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 Portugal

Demographics

- 17 lung cancer patients or their carers responded
- 59% of respondents identified as female, 41% identified as male
- 82% were diagnosed in the last five years
- 88% have non-small cell lung cancer

Treatment

- 82% of responding patients are currently having treatment. 12% had finished treatment, and one patient had just been diagnosed
- 82% felt involved in decisions about their treatment and care. 6% said they were not involved but would like to have been
- Almost 70% said they got the information they needed at the right time. Some patients had to look for more information, or said that what they received wasn’t helpful or was given too late

Accessing information

- 82% of responding patients said they would attend a screening appointment if invited
- Two patients said they were not sure if they would attend a screening appointment

Screening

- Getting the diagnosis had the biggest emotional impact for 57% of patients, followed by telling family and friends (50%) and waiting to see if treatment was working (36%)
- 57% of responding patients said they are fearful of relapse. 43% are worried about the impact on their family and 36% are worried about the financial impact
- A large majority (92%) of patients prefer face-to-face appointments in most situations, particularly when finding out their diagnosis, for the first consultation, and if there is a change to treatment. A third (31%) would like to telephone if they are worried about something

Emotional impact

- 69% of patients said there was no difference in how easy it has been to contact their treatment team during COVID-19. 62% said their treatment had continued as normal. Just one patient said that their face-to-face appointments had been swapped to telephone or video
- 100% of responding patients have been vaccinated against COVID-19

Impact of COVID-19

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.

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 Portugal is Pulmonale: https://pulmonale.pt

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