

Wide-Reaching Global Survey Reveals Majority of Women Living with Metastatic Breast Cancer Desire Increased Public Attention

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One in Two Women (53 percent) With Metastatic Breast Cancer Believe the Disease Receives Too Little Public Attention Most Women (75 percent) Proactively Seek Out Information on Metastatic Breast Cancer, Yet 51 percent Find Available Information is Often Insufficient or Ineffective Despite the Large Number of Women Living with Metastatic Breast Cancer, Their Needs Often go Unreported

NEW YORK--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--A new global survey of 950 women living with metastatic breast cancer (MBC) in nine countries (the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Belgium, Poland, the United States, Argentina, Egypt and Mexico) found that despite the negative impact of their disease, a majority still enjoy life and desire public attention that recognizes their unique experiences. Based on the survey results, the international committee of experts overseeing the survey advocate tailored education programs to raise awareness of the needs of women with MBC. Results from this survey, which was conducted by Harris Interactive® and sponsored by Pfizer Oncology, were presented today at the 11th International Conference on Primary Therapy of Early Breast Cancer in St. Gallen, Switzerland.

Among the reported findings from the BRIDGE Survey (Bridging Gaps, Expanding Outreach - Metastatic Breast Cancer Patient Survey), one in two women (53 percent) believe MBC receives too little public attention, and more than two in five women (44 percent) report being afraid to talk openly about their experiences. Nearly seven in 10 women (67 percent) desire increased public awareness of MBC, such as increased media attention of people living with MBC (53 percent) and recognition of public figures with MBC (49 percent).

“In many countries, the public face of breast cancer has largely been focused on early stage disease, which has led to a deficiency of resources and attention for those who develop metastatic breast cancer,” said Professor Lesley Fallowfield, director, Cancer Research UK Psychosocial Oncology Group, University of Sussex, UK, and BRIDGE steering committee member. “BRIDGE sheds light on the dire need for more public dialogue about metastatic breast cancer in an effort to make women feel more included among the broader breast cancer community.”

There are an estimated 1.3 million new cases of breast cancer each year. Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among women worldwide, with an estimated 465,000 annual deaths. In developed countries, nearly 30 percent of women with early stage breast cancer will eventually develop metastatic (Stage IV) breast cancer - cancer that has spread beyond the breast to other parts of the body, including the bones, lungs, liver and brain. In developing countries, the majority of women with breast cancer are diagnosed with advanced stage or metastatic disease. Unlike early stage breast cancer, there are no curative therapies for MBC and patients undergo continuous treatment to control the spread of their disease and symptoms.

Notably, while the majority (67 percent) of survey respondents recognize that MBC has negatively impacted most parts of their lives, most (66 percent) also say they are still able to enjoy life and 50 percent consider themselves to be a cancer “survivor”.

“The BRIDGE survey emphasizes the strength of the human spirit. With optimal support and resources, many women are able to live their lives well with metastatic disease for longer periods of time,” said Musa Mayer, M.S., M.F.A., author, patient advocate and founder of AdvancedBC.org, and BRIDGE survey steering committee member. “This survey is an important first step in identifying the needs of this neglected patient population. It provides impetus for stakeholders worldwide to ensure that these women receive the best support and care.”

The survey also indicated the important role information plays in helping women cope with MBC, with updates on new research and treatment options the most desired. However, while 75 percent of respondents proactively seek out information on their own to learn about MBC, over two in five women (45 percent) encounter difficulties locating information and one in two (51 percent) report that available information does not meet their needs.

“Despite its prevalence, women with metastatic breast cancer often experience feelings of isolation, as available information and attention from society range from being scant to sufficient, depending on country and cultural characteristics,” said Musa Mayer.

Members of the BRIDGE steering committee recommend that the survey results be used to improve collaboration among MBC stakeholders and enhance breast cancer initiatives worldwide, including but not limited to the creation of up-to-date and easily accessible information on MBC, and the development of education programs that promote public awareness of the disease. As the survey revealed women’s experiences with MBC vary by country, efforts to help women must be tailored to be culturally relevant where appropriate.

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 in multiple countries. This survey was conducted by Harris Interactive® on behalf of Pfizer Oncology and 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 survey was conducted between September 16, 2008 and February 18, 2009 among 950 women with MBC age 18 and over in the United States, Europe, Latin America and Africa. The interviews were conducted 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 and contextualization of the survey, 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., C.N.A., B.C., M.H.S., O.C.N., North American board member, International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care; nursing director of 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, New York University School of Medicine, United States; and
- Patricia Spicer, L.M.S.W., breast cancer program coordinator, Cancer Care, 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*.

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. While the life expectancy for patients with MBC is approximately two to three years, length of survival has continually increased since the 1990s due to advancements in diagnosis and treatment. Because metastatic breast cancer remains essentially incurable, current goals of therapy are focused on relieving symptoms, delaying tumor progression, improving quality of life, and prolonging survival.

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Pfizer Media: Jack Cox, 212-733-5017 or Investors: Jennifer M. Davis, 212-733-0717