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 USA

- 30% of respondents were diagnosed in the last five years.
- 70% of respondents identified as female, 30% identified as male.
- 76% have non-small cell lung cancer.
- Almost two thirds of responding patients are currently having treatment, 23% had just finished treatment, and 13% had just been diagnosed.
- 73% felt involved in decisions about their treatment and care.
- 63% said they would attend a screening appointment if invited.
- Of those, three patients had been diagnosed following a screening appointment.
- 64% said they were fearful of relapse.
- The 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.
- 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 virtual.
- The survey was a global online patient experience survey.

Demographics

- 30 lung cancer patients or their carers responded.
- 70% of respondents were diagnosed in the last five years.
- 76% have non-small cell lung cancer.

Treatment

- Almost two thirds of responding patients are currently having treatment, 23% had just finished treatment, and 13% had just been diagnosed.
- 73% felt involved in decisions about their treatment and care.
- 13% said they were not involved but would like to have been.

Screening

- 1 in 2 responding patients were aware of a lung cancer screening programme in the USA.
- Of those, three patients had been diagnosed following a screening appointment.
- 63% said they would attend a screening appointment if invited.

Emotional impact

- Getting the lung cancer diagnosis, telling family and friends, and waiting to find out test results had the biggest emotional impact on patients.
- 64% said they were fearful of relapse.

Impact of COVID-19

- 86% of responding patients have been vaccinated against COVID-19. Only two respondents chose not to get the vaccine.
- 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 virtual.
- The 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.

Call to action

The members of the GLCC in the USA are calling for the implementation of the rights outlined 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 USA are:

- CancerCare: https://www.cancercare.org
- GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer: https://go2foundation.org
- Lung Cancer Research Foundation: https://www.lungcancerresearchfoundation.org
- Prevent Cancer Foundation: https://www.preventcancer.org

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