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GOVERNANCE



Board members convened for a strategic retreat focused on strengthening governance, aligning organizational priorities, and reaffirming a shared commitment to advancing cancer control.

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PATIENT SUPPORT



UCS received 29 wheelchairs from MTN Uganda Foundation under the Change makers Program to strengthen supportive care for cancer patients and their caregivers.

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AWARENESS CREATION



4th Childhood Cancer Colour Run, organized by UCCF to raise awareness and mobilize support for critical needs, including transport, nutrition and psychosocial care for children battling Cancer.

EDITOR'S NOTE



The second quarter of 2026 has been a period of consolidation, growth and renewed momentum for the Uganda Cancer Society. As we reflect on the work undertaken, we are encouraged by the progress made in strengthening our systems, expanding partnerships, improving patient support and creating greater opportunities for meaningful engagement in cancer control.

We continued to strengthen our governance and institutional foundations, while advancing initiatives that place patients, survivors and communities at the centre of our work. We expanded access to reliable cancer information through the digitalization of the Cancer Education Materials for Patients and Caregivers, strengthened supportive care through the provision of wheelchairs, and continued to use awareness platforms to promote prevention, early detection and timely access to care.

Our partnerships have also continued to grow. The signing of the partnership with Girls4Girls and the launch of the LEAP programme marks an important step in our commitment to empowering cancer survivors as advocates, peer supporters and champions for cancer control. We also welcomed new members into the UCS network, reinforcing our belief that greater impact is achieved when organizations work together, share knowledge and leverage their collective strengths.

Looking ahead, the months of May to July and beyond are already demonstrating the value of the foundations we have laid. We are moving from planning to implementation of initiatives that strengthen survivor leadership, patient and community engagement, member coordination, cancer education and advocacy. We will continue to invest in partnerships, digital innovation, resource mobilization and evidence generation while strengthening our internal systems and accountability.

We thank our members, partners, Board, volunteers, survivors and supporters for walking this journey with us. The progress we are making is a shared achievement, and together we look forward to an even more impactful second half of the year.

Brenda Nandutu
Programs officer, UCS

Governance

Strong governance remains at the heart of the Uganda Cancer Society's accountability, effectiveness and sustainability. During this period, UCS continued to strengthen its governance systems through Board oversight, regular management and governance meetings, policy review, financial and programme accountability, compliance, risk management and performance monitoring.

STRATEGIC BOARD RETREAT FOR BOARD MEMBERS

On 8 May, Uganda Cancer Society's newly constituted Board convened for a strategic retreat to strengthen governance, align organizational priorities, and lay a strong foundation for effective leadership. The retreat was attended by all nine Board members and supported by UCS staff.

Key outcomes included the establishment of Board Committees, development of the Board Meetings Calendar, and review of the Board Charter and other governance documents. The Board also reaffirmed its collective commitment to sustainability, accountability, and advancing cancer control efforts in Uganda.

The retreat marked an important milestone in setting the new Board's work in motion. Together, the Board and staff look forward to strengthening member coordination, raising awareness on cancer, advocating for improved service delivery, supporting patients and caregivers, building capacity, and generating evidence through research to inform cancer control efforts in Uganda.



Figure 1: Left: board members along with secretariat staff pose for a group photo and on the right they discuss UCS strategic direction

Patient support

Patients and caregivers need more than medical treatment, they also need information, guidance, psychosocial support and a voice throughout their cancer journey. Through our members, we continue to connect patients and caregivers to reliable cancer information, support systems and resources that help them better understand and navigate their diagnosis and care. This quarter we did this through distribution of the CEMPCs, and securing wheel chairs for the patients.

Advancing Access to Cancer Information through Digital Innovation

Since 2017, UCS has continued to promote the use of Cancer Education Materials for Patients and Caregivers (CEMPCs) as an important resource for cancer education and patient support. Health workers have consistently used the materials to strengthen patient education, while patients and caregivers have relied on them to better understand cancer, navigate their care, make informed decisions, and remain informed throughout the cancer journey.

Recognizing the evolving ways in which people access and consume information, UCS has digitalized access to the CEMPCs. The Society has developed QR codes that provide direct access to the electronic versions of the CEMPCs. By simply scanning the QR code using a mobile phone, health workers, patients, caregivers, and other

interested users can access the materials digitally and have the information readily available whenever they need it.

This innovation represents UCS's commitment to sustainable, accessible and future-oriented cancer information delivery. While printed materials remain valuable in settings where they are most appropriate, the digital platform provides an opportunity to extend the reach of the CEMPCs beyond the limitations of physical distribution. It also enables the Society to make cancer information more readily available across different settings and to promote continued access to trusted information throughout the cancer care journey.



