The "06" committee: an untiring soldier in the Tunisian fight against gynecologic cancer

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The Institute Salah Azaiez has been the Public Anti-Cancer Center in Tunisia since March 20, 1969. It has thus offered over 50 years of cancer care to our population. The center comprises 10 departments: Surgical Oncology, otolaryngology, Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Nuclear Medicine, Histology, Immunohistochemistry, Diagnostic Radiology, Biology, and Epidemiology. Like every anti-cancer center, the decision-making process is made in a multidisciplinary meeting, known in our institution as a committee. One of those committees is dedicated to gynecologic malignancy. It is known as “Committee 06” and has been working since March 1969 (Figure 1) to help improve care.

Since that date Committee 06 through its leading members has been a cornerstone in the field of gynecologic malignancies, with multiple roles in establishing and promoting standard of care.

As part of its role promoting the best standard of care for Tunisian patients, Committee 06 members have produced the first country-specific guidelines (Figure 2) for gynecologic cancers based on the international state of the art. As a team we have worked to adapt these international standards to our reality. This has helped in terms of recognizing and addressing our limitations and focusing on what we need to do to maintain our health system at a viable, high-quality level.

Since 2011 and the Arab Spring, approximately 4000 women per year have had surgery for various tumor types. Each year approximately 60 women have had radical hysterectomies for cervical cancer. One hundred others had hysterectomies mainly for endometrial cancer and also early-stage cervical cancers. More than 60% of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer underwent optimal to complete cytoreductive surgery.

Figure 1 The O6 Committee meeting.

Figure 2 Published Abstract describing the country-specific guidelines for endometrial cancer.
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