

Patient support initiatives for chronic myeloid leukaemia patients in Nigeria

Eunice Orekha, President, Max Care Foundation Nigeria

Introduction

The peculiarities of the healthcare system in Nigeria do not provide insurance for cancer patients to receive treatment and so, access to much needed medications, in this case, Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitors (TKIs) for patients living with CML is through generous drug donations from Pharma companies to The Max Foundation through its Max Access Solutions. In Nigeria, patients receive these drugs at ONE centre in the SW region of the country. However, the associated transport costs for patients to access this treatment centre can be very prohibitive.

Last Mile Initiative

A concept of the Max Foundation, is geared towards ensuring that patients are able to access treatment promptly by offsetting their transportation costs. This is carried out in collaboration with registered patient organizations in-country.

World CML Day (WCMLD) Fundraising Project

An initiative of the CML Advocates Network under the WCMLD theme: *"Leaving no one behind"*, the project seeks to highlight challenges faced in LMICs and provide opportunity for donations which can benefit patients in these regions.

Objectives

Provision of funds to cover round trip transportation costs to the treatment centre, in order to access medications.

Provision of funds to carry out much needed PCR testing for effective monitoring and evaluation of individual patients.

Methods

Authenticate patients by name and hospital number from database available at the treatment centre.

Identify location of patient and calculate approximate distance to/from treatment centre.

Identify patients who are due for scheduled PCR testing from available data.

Allocate funds in local currency to authenticated patients based on their survey of average road transport costs determined from the motor park services;

- A consideration was made for patients who did not have to travel to the treatment centre, but still needed to receive their drugs by courier service.
- Funds were provided by bank transfer to the patient's accounts, and in cases where the patient was unbanked, funds are sent to their spouse or other accompanying adult relative.
- Funds received are acknowledged and on arrival to also confirm arrival to treatment centre.
- Bank transfer receipts were kept for auditing.



Nigeria has a very large land mass and moving around can be quite a challenge. The treatment centre, Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife, is in Osun State, South-West Nigeria, shown in the image on the left above. The image on the right shows the other regions of the country from where patients need to come to access their CML healthcare needs.

Figure 1: No of patients assisted per month

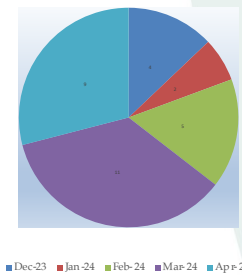
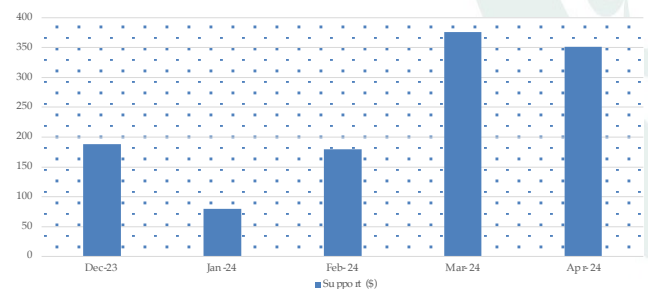


Figure 2: Grant support per month (\$)



Outcomes

In the months that these initiatives have been implemented, available feedback reveal the following;

- Improved patient attendance in clinics.
- Prompt delivery of medications to patients.
- Compliance to scheduled PCR tests.
- Regular clinic evaluation by health care providers.
- Patient appreciation for these initiatives.



Vilnius, Lithuania / 24-26 May 2024

