the first year of the project then up to 80% by the end of the third year via a 10% yearly increase

> Reduce the wait for biopsy results from six weeks to two weeks by the end of the first year

> Increase the number of BL children entering hospitals in good general condition with symptoms of early disease from 20% to 40% in the first year of the project

> Increase the cure rate of Burkitts lymphoma in Tanzania from 40% to 60% by the end of the second year

> Increase the number of children with BL who comply with follow up appointments from 20% to 40%. By the end of the first year

BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:

> Number of children given proper BL treatment increased from 145 to 600

> Waiting period for biopsy results reduced from 6wks to 2wks

> Follow up rate increased from 20% to 80%

> Number of hospitals treating BL increased from 4 to 26

> Government commitment