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Editorial www.enlivenarchive.org Enliven: Challenges in Cancer Detection and Therapy

Chinese Cancer Status-Challenge and Opportunity

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Statistically cancer is rated as the leading cause of death and with high disease burden in China [1]. The factors responsible for these are associated with environmental and genetic risks [2,3].China aging population contributes to cancer prevalence, aged 65 year and above constitutes 8.87% of china population in 2010 [4], this group in the population pyramid often prone to cancer would continue to be a public health problem in china.

Pathological changes from formerly common cancer like esophagus and stomach tumor linked with the poor people to currently prominent colon and prostrate neoplasm may be due in part to improved economy which may be responsible for better standard of living and lifestyle changes and gains in tobacco control with current declining rate in men at about 1% per year [5], whereas breast cancer is a worldwide phenomenon not limited to China.

The new challenge is correlating environmental pollution with cancer. It is worrisome to the Chinese. Proven this may be difficult, this may be due to lack of substantiating data and lack of transparency in the part of government about environmental concerns and related data. There is insinuation from the people to believe the Particulate Matter (PM) 2.5 is the cause. Scientifically, convincing evidence is lacking to show that PM 2.5 increases cancer mobility and mortality. In 2013 study on correlation of cancer with types of pollution with respect to air, water and soil suggested the pollution from the soil are more related with cancer cluster. Recently, Chinese authorities have acknowledged the existence of so-called "cancer villages" in a new report according to multiple media outlets [6]. This could be a signal to show China concern about the huge cancer rates.

Individuals show more concern on cancer therapy, especially "natural therapy"-Chinese traditional medicine. Recently, Bama, a county in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, is highlighted for high longevity which is attributed to her unique environment. It is the haven for cancer patients in China. Cancer patients sort her as last hope for natural therapy. However, it is hard to evaluate the effect. It seems that Chinese cancer patients are more likely to pursue "natural therapy" than the orthodox medicines. This should necessitate cooperation from government or Non-government organization for more research in this field.

A national cancer prevention and control plan is needed. The first step is building a national surveillance and information systems, to gather national statistics on cancer through a network registry. Although Chinese cancer hospitals of each province had been and run for years, hospital-based cancer register is not good enough, much less to surveillance, predict, or make cancer prevention policy. At same time, MD Anderson Cancer Center in USA combines treatment, prevention, and research; this could a model for Chinese to emulate. Population base cancer prevention is more important than treatment because it has more public health benefits, for individuals, the standard and scientific therapy is needed.

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