



Genetics is a key component of oncology practice. Inherited genetic information can inform cancer risk and management. Despite the high proportion of African cancer cases diagnosed at an early age and late stage, as well as the potential for interventions to reduce cancer risk and death by using genetic tools, genetic testing, counseling, and clinical management protocols have largely not been widely developed in Africa. An evidence base is required to develop best practices for cancer clinical genetics in Africa.

Who We are

The African Oncogenetics Network (AON) is a multidisciplinary group of clinicians, researchers, community members, and others interested in developing cancer genetics in Africa. We guide the development and implementation of African-specific guidelines for cancer genetic testing, counseling, and risk management. The AON aims to coordinate cancer genetics research across Africa and promote the field of precision medicine for cancer through education so that inherited and somatic genetic information can be incorporated into improved clinical oncology practice in Africa.



Mission

The AON supports fundamental and applied research, development and implementation of clinical care pathways, and education of researchers, practitioners, patients, and the public. AON activities include:

Research: Investigation of lifestyle, genetic, biological, epidemiological, and clinical risk factors for hereditary cancer in Africa.

Capacity Building: Developing African cohorts, biobanking, genetic testing capabilities, and protocols for genetics applications.

Clinical Implementation: Development and implementation of state-of-the-art methods, resources, protocols, and care pathways for cancer genomics in all parts of Africa.

Training: Training, communication, and dissemination of the strategies developed above.

The AON has developed an online basic course for cancer clinical genetics in Africa. The course is free to all, and can be viewed at: <https://www.africanoncogenetics.org/home>

Organization

The AON Steering Committee members serve on a rotating basis. The current steering committee consists of the following members:

Names	Affiliation
Prisca Olabisi Adejumo	University of Ibadan, Nigeria
Yosr Hamdi (Chair)	Institut Pasteur de Tunis, Tunisia
Achille Manirakiza	King Faisal Hospital, Kigali, Rwanda
Rokhaya Ndiaye	Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal
Olufunmilayo I. Olopade	University of Chicago, USA
Timothy R. Rebbeck	Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health & Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, USA

How Can You Become Involved?

The AON is an interest group, composed of clinicians, academicians, and investigators on the African continent and beyond. All members of these communities and others including advocates, policy makers, and others are welcome to join this initiative. Ongoing activities include clinical and population-based genetic studies on breast, prostate, colorectal, childhood, and other cancers in African populations.



Special interest groups (SIGs) will be formed for different disease entities, with specific objectives. The goal of SIGs is to create a specialized and diverse research entity based on interests and expertise, to apply for funding and to conduct inclusive research on the continent. SIGs may include, but are not limited to:

- Breast and ovarian cancers
- Prostate cancer
- Colon cancer
- Early onset cancers
- Pediatric cancers
- Oncogenetics counseling
- Ethics
- Clinical Implementation and protocols
- Policy, funding, health system integration, and sustainability

The AON will hold its first launching meeting at the African Organization for Research and Training In Cancer (AORTIC) Conference in Dakar in November 2023. Information about the time and location of this meeting will be available at the conference.

<https://www.africanoncogenetics.org>

For more information, visit our web site at:

