Patients' experiences of lung cancer during COVID-19
Insights from Italy

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 Italy

Demographics
- 136 lung cancer patients or their carers responded
- 79% were diagnosed in the last five years
- 93% have non-small cell lung cancer
- 73% of respondents identified as female, 27% identified as male
- Nearly eight in ten (79%) of responding patients are currently having treatment. 18% had just finished treatment, and 2% had just been diagnosed
- 85% felt involved to some extent in decisions about their treatment and care. 9% said they were not involved but would like to have been
- 75% 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

Screening
- 1 in 10 responding patients said they were aware of a lung cancer screening programme in Italy
- One patient said they had been diagnosed following a screening appointment
- 83% said they would attend a screening appointment if invited

Treatment
- Getting the diagnosis, waiting to see if treatment is working, and waiting to find out test results had the biggest emotional impact on patients
- More than half (56%) of respondents said their treatment has continued as normal; 52% found no difference in how easy it was to contact their treatment team, but 9% felt that family and friends were the most helpful in dealing with their diagnosis. 27% said speaking to their treatment team helped
- The majority of patients prefer face-to-face appointments in all situations, particularly when finding out their diagnosis, for the first consultation, and if there is a change to treatment

More information
The GLCC's members in Italy are:
- ALCASE Italia: https://www.alcase.eu
- Tribunale per i Diritto del malato - Cittadinanzattiva: https://www.cittadinanzattiva.it

For more information about this survey and the work of the GLCC, please visit our website: https://www.lungcancercoalition.org/

You can email our secretariat at: glcc@roycastle.org