

Achievements in Childhood Cancer

Biennium 2024–2025


Effective Access to Life-Saving Medicines

Within the framework of the Global Platform for Access to Childhood Cancer Medicines, a joint initiative of the World Health Organization, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the Pan American Health Organization, and UNICEF, more than 300 children and adolescents in Ecuador received essential oncology medicines supplied by the Platform since February 2025. Medicines were delivered to hospitals in less than 48 hours after nationalization and other regulatory processes, reducing critical delays in the initiation and continuity of treatment.

PAHO/WHO provided technical cooperation for the operational implementation of the Platform, coordinating with the Ministry of Health, hospitals, and strategic partners, and strengthening planning, logistics, and distribution processes.

In 2026, the Platform will expand its reach to ten hospitals in Ecuador and El Salvador, with an investment exceeding USD 3.3 million and more than 70 medicines and formulations for chemotherapy and supportive care. At the same time, nine countries in the Region are already accessing these high-quality medicines through PAHO's Regional Revolving Funds, strengthening equitable and sustainable access to childhood cancer treatment.

More than **300** children and adolescents treated on time in Ecuador, with regional expansion to El Salvador and other countries in the Americas




Go to Global Platform for Access to Childhood Cancer Medicines 

National Policies to Transform Childhood Cancer Care

During the 2024–2025 biennium, the number of countries with national childhood cancer policies, including early diagnosis guidelines, increased from 8 to 12 countries under the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer (GICC). In parallel, 14 countries developed or strengthened national childhood cancer plans, consolidating unprecedented regional progress.

PAHO/WHO supported this process through sustained technical cooperation, assisting with regulatory development, adaptation of global recommendations, and joint work with ministries of health, scientific societies, and strategic partners such as St. Jude.

These advances are fundamental: early diagnosis is one of the main determinants of survival in childhood cancer. The expansion of national policies and guidelines demonstrates that it is possible to accelerate structural changes in health systems and scale high-impact interventions that reduce late diagnoses and access gaps in the Region.




In just two years, more countries in the Region **adopted key national policies** for childhood cancer



Strengthening Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation in the Andean Subregion

Through the Cooperation among Countries for Health Development (CCHD) project on hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT), the Andean subregion has strengthened not only technical capacities in pediatric transplantation but also subregional collaboration in a highly specialized field with uneven development among countries. During the 2024–2025 biennium, a subregional technical guide, a regional course on transplant indications, and communication materials for patients and families were developed.

PAHO/WHO led a collaborative process with clinical experts, national teams, and regional partners, with political and technical support from ORAS-CONHU, harmonizing criteria across countries, reducing variability in clinical practice, and strengthening decision-making in pediatric transplantation.



The Andean subregion is advancing toward a **regional approach** to transplantation in childhood cancer.



This effort contributes to improving the quality, equity, and safety of transplantation in children with cancer and establishes a common technical foundation that can be expanded to regional referral networks, specialized training, and results monitoring.

New regional guidelines and resources strengthen comprehensive childhood cancer care

93 publications and 128,000 downloads

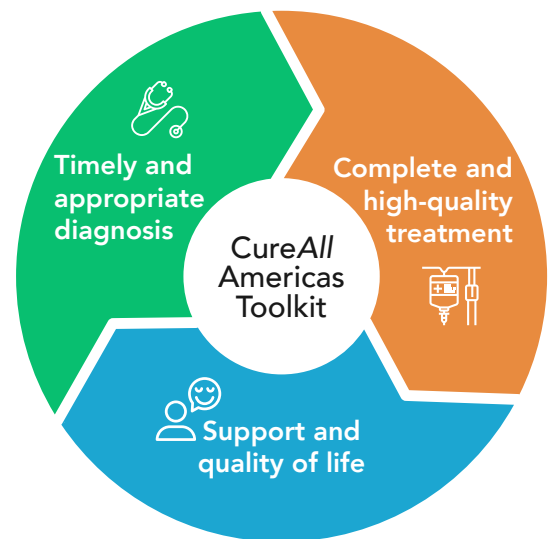


Comprehensive Guidelines and Resources to Improve Diagnosis, Treatment, and Quality of Life

As part of technical cooperation between PAHO/WHO and St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, 17 new comprehensive guidelines and resources were developed and made available during the 2024–2025 biennium to strengthen early diagnosis, treatment, and quality of life for children and adolescents with cancer under the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer (GICC).

