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## **Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School to Convene 2017 Global Health Catalyst Cancer Summit**

- International leaders, celebrity advocates, cancer experts unite to discuss growing global burden of cancer and health disparities
- Basketball legend and NBA Hall of Famer Dikembe Mutombo to be honored for heroic public health efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- New partnership will create knowledge exchange between Dana-Farber cancer experts and African clinicians on the latest radiation treatments

**BOSTON**— [The World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) estimates that 8.2 million people die each year from cancer, and 70 percent of those who succumb to the disease live in low and middle income countries. To combat this disparity, [Dana-Farber Cancer Institute](#), [Brigham and Women's Hospital \(BWH\)](#) and [Harvard Medical School](#) are uniting African ambassadors, ministers of health, celebrity cancer advocates and global health stakeholders to host the Global Health Catalyst (GHC) Cancer Summit April 28 through April 30 in Boston.

Representatives from more than 12 countries will join Arikana Chihombori, African Union Ambassador; Diane Gashumba, Minister of Health of the Republic of Rwanda; Dikembe Mutombo, NBA Hall of Famer; and other global health stakeholders to discuss the growing global burden of cancer and ways to reduce gaps in incidence and mortality among nations.

The [WHO's 2014 Cancer Report](#) described alarming international cancer trends. Beyond the unspeakable human toll, the disease's economic burden is estimated at \$2 trillion per year. According to the report, more than 60 percent of the 14 million new cancer diagnoses made each year occur in low-income countries. Experts believe that these nations require global healthcare partners to help stem the rising tide of cancer and its toll.

The Global Health Catalyst Cancer Summit is an annual event that provides a forum for global health stakeholders to network, share knowledge and strengthen high-impact international collaborations that save lives while reducing global health disparities. Participants at the GHC Summit come from all across North America, Europe, Africa, and other impacted nations. Participants include leaders from the [World Health Organization](#), [World Bank Group](#), policy makers, Diaspora organizations, community leaders, U.S. congressional representatives, internationally recognized physicians and researchers, industry, professional sports celebrities and other cancer advocates.

Dana-Farber [President Laurie Glimcher](#), MD, will welcome delegates and highlight Dana-Farber's mission to promote public health, particularly among vulnerable populations. She will also speak about Dana-Farber's ongoing pursuits to make innovative and life-saving care accessible across the United States and the world. Mutombo, an 18-year NBA veteran, will be recognized on Saturday night for his humanitarian work after establishing the Biamba Marie Mutombo Hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The facility has contributed to the improved health of citizens, while focusing on cancer services and research.

"Global health is local health, and discoveries made in one place can save lives, or benefit patients in other parts of the globe," said Wilfred Ngwa, PhD, Department of Radiation Oncology at Dana-Farber and BWH and Director of the GHC program. "We are excited to have such high profile participation in this summit to help in the fight against cancer and associated disparities across the globe."

With the growing global burden of cancer and cancer disparities, the emerging consensus among public health specialists is that improved international collaborations in cancer care, research and education are needed across a wide array of institutions and stakeholders.

"In many low and middle income countries, there are no cancer treatment services, such as radiotherapy, which is used to treat more than 50 percent of cancer patients in the United States" said Ngwa. "Being diagnosed with cancer in a low-or middle-income country often leads to a painful and distressful death. By catalyzing international collaborations and partnerships through this summit, we are advancing global reach and working toward our goal of eradicating cancer with partners across the globe."

Sessions at the event will highlight opportunities for advancing global health, including new low cost technologies for cancer prevention and control. There will also be discussions about how information and communication technologies can enable tele-medicine, research, and new therapies to reach underprivileged countries. For example, participants are expected to introduce a new global radiation oncology online course that will be instructed by Dana-Farber and [Harvard Medical School faculty](#) in collaboration with the [African Organization for Research and Training in Cancer \(AORTIC\)](#).

"Every life cut short by cancer is a tragedy, whether it occurs in Boston or Botswana. Physician-scientists around the world must come together to ensure that people everywhere will benefit from the latest knowledge and treatment approaches," said [George Q. Daley MD, PhD](#), dean of Harvard Medical School and a renowned cancer biologist and stem cell scientist. "This summit and the transnational collaborations that emanate from it embody the spirit of Harvard Medical School's quest to alleviate human suffering caused by disease for people across the globe."

The [Global Health Catalyst Summit](#) is seed-funded in part by the [Department of Radiation Oncology at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Brigham and Women's Hospital](#), and the [Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies at Harvard University](#). For a complete list of the sessions, speakers/panelists, go to [www.globalhealthcatalystsummit.org](http://www.globalhealthcatalystsummit.org).

Media members who wish to attend the GHC Summit should contact Brendan Monahan, Media Relations Manager, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, 617-632-5653, [BrendanJ.Monahan@dfci.harvard.edu](mailto:BrendanJ.Monahan@dfci.harvard.edu)

**About Dana-Farber Cancer Institute:**

From achieving the first remissions in childhood cancer with chemotherapy in 1948, to developing the very latest new therapies, [Dana-Farber Cancer Institute](#) is one of the world's leading centers of cancer research and treatment. It is the only center ranked in the top 4 of U.S. News and World Report's Best Hospitals for both adult and pediatric cancer care.

Dana-Farber sits at the center of a wide range of collaborative efforts to reduce the burden of cancer through scientific inquiry, clinical care, education, community engagement, and advocacy. [Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center](#) provides the latest in cancer care for adults; [Dana-Farber/Boston Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center for children](#). [The Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center](#) unites the cancer research efforts of five Harvard academic medical centers and two graduate schools, while Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care provides high quality cancer treatment in communities outside Boston's Longwood Medical Area.

Dana-Farber is dedicated to a unique, 50/50 balance between cancer research and care, and much of the Institute's work is dedicated to translating the results of its discovery into new treatments for patients locally and around the world.

**About Brigham & Women's Hospital:**

[Brigham and Women's Hospital](#) (BWH) is a 793-bed nonprofit teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School and a founding member of [Partners HealthCare](#). BWH has more than 4.2 million annual patient visits and nearly 46,000 inpatient stays, is the largest birthing center in Massachusetts and employs nearly 16,000 people. The Brigham's medical preeminence dates back to 1832, and today that rich history in clinical care is coupled with its national leadership in patient care, quality improvement and patient safety initiatives, and its dedication to research, innovation, community engagement and educating and training the next generation of health care professionals. Through investigation and discovery conducted at its [Brigham Research Institute \(BRI\)](#), BWH is an international leader in basic, clinical and translational research on human diseases, more than 3,000 researchers, including physician-investigators and renowned biomedical scientists and faculty supported by nearly \$666 million in funding. For the last 25 years, BWH ranked second in research funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) among independent hospitals. BWH is also home to major landmark epidemiologic population studies, including the Nurses' and Physicians' Health Studies and the Women's Health Initiative as well as the TIMI Study Group, one of the premier cardiovascular clinical trials groups. For more information, resources and to follow us on social media, please visit BWH's online newsroom.



**About Harvard Medical School:**

[Harvard Medical School](#) has more than 11,000 faculty working in 10 academic departments located at the School's Boston campus or in hospital-based clinical departments at 15 Harvard-affiliated teaching hospitals and research institutes: Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston Children's Hospital, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Cambridge Health Alliance, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute, Hebrew SeniorLife, Joslin Diabetes Center, Judge Baker Children's Center, Massachusetts Eye and Ear/Schepens Eye Research Institute, Massachusetts General Hospital, McLean Hospital, Mount Auburn Hospital, Spaulding Rehabilitation Network and VA Boston Healthcare System.