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*Editorial*

## **Empowering Women in Oncology: Science, Equity, and the Human Connection**

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In recent years, cancer has come to be understood not only as a biological disease but also as a condition profoundly shaped by social, cultural, and economic factors. Within this complex reality, women face unique challenges—both as patients and as professionals in the healthcare system. Female cancers—such as breast, cervical, ovarian, and endometrial cancer—not only represent a significant epidemiological burden, but also reflect persistent gender-based inequities that impact prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

The data are striking: in many low- and middle-income countries, women are still diagnosed at advanced stages of gynecologic cancers, often due to stigma, lack of education, social vulnerability, or prioritization of others' needs above their own [1]. In Latin America, for example, cervical cancer remains a leading cause of death in young women, despite the availability of effective screening and prevention tools [2].

But these challenges are not limited to patients alone. As a medical oncologist, researcher, and educator, I've witnessed how similar barriers affect women physicians. Although the feminization of the healthcare workforce continues to grow worldwide, this has not translated into equal representation in leadership, scientific societies, or editorial boards. Fewer women receive research funding, are invited to speak at international conferences, or lead clinical trials [3].

Yet the path toward equity does not lie in complaint, but in action. Visibility, mentorship, inclusive policies, and the creation of professional networks are essential tools. Scientific knowledge is not built in a vacuum—it is shaped by lived experience, diverse voices, and an ethical commitment to inclusion. We need more women leading research, more gender-sensitive trial designs, and more bridges between science, society, and human dignity.

In this issue of eCurater, we celebrate not only scientific progress, but also human progress—the kind that allows us to see cancer through an inclusive and transformative lens. The most powerful science is that which serves life. And many of us—women from all corners of the world—are working every day with this mission at heart.

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With hope, conviction, and commitment,

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