

Gynecologic Oncology at Home: a new opportunity to teach and learn

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Currently, there is a wide disparity in the training of gynecologic oncologists, especially in low- and middle-income countries, resulting in a deficiency of adequate healthcare for patients with gynecologic cancer.¹ Gynecologic oncology in Venezuela is a relatively new specialty which has been provided to obstetrician-gynecologists in a single training center in the country since 2010 for a 3-year period, so currently there are few qualified specialists.

The Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology of Venezuela (SOGV) has maintained a commitment to promoting medical education and training programs for over 50 years. It is subdivided into nine divisions representing different regions of the country, and 15 sections representing the different sub-specialties. The Gynecologic Oncology Section in its current period (2021–2023) is formed by a multidisciplinary and inclusive team composed of three gynecologic oncologists, one oncologic surgeon, and one molecular biologist.

Since the beginning of the Gynecologic Oncology Section period, an approximation with the divisions and their representatives in each region of Venezuela was achieved, with the idea of strengthening relationships among members and promoting medical education and training. The ‘Gynecologic Oncology at Home’ project arose from the growing need to access knowledge on the management of patients with gynecologic cancer in distant regions, and also to be aware of the weaknesses related to an early diagnosis and therapeutic approach, and thus try to generate educational programs with lectures that can progressively contribute to filling this gap.

The main objective is to train residents and specialists in gynecology and obstetrics from different regions of the country, with

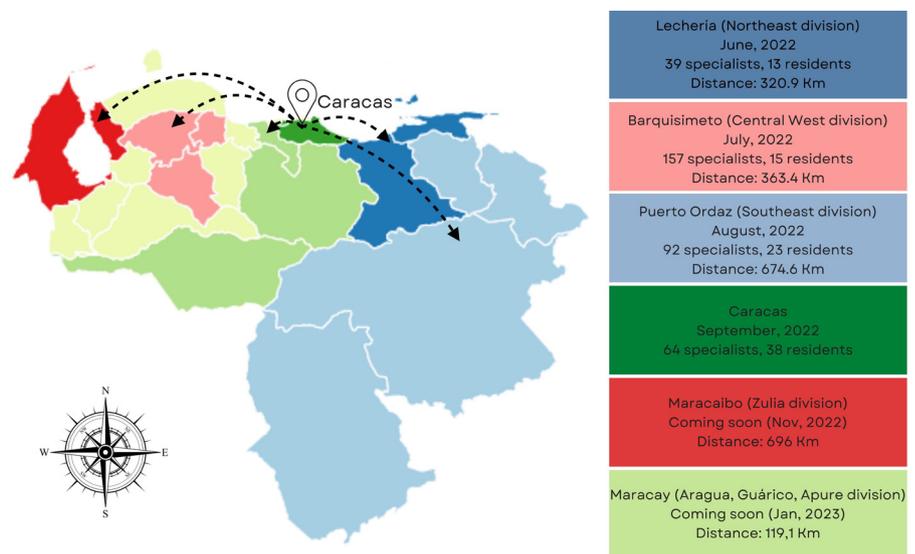


Figure 1 Venezuelan divisions of the Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology of Venezuela visited up to September 2022.

the purpose of providing knowledge related to the prevention, early diagnosis, initial management, and referral of patients with gynecologic cancer to specialized centers so that they can receive the greatest benefit in terms of disease-free survival and overall survival, based on the principle that these patients have a better prognosis when they

are treated by gynecologic oncologists.² The participation of private companies, laboratories, and other stakeholders has had a fundamental role in the development of the project, providing sponsorship, locations, and necessary logistics for the execution of the program due to the non-profit nature of the project.



Figure 2 The audience of ‘Gynecology Oncology at Home’ in (A) Lechería, (B) Barquisimeto, (C) Puerto Ordaz, (D) Caracas.



Figure 3 Bringing gynecologic oncology to every corner of Venezuela. National Park La Llovizna, Puerto Ordaz.

Currently, the team has visited four of the nine divisions in the country (Figures 1–3), with the expectation of reaching all of them in the remaining months of the current period. In addition, the Gynecologic Oncology Section had the opportunity to celebrate the month of gynecologic oncology for the first time in the country. Each event consists of five lectures and discussions of clinical cases, focused on cervical cancer prevention, adnexal mass management, extension studies, and initial management of gynecologic cancer.

Thus far we have visited four cities, 23 lectures have been given, and 442

attendants received educational benefits. Two cities remain to be visited in the coming months to reach a total of six divisions. This innovative initiative in the country could benefit patients with gynecologic cancer, providing them with a better prognosis and quality of life due to the academic update provided through this project.

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