

New Findings from Global Survey of Women Living with Metastatic Breast Cancer Highlight Strategies to Improve Patient Enrollment in Clinical Trials

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Physician influence key conduit of enrollment, yet only 23 percent of women surveyed have been invited to consider a clinical trial by a healthcare provider. Women who actively seek information on clinical trials are more likely to participate.

[\(BUSINESS WIRE\)](#)--Newly released findings from the BRIDGE survey (Bridging Gaps, Expanding Outreach – Metastatic Breast Cancer Patient Survey) found that most (78 percent) women living with metastatic breast cancer (MBC) have never participated in a clinical trial. Of these women, more than half (56 percent) were never invited to consider a clinical trial and one-third (30 percent) had not been recommended a clinical trial by their healthcare provider. Findings from the survey, conducted by Harris Interactive and supported by Pfizer Oncology, were presented today at the American Association for Cancer Research 100th Annual Meeting 2009 in Denver, Colorado.

The survey of 950 women living with MBC in the United States, the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Spain, Poland, Argentina, Egypt and Mexico found that less than one-fifth of respondents (18 percent) had ever enrolled in a clinical trial. Of these women, 77 percent cited encouragement from their healthcare provider as the primary reason for participating. Among the 23 percent of respondents who were invited to consider a clinical trial by a healthcare provider, 31 percent (67 respondents) did not participate for reasons including fear of side effects (38 percent), not meeting screening requirements (31 percent), belief that they would not benefit from the trial (30 percent) and not wanting to be part of an experiment (26 percent).

“Metastatic breast cancer remains a clinical challenge in the oncology community, as the majority of patients progress despite available therapies,” said Ruth Oratz, M.D., F.A.C.P., clinical associate professor of medicine, NYU School of Medicine and BRIDGE steering committee member. “While clinical trials are critical to the development of new treatment options for metastatic breast cancer, many trials are delayed due to insufficient enrollment. The BRIDGE survey helps to reveal some of the barriers to clinical trial participation in the metastatic breast cancer setting that may help us address challenges in patient recruitment.”

The BRIDGE survey found that about a quarter (26 percent) of respondents had proactively searched for information on clinical trials. Of these women, nearly half (46 percent) had been invited to consider a clinical trial by a healthcare provider and 34 percent had enrolled in a clinical trial, compared to those who had not sought out information, 15 and 13 percent, respectively. Further, among women who had participated in a clinical trial, more than half reported that information about the benefits and risks of participation (57 percent), as well as potential side effects (54 percent), was helpful in getting them through the clinical trial process.

“The BRIDGE survey shows that knowledge is power when it comes to clinical trials,” said Professor Lesley Fallowfield, director, Cancer Research UK Psychosocial Oncology Group, University of Sussex, UK, and BRIDGE steering committee member. “Physician influence is a primary factor driving participation, but patients can only take an active role if they are aware of all their treatment options and are encouraged to enquire about treatments available within a clinical trial.”

Based on these findings, the international steering committee overseeing the BRIDGE survey encourages healthcare providers to proactively discuss the options, risks and benefits of clinical trials with potentially eligible patients, and provide support services that offer assistance and guidance to patients throughout the clinical trial process. The steering committee also encourages women living with MBC to research and proactively discuss clinical trials with their healthcare providers.

About the BRIDGE Survey

The BRIDGE survey is a new, wide-reaching global assessment of the needs, experiences and attitudes of women living with MBC age 18 and over in multiple countries. The survey, which was conducted between September 16, 2008 and February 18, 2009, was led by an international steering committee comprised of seven breast cancer thought leaders and advocates dedicated to addressing the unmet needs of the MBC community. The interviews were conducted by Harris Interactive using a combination of telephone, mail or in-person methods. More information on the methodology is available. For additional information about the BRIDGE Survey, please visit www.BridgeMBC.com.

The international steering committee members, who were responsible for the development of the BRIDGE survey questionnaire and interpretation of the results, include:

- Elyse S. Caplan, M.A., education director, Living Beyond Breast Cancer, United States
- Lesley Fallowfield, Bsc., DPhil., FMedSci., director, Cancer Research U.K., Sussex Psychosocial Oncology Group and Sussex Health Outcomes Research and Education (SHORE), Brighton and Sussex Medical School, United Kingdom
- Catherine Glennon, R.N., NE-BC, M.H.S., O.C.N., North American board member, International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care; director of nursing, outpatient cancer services, University of Kansas Hospital, United States
- Adrian Huñis, M.D., assistant professor of internal medicine, University of Buenos Aires School of Medicine; head professor of oncology, Maimonides University, Argentina
- Musa Mayer, M.S., M.F.A., author and patient advocate, founder, AdvancedBC.org, United States
- Ruth Oratz, M.D., F.A.C.P., clinical associate professor of medicine, NYU School of Medicine, United States
- Patricia Spicer, L.M.S.W., breast cancer program coordinator, CancerCare, United States

Pfizer Oncology is committed to helping fulfill unmet educational and support needs for MBC patients worldwide and has embarked on a number of initiatives, including the sponsorship of an MBC Advocacy Working Group, a cooperative of patient advocates from seven countries, which recently issued a Consensus Report urging breast cancer stakeholders to improve collaboration and implement strategies to address unmet needs of women with MBC. This report was published in the December 2008 issue of the journal, Community Oncology.

Additional BRIDGE Survey Findings

Previously reported findings from the BRIDGE survey shed light on the attitudes and perceived gaps in resources, information and psychosocial support among women living with MBC. The findings demonstrate that

despite the negative impact of their disease, the majority of women living with MBC are still able to enjoy life and desire public attention that recognizes their unique experiences. The survey also found that although information plays an important role in helping women with MBC cope with their disease, many encounter difficulties accessing information and report that available information does not meet their needs.

About Metastatic Breast Cancer

Metastatic breast cancer (MBC) is the most advanced stage of breast cancer (Stage IV) and occurs when cancer has spread beyond the breast to distant parts of the body. Compared to early stage breast cancer, the prognosis for Stage IV breast cancer is poor, with the majority of breast cancer-related deaths resulting from complications of metastatic disease. Despite advances in treatment, effective therapy for metastatic breast cancer remains a clinical challenge in the oncology community, as the majority of patients eventually relapse even with available therapies. Additional treatment options are critically needed to address this continuing unmet need.

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