All resources are openly available on the CureAll platform, offering practical guidance for health teams across the entire continuum of care, from primary care to specialized services. The resources and tools of the CureAll toolkit represent substantial and innovative advances to strengthen childhood cancer care. More than a set of technical inputs, these new resources provide practical and actionable solutions to improve early diagnosis, access to treatment, quality of care, and outcome monitoring, with a direct impact on the survival of children and adolescents with cancer.

These tools strengthen health system and clinical team capacities, reduce late diagnoses, improve quality of care, and increase survival, with a child- and family-centered approach. Regional pediatric cancer networks and working groups have also been consolidated, facilitating experience exchange, harmonization of approaches, and ongoing technical support among countries. These collaborative spaces strengthen national childhood cancer services and programs, contribute to the development and updating of the CureAll toolkit, and ensure that the tools respond to the real needs of health teams, patients, and families in the Region.



[Go to CureAll toolkit](#)

Strengthening Technical Capacities for Sustainable Care



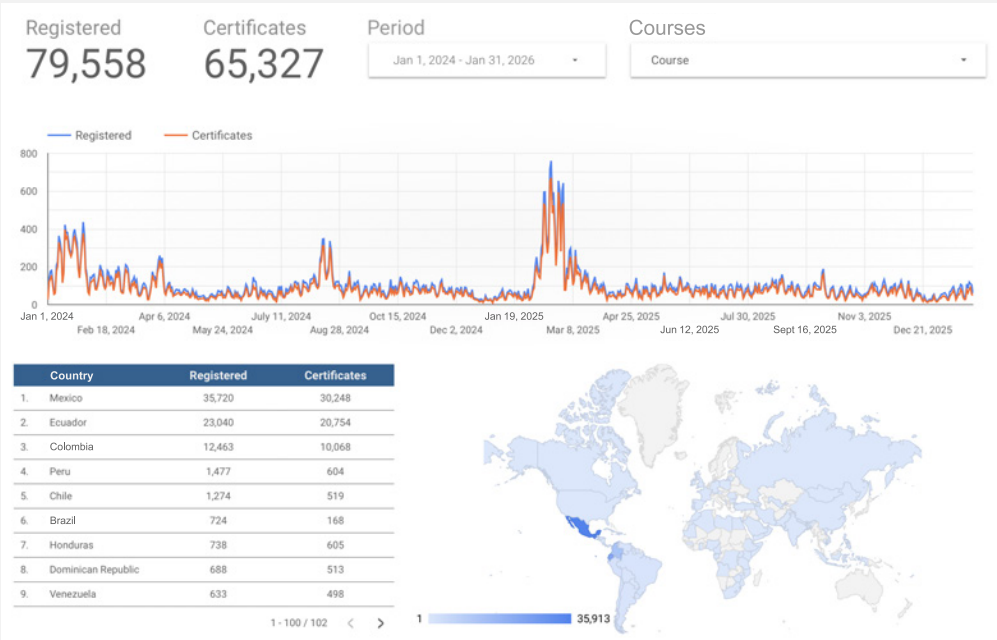
More than **123,000** health professionals strengthened their capacities to improve childhood cancer care in the Region

Through PAHO/WHO technical cooperation, 123,078 health professionals from 32 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were trained during the 2024–2025 biennium to strengthen comprehensive childhood cancer care. These training activities were carried out within the framework of four key regional courses designed to address critical gaps in health systems.

Courses hosted on the Virtual Campus for Public Health addressed priority areas across the continuum of care: early diagnosis of childhood cancer, pediatric palliative care, safe pediatric chemotherapy, and hematopoietic stem cell transplantation.

In addition to clinical training, PAHO promoted service assessment tools, national planning, and quality improvement initiatives to support informed decision-making and strengthen health systems.

This effort contributes to closing technical capacity gaps, improving the quality and safety of care, and ensuring that the advances achieved are sustainable over time, with a direct impact on the survival and quality of life of children and adolescents with cancer.



Go to virtual courses

Early Diagnosis of Cancer in Childhood and Adolescence

Basic recommendations for managing pediatric chemotherapy (Available in Spanish)

Palliative Care in Pediatric Cancer (Available in Spanish)

Stem cell transplantation in pediatric cancer patients (Available in Spanish)

Regional Mobilization to Raise Awareness of Childhood Cancer

Regional campaigns amplify the message on early diagnosis and treatment of children with cancer



During the 2024–2025 biennium, PAHO/WHO, in coordination with the countries, promoted the childhood cancer early diagnosis campaign and its implementation in the Andean subregion, with the aim of strengthening recognition of early signs and symptoms, promoting timely diagnosis and early initiation of treatment, and reinforcing the rights of children and adolescents with cancer.

