

Premature cancer death needs serious attention

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Singapore: 1.5 million lives, which would be lost to cancer, could be saved per year if decisive measures are taken, according to Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) and International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

Currently, 7.6 million people die from cancer worldwide every year, out-of-which, four million people die prematurely (aged 30-to-69 years). Unless urgent action is taken to raise awareness about the disease and to develop practical strategies to address cancer, by 2025, this is projected to increase to an alarming six million premature cancer deaths per year.

"The estimate of 1.5 million lives lost per year to cancer that could be prevented must serve to galvanize our efforts in implementing WHO's '25 by 25' target," said Dr Christopher Wild, director, IARC.

He further added, "There is now a need for a global commitment to help drive advancements in policy and encourage implementation of comprehensive national cancer control plans. If we are to succeed in this, we have a collective

responsibility to support low and middle-income countries, who are tackling a cancer epidemic with insufficient resources."

The 1.5 million lives lost per year represent 25 percent of the estimated six million premature cancer deaths that will occur by 2025, and the six million figure is itself based on population projections of current numbers and aging.