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Novartis survey reveals burden of myeloproliferative neoplasms (rare blood cancers) on patients’ daily activity and ability to work, calling for more proactive symptom assessment

- Findings show more than a quarter of myeloproliferative neoplasm (MPN) patients are managed with watchful waiting at diagnosis, despite one in five (22%) reporting moderate to high symptom burden.
- Survey highlights potential disconnect between perceived symptom severity among UK patients and clinicians.
- Data presented at 22nd Congress of the European Hematology Association (EHA) in Madrid, Spain.

Camberley, UK, June 23 2017 – Novartis today announced new data from the MPN Landmark survey, with clinicians reporting more than a quarter of their MPN patients are managed with watchful waiting at diagnosis. Although most patients in the survey reported low symptom burden, more than one in five (22%) reported moderate to high burden, highlighting the need for proactive and standardised symptom assessment at diagnosis and during the course of treatment.

The cross-sectional MPN Landmark survey assesses the treatment of patients with myelofibrosis (MF), polycythemia vera (PV), and essential thrombocythemia (ET), which are rare and life-threatening blood cancers collectively known as MPNs. Findings from the survey, conducted in Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom, were presented at 22nd Congress of the European Hematology Association (EHA) in Madrid, Spain.

A sub-group analysis of the survey, comparing UK patients and clinicians with the rest of the survey population (rest of surveyed world [ROSW]), highlights higher symptom burden in the UK, as reported by patients in 28 of the 31 symptoms investigated, including fatigue and tiredness (UK – 87% MF and PV, 86% ET; ROSW – 64% MF, 39% PV, 45% ET). UK patients also reported greater overall disease burden, with 35% UK patients in the high symptom burden group, versus 16% ROSW patients.

In contrast to the patient findings, UK clinicians did not perceive a greater symptom severity among their patients, revealing a potential disconnect in perceptions. However, with more patients under their care than their ROSW counterparts, UK clinicians felt they have less time to fully discuss symptoms and discuss management plans with their patients.

Dr. Claire Harrison, Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, London, United Kingdom said: “MPNs place a significant burden on patients, with symptoms impacting on their quality of life. Findings from the MPN Landmark survey highlight the need for individual patient evaluation and a tailored management and treatment according to their specific circumstances. While watchful waiting remains a mainstay of MPN management, wider measures should be considered to detect and mitigate symptom burden amongst these patients.”

Findings from the UK sub-group analysis also revealed a greater desire among UK patients to be involved in treatment decisions compared to ROSW patients (mean: UK – 6.25; RPSW – 7.01). UK patients were also more likely to disagree with their clinician on primary treatment recommendations than those in ROSW (16% vs. 7%).
With high symptom burden an important issue for MPN patients, findings from the MPN Landmark survey emphasise the importance and benefit of patient-clinician communication, to improve patient satisfaction with treatment in the UK.

About the International MPN Landmark Survey
The international MPN Landmark survey, conducted between May and October 2016, is a cross-sectional, internet-based survey of patients with MPNs (myelofibrosis (MF), polycythemia vera (PV), essential thrombocythemia (ET)) and clinicians who treat these conditions across Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, Japan, Canada and Australia. Patients (699 in total with 286 from the UK) and clinicians were recruited independently.

About Myeloproliferative Neoplasms (MPNs)
Myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs) are a group of related and rare blood cancers in which bone marrow cells responsible for the body's blood cells develop and function abnormally. Specific MPN conditions include myelofibrosis (MF), polycythemia vera (PV) and essential thrombocythemia (ET).

In patients with MF, their bone marrow can no longer produce enough normal blood cells, causing the spleen to enlarge. MF affects approximately one in every 100,000 people and has similar survival rates as other malignancies, such as breast cancer and colon cancer.

PV is associated with an overproduction of blood cells that can cause serious cardiovascular complications if left inadequately controlled, such as blood clots, stroke and heart attack. PV affects up to three per 100,000 people globally each year.

ET is characterised by an overproduction of platelets and complications, which commonly include blood clotting and/or bleeding.

About Novartis
Novartis provides innovative healthcare solutions that address the evolving needs of patients and societies. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis offers a diversified portfolio to best meet these needs: innovative medicines, cost-saving generic and biosimilar pharmaceuticals and eye care. Novartis has leading positions globally in each of these areas. In 2016, the Group achieved net sales of USD 48.5 billion, while R&D throughout the Group amounted to approximately USD 9.0 billion. Novartis Group companies employ approximately 118,000 full-time equivalent associates. Novartis products are sold in approximately 155 countries around the world. For more information, please visit http://www.novartis.com.

In the UK, Novartis develops, manufactures and markets innovative medicines, devices and diagnostic tests which help improve patient outcomes. Based on four sites across the north and south of England, we employ approximately 1,500 people to serve healthcare needs across the whole of the UK, as well as supporting the global operations of Novartis by manufacturing the active pharmaceutical ingredients used worldwide in many medicines. In 2015 Novartis in the UK invested over £50million in R&D and is the largest commercial sponsor of clinical trials. For more information, please visit www.novartis.co.uk.

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References


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