

**Press Release**

**Evaluation of Cancer Medicines**

**New WHO Collaboration Centre in Cologne**

**At the start of 2023 Clinic I of Internal Medicine at the University Hospital Cologne (Klinik I für Innere Medizin der Uniklinik Köln), of which Prof Dr Michael Hallek is the director, was officially nominated by the World Health Orgnaization as a “WHO Collaborating Centre for evidence synthesis and evaluation of new cancer treatments.” The nomination is in recognition of the continuity of the longstanding good cooperation with Prof Dr Nicole Skoetz and her “Evidence-based Medicine Research Group” at Clinic I. The research group has been supporting the WHO for several years in creating an Essential Medicines List (EML). This lists all the essential medicines that are crucial for addressing the most essential needs of a public health system.**

In addition to the EML for adults there is also a separate list for children up to the age of 12 since 2007. The lists are adapted by the countries according to their needs by taking into consideration their domestic disease burden and clinical requirements. “The WHO list of essential medicines is fundamental to providing world-wide health care by supporting efficacious and quality controlled drugs, which are affordable for both health systems and patients. We are delighted to have the excellent methodical and oncological expertise of Prof Skoetz and her team at the newly created collaborating centre for the evaluation of cancer medicines,” says Dr Benedikt Huttner, Secretary of the WHO Expert Committee on the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines.

The main focus of the research group evidence-based medicine by Prof Skoetz is based on the use and further development of methods for evidence-based medicine, which are used, for example, within the framework of systematic reviews and clinical guidelines. The research group has already created several valuable evidence-based reports on medicines and innovative oncological treatments for the WHO in the last few years. “These reports will also remain the main focus of the WHO collaboration centre. In addition, we will examine whether these important medicines are also being used during treatment and how this implementation can be improved. In particular, if cancer medicines are available in countries with low and middle incomes, but also if there will be supply shortages or price increases in high-income countries, as we have recently witnessed in Germany,” according to Prof. Nicole Skoetz, the head of the new “WHO Collaboration Centre.”

“The WHO usually nominates public institutes and research facilities as collaboration centres. The fact that they have appointed our hospital as a WHO Centre for evaluating new cancer treatment is exceptional and is a great honour,” says a pleased Prof Hallek, director of Clinic I of Internal Medicine.

The nomination of the new WHO collaboration centre is valid for four years to start with. After every 12 months an annual report will have to be submitted.

**Head of WHO Collaborating Centre for evidence synthesis and evaluation of new cancer treatments.**

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