Figure 2: the QR codes generated to support access to the electronic version of the CEMPCs in English and Luganda

MTN FOUNDATION DONATION STRENGTHENS SUPPORT FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS

On 25 May 2026, we received 29 wheelchairs from the MTN Uganda Foundation under its Changemakers Program, in a partnership aimed at strengthening supportive care for people affected by cancer. The wheelchairs were distributed to three (3) UCS member organisations, including Kawempe Home Care, Bless a Child Foundation, Hospice Africa Uganda, and the Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI), to strengthen their ability to support patients and caregivers as they navigate treatment and care services.

For many cancer patients, mobility can become a significant challenge due to weakness, pain, fatigue, surgery, treatment side effects or advanced illness. A wheelchair may appear to be a simple intervention, but for a patient and their caregiver, it can make a meaningful difference, providing safer movement, greater comfort and improved independence while reducing the physical strain associated with moving a patient.

In busy treatment environments such as the Uganda Cancer Institute, access to wheelchairs is particularly valuable. Patients can be supported to move safely and comfortably between clinics, wards, laboratories and treatment units without placing additional physical demands on themselves or their caregivers. Beyond mobility, this support contributes to preserving dignity, comfort and psychosocial wellbeing during what can be a physically and emotionally demanding journey.

The donation also strengthens the work of UCS member organisations by providing them with a practical resource they can use in responding to the needs of the patients and families they serve. By equipping organisations that work directly with patients and caregivers, the support extends beyond the individual wheelchair user to strengthen the wider care and support system.

UCS is deeply grateful to MTN Uganda Foundation and MTN Uganda for recognizing the importance of supportive cancer care and for choosing to stand with UCS, its member organisations and the Uganda Cancer Institute in this cause.

This partnership is a powerful reminder that small, practical interventions can make a significant difference in the cancer journey helping to ease the burden of care, strengthen patient support and promote greater dignity for people living with cancer and their caregivers.



Figure 3: wheel Chairs being delivered to Kawempe Home care,Hospice Africa Uganda,Uganda Cancer Institute and Bless a Child Foundation

Awareness Creation

Cancer awareness is a key part of UCS's efforts to promote prevention, early detection and timely access to care. Our awareness efforts focus on increasing understanding of cancer risk factors, prevention, signs and symptoms, early detection, screening and the importance of seeking care early. This is done through public campaigns, community engagement, digital platforms and partnerships.

COMMEMORATION OF WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Ahead of World No Tobacco Day 2026, in alignment with this year's theme, "Unmasking the Appeal: Exposing Industry Tactics on Tobacco and Nicotine Products," UCS used its digital platforms to help communities understand how tobacco and nicotine products are deliberately marketed and positioned to make them attractive, particularly to young people.

Through a series of awareness messages and educational content, UCS highlighted the need for the public to look beyond the appealing packaging, flavors, imagery and marketing strategies used to promote tobacco and nicotine products. The campaign encouraged audiences to question the tactics used by the tobacco industry and recognize the long-term health and social consequences associated with tobacco use.

The campaign promoted increased taxes on tobacco products as an important intervention that can make tobacco less affordable, discourage initiation and consumption, particularly among young people, and generate additional government revenue that can support public health priorities.

