Patients' experiences of lung cancer during COVID-19
Insights from the United Kingdom

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 the UK

Demographics

- 72 lung cancer patients or their carers responded
- 83% of respondents identified as female, 17% identified as male
- 74% were diagnosed in the last five years
- 83% have non-small cell lung cancer

Treatment

- Half (50%) of responding patients are currently having treatment. 41% had just finished treatment, and 3% had just been diagnosed
- 89% felt involved to some extent in decisions about their treatment and care. 9% said they were not involved but would like to have been

Screening

- 1 in 4 responding patients were aware of a lung health check programme in the UK
- Of those, two patients had been diagnosed following a screening appointment
- 91% said they would attend a screening appointment if invited

Accessing information

- 81% of respondents said they are or have been worried about their health and future
- Nearly half the respondents (48%) said that speaking to their treatment team or to friends and family was most helpful in dealing with their emotions

Emotional impact

- The majority of patients prefer face-to-face appointments in all situations, particularly when finding out their diagnosis (92%), for the first treatment and care.
- 98% of responding patients have been vaccinated against COVID-19. Only one person chose not to get the vaccine
- 53% of patients carried on attending appointments during the pandemic, and a third (36%) said their treatment continued as normal. Over half (54%) said face-to-face appointments had been swapped for video or telephone consultations.

Call to action
The members of the GLCC in the UK 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 the UK are:
- Asthma + Lung UK: www.blf.org.uk
- Lung Cancer Nursing UK: www.lcnuk.org
- Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation: www.roycastle.org

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