Control and management of gynecological cancer in Peru

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Peru, in South America, is a developing country according to the United Nations, with a population of 33.6 million inhabitants and a rugged geography. Administration of health services is often limited for the population residing in remote places. Lima, the capital city, has 9.6 million inhabitants, and therefore two thirds of the population live in the provinces.

The Instituto Nacional de Enfermedades Neoplásicas (INEN), Lima, is the national governing body for cancer. In 2021, it registered 26,940 gynecological visits, mostly to patients affiliated with the Seguro Integral de Salud (SIS) (ie, at minimal cost to the patient, otherwise the cost is US$5.05); the wait from the request to completion of the consultation was 1–7 days. In the same year, 665 major surgeries and 402 procedures for gynecological cancer were registered, with adjuvant treatment available (eg, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, brachytherapy, immunotherapy, and hormone therapy).1

In 2019, the INEN tower was opened (Figure 1), where procedures are performed in large volume, and 13,000 new cases of cancer were treated and almost half were from the provinces. Therefore, the strategy to fight cancer consisted of decentralization, a planning that was contemplated years before with the creation of the Institutos Regionales de Enfermedades Neoplásicas (IRENes) in strategic cities in the north, center, and south of Peru (Figure 2).

Figure 1  Instituto Nacional de Enfermedades Neoplásicas (INEN) tower where 1402 procedures for gynecological cancer were performed in 2021.

Figure 2 Strategic geographic layout of the Institutos Regionales de Enfermedades Neoplásicas (IRENes) on the map of Peru.

The Instituto Regional de Enfermedades Neoplásicas (IREN NORTE), Trujillo (1 million inhabitants in 2022), has served the northern macro region since 2007. In 2021, it registered 7200 gynecological visits, mostly covered by the SIS (otherwise the patient pays US$4.29); the request to completion wait for the consultation was 1-3 days. In 2021, IREN NORTE registered 113 major gynecological surgeries, with adjuvant treatment.2

IREN SUR, Arequipa (1.3 million inhabitants in 2022), has been serving the southern macro region since 2008. In 2021, it had 2466 gynecological services covered mostly by the SIS (otherwise the
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