Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on patients, including those living with lung cancer, and healthcare systems around the world.

The Global Lung Cancer Coalition (GLCC), an alliance of 42 patient organisations from 30 countries across the world, wanted to understand if COVID-19 is still impacting the care patients receive, and to compare the experiences of patients in different countries.

In December 2021, the GLCC shared a global online patient experience survey. The survey ran for eight weeks and received 555 responses from patients across 21 countries.

Key findings from Denmark

Demographics

- 45 lung cancer patients or their carers responded
- 76% of respondents identified as female, 24% identified as male
- 90% felt involved in decisions about their treatment and care.
- 86% said they got the information they needed at the right time. But some had to look for more information or said that what they received wasn’t helpful or was given too late.
- 1 in 5 responding patients were aware of a lung cancer screening programme in Denmark
- Of those, one patient had been diagnosed following a screening appointment
- 100% of responding patients have been vaccinated against COVID-19
- Many patients said there was no difference in how easy it has been to contact their treatment team during COVID. Treatment has continued as normal; appointments have carried on, but some have been swapped from face-to-face to video or telephone
- The majority of patients prefer face-to-face appointments in most situations, particularly for the first consultation, when finding out their diagnosis, and if there is a change to treatment

Treatment

- 43% of responding patients are currently having treatment, and 55% had finished treatment.
- 56% were diagnosed in the last five years
- 69% have non-small cell lung cancer

Screening

- 68% of patients stated that family and friends were the most helpful in dealing with their diagnosis. 49% said that speaking to their treatment team helped
- 68% of patients said they are fearful of relapse
- Getting the diagnosis, telling family and friends, and being told the lung cancer had returned had the biggest emotional impact on patients

Emotional impact

- 81% said they would attend a screening appointment if invited
- 100% of responding patients have been vaccinated against COVID-19
- Many patients said there was no difference in how easy it has been to contact their treatment team during COVID. Treatment has continued as normal; appointments have carried on, but some have been swapped from face-to-face to video or telephone
- The majority of patients prefer face-to-face appointments in most situations, particularly for the first consultation, when finding out their diagnosis, and if there is a change to treatment

Call to action

The members of the GLCC are calling for the implementation of the rights outlined in its patient charter, namely ensuring that all lung cancer patients have access to quality healthcare; informed self-determination, which includes involvement in decision-making; and physical and mental integrity.

More information

The GLCC’s member in Denmark is the Danish Lung Cancer Association: https://lungekraeft.com

For more information about this survey and the work of the GLCC, please visit our website: https://lungcancercoalition.org or email our secretariat at: glcc@roycastle.org