

A patient's story

Making access to treatment and medicines affordable

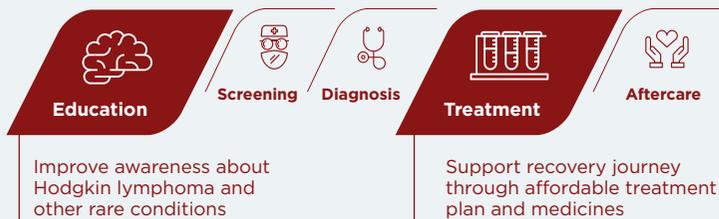
Ms. Jho-Ann Pulgo was working as a caregiver for elderly patients in Israel in 2018 when she was first diagnosed with stage four lung cancer. This brought an abrupt shift in perspective since she had spent her life looking after others.

I didn't know what to do when I first found out I had cancer and the first few weeks were difficult as I struggled to find help away from home.

My family helped me to return home to Manila to seek treatment where I saw many different doctors and had lots of different rounds of treatment, from chemotherapy to radiology.

In 2020, after two years of treatment, the lump on my neck was still there and my doctor suggested a second biopsy. It was then that I was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma, a rare form of cancer and one I had never heard of before.

Addressing barriers to access in a patient's journey



"My journey to recovery has only been possible because my doctor understood my situation and found a way to help get me the medicine that I needed but couldn't afford on my own."

A turning point came in 2021 when my doctor found an opportunity to enrol me in Takeda's PAP for patients with Hodgkin lymphoma. With limited savings, I could only afford one of the 16 rounds of treatment needed. My doctor helped me to apply for the program online and I was accepted, the cost of the rest of the treatment completely covered. For the first time in a long time, I was able to focus on getting better.

I've now completed 13 rounds of treatment and my body is responding well. I feel alive and myself again and I'm extremely grateful to my family, my doctor and Takeda. My journey to recovery has only been possible because my doctor understood my situation and found a way to help get me the medicine that I needed but couldn't afford on my own. I never imagined that this sort of thing existed and I'm so lucky to have found it. Being able to have more time with my family, especially my four young nieces, and watching them grow up, is more than I dreamed of.

It worries me that many people in my shoes are still unaware that this kind of cancer exists and that it is curable with the right treatment. I'm hopeful that we can find a way to improve awareness about Hodgkin lymphoma and other rare conditions, and help many others receive the amazing support that I have.

Ms. Jho-Ann Pulgo returned to the Philippines in 2018 after being diagnosed with lung cancer. She shared her views on access to medicines with Takeda in September 2022.

