



**Among the priority areas of action, ICCCPO proposes the following suggestions to your Honour/Excellency to seriously consider, to save and extend the lives of children with cancer as well as to alleviate the childhood cancer burden:-**

- 1. Strengthen** national health systems and services for childhood cancer by:
  - 1.1 Guaranteeing the availability, access and affordability of health services for the early detection and treatment of children with cancer.
  - 1.2 Securing (through legislation if necessary), the availability and access to affordable essential drugs and technologies for those affected by childhood cancers.
  - 1.3 Ensuring investment in cost effective and updated training and education of health and medical professionals in sub-specialties dealing with childhood cancers, as well as health para-professionals and community health volunteers.
  - 1.4 Providing separate, child-centered, childhood cancer units /wards.
  - 1.5 Formulating policy issuances to make childhood cancers a notifiable disease and establishing population-based cancer registries in strategic areas of the country.
  - 1.6 Developing a comprehensive, adequately resourced, national strategy or national action plan for children with cancer and ensuring that civil society organizations and various sectors are involved in its formulation, implementation, monitoring and assessment.
  - 1.7 Ensuring the access to high quality palliative care including opioid analgesics for those in pain from childhood cancers.
- 2. Expand** coverage of National Health Insurance schemes to include coverage of diagnostic services, supportive and palliative care services, and complete/full treatment of those affected by childhood cancers. In addition, ensure that it does not discriminate against survivors of childhood cancers and includes provision for follow up care services, as needed.
- 3. Promote** community-based actions and initiatives that assist and support children and families living with childhood cancer, to ensure the highest possible quality of life and well-being; and support the formation and growth of parent support groups, provide assistance and engage with them during awareness projects.
- 4. Undertake** high impact and multi-sectoral information campaigns to create an awareness of the signs and symptoms of childhood cancers as well as break the stigma and misconceptions associated with cancer (i.e. cancer is death; cancer is bad genes; cancer is a family curse etc.)