

In this article, we summarize a study by Junaid Jamshed et al., published in the [OncoDaily Medical Journal](#), which investigates the multifaceted causes of treatment abandonment in pediatric cancer patients at a tertiary care hospital in Pakistan.

Title: Identifying the Factors Contributing to Treatment Abandonment in Childhood Cancers at a Tertiary Care Hospital in Pakistan

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Treatment abandonment is a significant barrier to improving pediatric cancer survival in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), including Pakistan. The study identifies financial hardship, geographical inaccessibility, and caregiver education as key factors contributing to treatment abandonment. It highlights the critical need for improved financial support, decentralized services, and patient-centered interventions to increase treatment adherence and outcomes.

Among 104 pediatric cancer patients, 17.3% abandoned treatment. Financial difficulties were the leading cause (61.1%), followed by logistical challenges like long travel distances (60.6%) and frequent hospital visits (82.7%). Factors such as low maternal education, treatment-related side effects, and male gender were associated with higher treatment adherence. Solid tumors and leukemia had the highest abandonment rates.

What to do now:

- Strengthen financial assistance programs to cover both direct and indirect treatment costs.
- Improve transport and accommodation support to reduce geographical barriers for families.
- Implement caregiver education and communication strategies to improve understanding of treatment side effects and the importance of continuity in care.
- Decentralize cancer care services to increase accessibility for rural populations.