



# Implementation of a National Cancer Bank at the National Cancer Institute of Bogotá-Colombia



Martha Lucía Serrano<sup>1</sup>, Gustavo Hernández<sup>2</sup>, Antonio Huertas<sup>1</sup>, María Helena Escobar<sup>3</sup>, Germán Barbosa<sup>4</sup>, Diana Rivera<sup>5</sup>, María Teresa Martínez<sup>2</sup>, Alejandro Niño<sup>5,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cancer Biology Research Group, <sup>2</sup> Epidemiology Research Group, <sup>3</sup> Systems and Documental Management Group, <sup>4</sup> Pathology Group, <sup>5</sup> Policy, Law and Social Mobilization Group. \*All mentioned groups belong to the National Cancer Institute, Bogotá, Colombia.

## National Cancer Institute of Bogota-Colombia

- Since its foundation in 1934 the National Cancer Institute of Colombia of Bogotá-Colombia (INC) was conceived to work for cancer control at the national level, giving advice to the Ministry of Health on programs, plans and strategies to reduce the burden of cancer, based on high quality research.

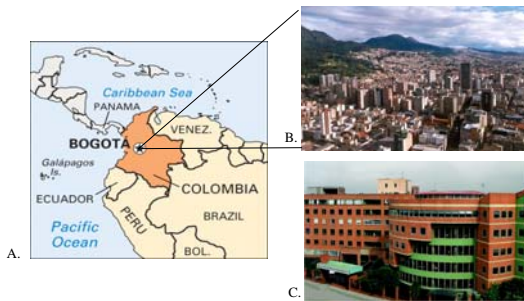
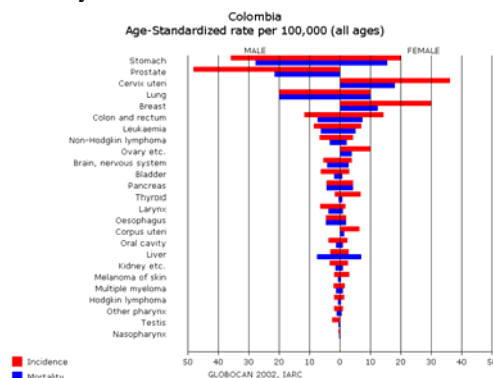


Figure 1 A. Colombia. B. Bogotá. C. Instituto Nacional de Cancerología (INC)

- During the same time, the INC has run an oncology hospital, attending more than 10.000 patients a year from all Colombia diagnosed with cancer.
- Nowadays, cancer is a public health issue in Colombia. The burden of cancer has increased steadily in the last decades. With 70.000 new cases diagnosed and 40.000 deaths a year, it has turned the third cause of death in our country.



- To substantially reduce the burden of cancer, research priorities must embrace and attend the complexity of the carcinogenesis process. One of the key issues in cancer research is data and specimen collection. These activities took an important proportion of time and effort during research projects.

## National Cancer Bank



Human resource (left to right): Antonio Huertas, María Helena Escobar, Alejandro Niño, Lina Garzón, Germán Barbosa, Rocío Jaimes, Gustavo Hernández.

**Objective:** To implement a cancer biobank in the INC to facilitate and promote cancer research at national and international level.

- The National Cancer Bank (NCB) at the INC will be a service unit in charge of a systematically collection of “platinum samples” (biological specimen + clinical & epidemiological information) of cancer patients and healthy donors to promote and facilitate cancer investigation at all levels to research groups.

**Impact:** The main benefits drawn from the implantation of a biobank in the INC are:

- Improvement in quality and opportunity of the results of investigation projects in the INC and rest of the country.
- Promote cancer investigation at the institutional, national and international levels.
- Have accurate information associated with the biological samples that will allow researchers to evaluate not only biological but also epidemiologic values related to tumors studied.
- Have the latest technology in the biobank for better quality of processed samples.
- Key factor in the success of programs such as the Cancer National Net, related with investigation programs in different entities across the country.
- It will implement better quality and more competitive services.

We plan to inaugurate the NCB this year. With funding from the Terry Fox Foundation, so far we have finished to adequate our physical space, obtained cutting edge technology (i.e. laser microdissection system and tissue microarrayer), and start working on proceeding and procedures protocols, defining an ethical framework and designing a social mobilization strategy for the NCB.

- The NCB is meant to be a Key actor not only in Colombia but also in Latin America for Cancer research. The INC and National Cancer Institute from Brazil have joined efforts to built up a Public Network of Cancer Biobanks in Latin America.



Meeting for Public Network of Cancer Biobanks in Latin America- INCA-Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) Nov.2008. Countries: Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Uruguay, Cuba, México