

The Basics of Pediatric Oncology-Physicians Course (BPO): A Nationwide E-learning Initiative in Pakistan – Participant Insights

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The Basics of Pediatric Oncology-Physicians Course (BPO): A Nationwide E-learning Initiative in Pakistan – Participant Insights

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Introduction: Pediatric oncology in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) like Pakistan faces challenges such as delayed diagnosis, limited specialized care, and insufficient training among healthcare workers. To address this, the Pediatric Oncology Department at Indus Hospital and Health Network introduced the 12-week Basics of Pediatric Oncology-Physicians (BPO) pilot course to equip medical professionals with essential skills for early diagnosis, treatment initiation, and referral of pediatric cancer cases nationwide.

Methodology: Twenty participants were selected based on clinical relevance and involvement in pediatric healthcare. Hosted on Moodle, the course comprised six modules covering leukemia, lymphoma, solid tumors, neuro-oncology, and supportive/palliative care. Each module featured pre-recorded lectures and interactive online sessions. Participants provided feedback via structured evaluation form upon completion. Frequency and percentages were calculated for the categorical variables.

Results: Participants reported improved knowledge and confidence in pediatric oncology, appreciating the structured design and practical focus on early diagnosis and referrals. They found the curriculum well-organized with clear objectives, valuing end-of-module assessments for tracking progress. While recorded lectures were beneficial, many requested supplementary materials for reinforcement and future reference.

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Some suggested extending the course for deeper engagement and better retention. Technical challenges, including internet issues and audio/visual quality, impacted learning, highlighting the need for better support and content delivery. Recommended improvements included additional written resources, case-based discussions, and region-specific adaptations for future courses.

Conclusion: The BPO course effectively improved pediatric oncology knowledge among healthcare professionals in Pakistan. Future iterations should integrate feedback by extending duration, enhancing materials, and improving technical support to strengthen pediatric oncology capacity in LMICs.