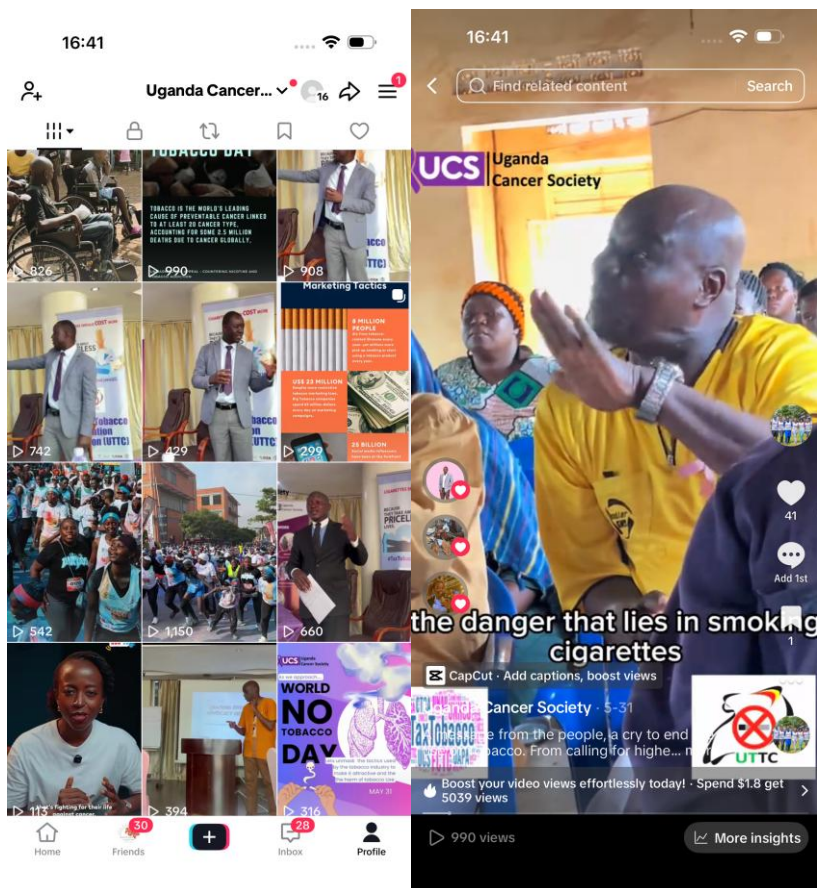


Figure 4: screen shorts from the UCS social media handles

Partnerships and Membership

UCS recognizes that greater impact in cancer control requires strong networks, shared expertise and collective action. Through its membership and partnerships, UCS brings together organisations and stakeholders working towards a common goal of reducing the burden of cancer in Uganda.

Our membership work focuses on recruiting, engaging, sustaining and growing a strong and active network of member organisations, while strengthening their capacity to contribute meaningfully to cancer control. During this quarter we on boarded one new member and worked with various partners.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

During this quarter, we welcomed Little Heroes Initiative as our newest member, further strengthening our growing network of organizations working together to advance cancer control in Uganda.

Established in Mbarara District, Little Heroes Initiative exists to inspire hope and dignity for children affected by cancer through community education, advocacy, support for equitable access to cancer treatment, and the provision of holistic palliative care services.

Through membership in UCS, Little Heroes Initiative will have opportunities to collaborate with fellow members, share knowledge and experiences, participate in joint advocacy and capacity-building initiatives, and contribute to collective efforts to improve cancer prevention, care, treatment and support in Uganda.



Figure 5: A flyer welcoming little Heroes Cancer Initiative

SIGNING AND MOU WITH G4G

On 2nd June 2026, Uganda Cancer Society (UCS) and Girls4Girls (G4G) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalize their partnership to support and empower cancer survivors through the Leadership for Early Detection, Advocacy and Peer Support (LEAP) Program.

The partnership comes from a shared belief that surviving cancer is not the end of the journey, it can be the beginning of a powerful role in helping others navigate theirs.

Cancer survivors understand the fears of diagnosis, the challenges of treatment, the importance of information and support, and the realities patients and families face throughout the cancer journey. With the right skills and opportunities, survivors can become powerful voices for early detection, patient support, Adherence to treatment, advocacy and improved cancer services.

The six-month LEAP pilot will bring together 30 female cancer survivors through a combination of online and in-person learning. Participants will explore topics ranging from understanding cancer and patient support to communication, negotiation and advocacy, ethics, healthy living, courageous leadership and becoming a Cancer Control Champion.

Ultimately, LEAP seeks to create a network of survivors who can serve as peer supporters, community educators, patient navigators, advocates and cancer-control champions within their communities.





GIRLS FOR GIRLS



Uganda Cancer Society

UCS LEAP COHORT CALENDAR

In-Person: 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Online: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

22 Aug 2026	Building Trust and Understanding Cancer as a Disease In Person
19 Sept 2026	Negotiation & Advocacy for Self, Patients, and the Community Online
24 Oct 2026	Art of Communication, Storytelling and Awareness Creation In Person
21 Nov 2026	Public Service, Patient Navigation and Support Systems Online
23 Jan 2027	Ethics, Values & Healthy Living and Lifestyle Management In Person
13 Feb 2027	Courageous Leadership & Becoming a Cancer Control Champion Online
27 Feb 2027	Graduation Ceremony In Person

Figure 6: The PO and ED pose with the P.O of G4G after signing the MoU to Launch LEAP

HONOURING A LEGACY OF COMPASSION: REMEMBERING DR. ANNE MERRIMAN

On 18th May UCS joined the palliative care community at a commemoration organized by Hospice Africa Uganda (HAU) to honor and celebrate the life and enduring legacy of Dr. Anne Merriman, marking the first anniversary of her passing. The gathering brought together colleagues, partners and members of the palliative care community to reflect on Dr. Merriman’s remarkable contribution to healthcare in Uganda and the values that shaped her life’s work.

