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 Spain

Demographics

- 56 lung cancer patients or their carers responded
- 54% of respondents identified as female, 46% identified as male
- 86% were diagnosed in the last five years
- 88% have non-small cell lung cancer

Impact of COVID-19

- More two thirds (69%) of responding patients are currently having treatment. 28% had finished treatment, and 4% had just been diagnosed
- 73% of responding patients said they felt involved in decisions about their treatment and care to some extent. 11 patients (20%) said they were not involved in decision-making but would like to have been
- 72% of responding patients said they got the information they needed at the right time. But 20% said they had to look for more information on their own
- 54% of responding patients said their treatment has continued as normal during the pandemic. But 20% said their face-to-face appointments had been swapped to virtual (telephone or video)
- A large majority 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. 24% would prefer telephone if they are worried about something

Four patients

- who responded said they were aware of a lung cancer screening programme in Spain
- Of those, one patient said they had been diagnosed following a screening appointment
- 100% of responding patients said they would attend a screening appointment if they were invited

Emotional impact

- 70% of responding patients said that getting the lung cancer diagnosis had the biggest emotional impact on them
- 48% said they are fearful of relapse while 28% said they are feeling worried or depressed
- 60% of respondents said that family and friends were the most helpful in helping them deal with their emotions

Call to action

The members of the GLCC in Spain 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 members in Spain are:

- Asociación Española De Afectados De cancer De Pulmón: https://afectadoscancerdepulmon.com/
- La Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer: https://www.contraelcancer.es/es/eventos/dia-mundial-contra-cancer

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