

P290 FAMILY LIFE DURING AND AFTER BREAST CANCER TREATMENT: A EUROPEAN PATIENT SURVEY

Poster Abstracts II

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Goals: Family and friends play an important role for patients with breast cancer but the support they provide and the impact that breast cancer treatment may have on family life is not well documented. The aim of this pilot study was to describe breast cancer patients' experience of family life during and after chemotherapy treatment.

Methods: 192 women, aged between 18 and 65, who had received chemotherapy treatment for early stage, hormone receptor positive breast cancer, completed an online survey. The survey was conducted in 3 countries: UK (33%), France (39%) and Germany (28%). Recruitment was mainly conducted via patient organisations. The survey was developed following a literature review of existing instruments and input from several expert panels.

Results: On average, participants completed chemotherapy 31.9 months ago (SD 13.6). Overall 140 participants (70%) had children, 97 of them (49%) had children requiring being looked after. From this subgroup, 59 participants (61%) required help to take care of their children during chemotherapy. The majority (above 70%) received support from their partners and/or family members/relatives, whereas a minority required paid help (27%). Overall 113 participants (57%) required support for looking after themselves, mainly provided by their partners. Help was needed for household chores and transportation to attend medical appointment. The younger age groups (18–44 years) required more support (71%) compared to the older age groups (45–65 years) (53%). A greater number of participants in France (41%) reported receiving help from their relatives, in comparison with participants in the UK (26%) and Germany (27%). 20% of the participants required assistance for self-care, mainly in France and in the UK. No participants in the UK reported receiving paid help, in comparison to 32% in France and 20% in Germany. Nearly a third of the participants (30%) reported being unable to perform their former family role; however 63% reported being happy with the emotional support received from their family. Above 50% reported being closer to their family after completing chemotherapy.

Conclusion: These findings suggest that families actively support patients with their daily activities during treatment for early breast cancer. Additional research should be conducted to further explore the impact on and the role of the family in breast cancer. Dr Zarca is an advisory board member for Genomic Health