A recurring theme throughout the reflections was Dr. Merriman’s deep belief in Ubuntu “I am because we are.” This philosophy was reflected in her commitment to humanity, compassion and the belief that care should always place the person at the centre.

Speakers repeatedly reminded participants that “the patient is the VVIP” the most important person in the care journey. This powerful message reinforces the importance of patient-centred care, where treatment is not only about addressing illness but also about ensuring comfort, dignity, respect and quality of life.

Dr. Merriman is remembered as a pioneer who played a transformative role in establishing palliative care in Uganda. Her work helped shift conversations around care for people with life-limiting illnesses, demonstrating that healthcare extends beyond treatment and cure to include compassionate support, pain management and dignity at every stage of the illness journey.

One of her most significant contributions was her pioneering work in introducing the production and use of oral morphine in Uganda, transforming pain management and bringing much-needed relief to thousands of people living with cancer and other life-limiting conditions.

As we remember Dr. Merriman, we celebrate more than the achievements of a healthcare pioneer. We celebrate a legacy of compassion, dignity, humanity and service that continues to influence palliative care in Uganda and beyond.

Her life reminds us that while we may not always be able to add days to life, we can add life to days, by ensuring that every patient is cared for with compassion, dignity and humanity.



Figure 7; The ED of HAU Ms.Prossy Nakyanja (Left) sharing in memory of Dr.Marriman on the right

Behind Every Step, a Child's Story: UCS Joins the Childhood Cancer Colour Run

On 17 May 2026, UCS joined thousands of Ugandans at the 4th Childhood Cancer Colour Run, organised by the Uganda Child Cancer Foundation (UCCF) at the Uganda Cancer Institute. Held under the theme “Behind Every Step, A Child’s Story,” the event brought together families, cancer survivors, health workers, advocates, corporate teams and members of the public in a colourful show of solidarity with children living with cancer.

For UCS, participation in the Colour Run was more than a celebration. It was an opportunity to stand with children and families navigating the difficult realities of childhood cancer and to amplify the message that every child deserves a chance to access care, complete treatment and live a healthy and fulfilling life.

Children and families can face significant barriers beyond the cost of treatment, including transport, nutrition, accommodation and psychosocial support. These challenges can affect their ability to remain in care and complete treatment. The 2026 Colour Run therefore served as both an awareness and fundraising platform to mobilise support towards some of these critical needs.

UCS remains committed to working alongside organisations, health facilities, communities and other stakeholders to strengthen awareness, early detection, access to care and support for people affected by cancer.



Figure 8: some of the moments from the Childhood Cancer Colour Run

UCS Brings Patient and Community Voices to HOSU Kampala Round Table

We joined cancer and hematology professionals, researchers, policymakers and partners at the Hematology & Oncology Society of Uganda (HOSU) Kampala Round Table and Annual General Meeting, held on 11 June 2026 at Mestil Hotel, Kampala.

Held under the theme “Equity in Every Life: Expanding Access to Comprehensive Cancer Care and Blood Diseases,” the meeting provided an important platform for stakeholders to reflect on the challenges affecting access to quality cancer and blood disease care in Uganda and explore opportunities for stronger collaboration.

Representing UCS, the Executive Director, Ms. Asimwe Patience, contributed to the Equity, Patient and Community Engagement Session, highlighting the importance of placing patients and communities at the centre of cancer and blood disease care.

Her submission emphasized the need to address barriers that affect access to care, including diagnostic delays, referral challenges, distance, treatment costs, transport and financial constraints. She called for patients and caregivers to move beyond being recipients of care to becoming active partners in shaping policies, research, services and health programs.

She also highlighted the role of survivors, Village Health Teams, community health workers, patient groups, faith and cultural leaders, and civil society organisations in promoting early detection, addressing misinformation, supporting care-seeking and helping patients navigate the health system.

The session further underscored the importance of addressing stigma and misconceptions surrounding cancer and blood diseases, with patient and survivor voices serving as powerful tools for creating understanding and reducing fear.

Patience emphasized that equity goes beyond the availability of services; patients must be able to reach, afford, understand and complete the care they need. She called for greater attention to patient experiences, financial barriers, treatment completion and meaningful patient participation in health decision-making.

Her key message was: “Nothing about patients should be decided without patients.”



Figure 9: panelists for the Equity Patient and Community Engagement Session