

Pakistan has the highest rates of breast cancer in Asia

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Singapore: It is estimated that one in every four women in Pakistan have breast cancer, a disease that claims the lives of 50,000 women every year. Recently, Pakistan Breast Cancer Trust had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Nations to generate widespread awareness about breast cancer in the country.

At the press conference speakers expressed serious concerns over lack of accurate data about all kinds of cancers in the country and lack of awareness about the disease among people and doctors. Speaking to the participants, Ms Saira Afzal Tarar, National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination (NHSRC), Minister of State, said, "Not a single penny has been released to any private or public hospital to conduct a survey or to gather data on cancer patients."

Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University, vice-chancellor, Prof Javed Akram, said that to facilitate earlier detection and screening of breast cancer, the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences has planned to introduce mobile mammography services for women living in far-flung areas of the country which will help them to get screened for the disease before it gets too late.

Ms Lola Castro, country director World Food Program, said, "It is disheartening to see so many women die of a disease that can be so easily prevented." Social taboos are also thought to be a cause that increases the incidences of breast cancer in Pakistan.