As part of the technical cooperation, PAHO led the development of graphic, audiovisual, and digital communication materials in close collaboration with countries and strategic partners. The content was adapted to national and subregional contexts, actively involving families, health professionals, civil society, and decision-makers. As a result, the campaign achieved broad reach across the Region, with materials available in Spanish, English, Portuguese, and French.

This achievement is key because early diagnosis is one of the main determinants of survival in childhood cancer. Regional and subregional experience shows that awareness campaigns, when integrated into health systems and adapted to local contexts, can be scaled up and contribute sustainably to reducing late diagnoses, decreasing stigma, and increasing demand for timely, high-quality health services.



Peru and Panama Achieved Concrete Advances in Early Diagnosis in childhood cancer



During the 2024–2025 biennium, Peru and Panama recorded concrete advances in the timely diagnosis of childhood cancer, reflected in reduced diagnostic times in Peru and a decrease in diagnoses at late or advanced stages in Panama. These results mark a significant shift in early detection and timely access to treatment for children and adolescents with cancer. In Peru, the average time to diagnosis was reduced from 107 to 57 days, enabling earlier access to treatment. In Panama, a 50% reduction in cases diagnosed at advanced stages was achieved, demonstrating substantial progress toward early detection and timely referral within the health system.

These achievements were supported by PAHO/WHO technical cooperation within the framework of the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer (GICC). PAHO accompanied both countries in strengthening national policies, implementing early diagnosis guidelines, utilizing telemedicine resources, training health professionals, and developing awareness campaigns targeted both at the primary care level and the community, in collaboration with strategic partners.

Less time to diagnose and fewer children arriving at advanced stages



This progress is fundamental because diagnosing earlier saves lives. Reducing diagnostic delays and decreasing the proportion of cases detected at advanced stages translates into better clinical outcomes, less complex treatments, and higher survival rates. The experience of Peru and Panama demonstrates that timely diagnosis strategies, when integrated into health systems and supported by sustained technical cooperation, can be scaled up and replicated in other countries of the Region, accelerating the impact of the childhood cancer agenda.



Brazil Consolidates a Robust National Framework for childhood cancer and Strengthens its Regional Leadership



Brazil has significantly strengthened its national response to childhood cancer through the implementation of a specific regulatory and programmatic framework, positioning the country as a regional reference in pediatric oncology care. The approval of the National Policy for Pediatric Oncology Care establishes clear guidelines for timely diagnosis, comprehensive treatment, palliative care, surveillance, and outcomes monitoring, integrated into the Unified Health System (SUS).

PAHO/WHO has supported this process through sustained technical cooperation, assisting in aligning the national framework with the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer (CureAll), strengthening technical capacities, and promoting Brazil's participation in regional networks and South-South cooperation spaces, including technical exchange activities and virtual training.

Brazil's experience is relevant for the Region because it demonstrates that having a specific national framework for childhood cancer helps organize service delivery, reduce territorial inequities, and strengthen quality of care. Moreover, its active role in regional cooperation shows how countries with consolidated capacities can support other Member States, contributing to the expansion of the CureAll toolkit and the advancement of the regional agenda to improve childhood cancer survival in the Americas.



Mexico Advances Early Diagnosis and builds strong foundations for Pediatric Cancer Data



During the 2024–2025 biennium, Mexico strengthened its national response to childhood cancer through the implementation of a national early diagnosis and timely referral guideline, designed to guide health personnel in the early identification of signs and symptoms of cancer in children and adolescents and to ensure appropriate clinical referral within the health system.

In parallel, the Ministry of Health presented the National Cancer Registry – Pediatric Module, a strategic tool to generate reliable statistics, improve detection and follow-up, and support the design of evidence-based policies for childhood cancer care. This registry is expected to initially capture between 3,000 and 5,000 pediatric cases per year, generating a robust database to assess trends, risk factors, and clinical outcomes.

PAHO/WHO, within the framework of the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer (CureAll), has supported Mexico in strengthening capacities, updating guidelines, and monitoring epidemiological surveillance trends, promoting the harmonization of clinical criteria to reduce diagnostic delays and improve the quality of care.

