
Foreword

Survival estimates of unselected groups of cancer patients from population-based cancer registries offer an important index for the evaluation of cancer diagnosis and treatment in a community. Like the other comparative measures of cancer control, i.e., incidence of and mortality from cancer, survival data provide a means to assess the effectiveness of overall cancer services. Comparisons of such data from different regions are instrumental for the planning or improvement of national and regional cancer control strategies.

Previously, survival estimates were available only from the United States, Canada, western Europe, and some countries in central and eastern Europe, Japan and Australia. Survival data are strikingly lacking from populations in developing countries where more than half of the global cancer burden occurs (52% of global incidence in 1995). The present volume provides, for the first time, systematic, centrally analysed survival data from 10 population-based cancer registries in developing countries, and this constitutes the outcome of another fruitful international collaboration. It provides not only a context to compare the results obtained in developing countries with those from developed countries but also to investigate deficiencies in cancer registration, clinical follow-up and health services planning, organization and delivery. The differences in cancer survival experienced in populations from developed and developing countries provide important clues to public health authorities in all countries on policies and investments to achieve attainable objectives in cancer control. It is hoped that this effort will further encourage more refined studies to identify technologically and economically viable, i.e. feasible and cost-effective, policies for cancer control.

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