

FIRST INTERNATIONAL ALZHEIMER'S SURVEY WITH PATIENT INPUT REVEALS SOCIAL INTERACTION REMAINS A PRIORITY FOR PEOPLE WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

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Munich, Germany, 26 May 2008 – The first ever international survey of Alzheimer's Disease (AD) has shown that patients consider maintaining a social life and feeling safe and supported at home to be just as important to them as receiving medical treatment that helps control their symptoms. The survey results were presented today at the 18th Alzheimer Europe Conference in Oslo, Norway.¹

Commenting on the survey results, Marc Wortmann, Executive Director, Alzheimer's Disease International said, "Patients may have a debilitating disease but they too have needs, hopes and expectations from life and want to live a normal life as much as possible. It's important that healthcare professionals and carers acknowledge the value of helping patients maintain a healthy social life as well as seeking effective medical treatment."

Caregivers agreed with the most important issues highlighted by patients but also said that access to detailed information about AD and opportunities to discuss the condition and its treatment with physicians are also important to them.

"The needs of patients are often perceived to be vastly different to those of caregivers, however this survey has challenged that and shown that in many aspects of everyday life patients and carers needs are aligned and are being met. The survey also highlights areas that carers would like to see enhancements such as making treatment compliance and medication management easier, and greater access to information", said Prof. Alexander Friedrich Kurz, M. D., Professor of Psychiatry and Head of the Centre for Cognitive Disorders at the Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy of Technische Universität München, Munich, Germany who presented the survey results.

Caregivers highlighted more areas where their needs are not being met compared with patients. In the US, patients felt that all of the needs that are important to them were being met, although improvements are required in the areas of treatment effectiveness (Germany, Spain); the ability to enjoy life (France, Germany, Spain); feeling safe and supported at home and keeping up a social life (Brazil).

"Although currently incurable, Alzheimer's disease is eminently treatable. Healthcare professionals have a responsibility to assist carers and family members with finding a treatment option that lessens the impact of the disease on a daily basis, and allows them to maintain their personal quality of life. Giving an AD patient their medication can be a daily battle for some carers and so finding a treatment that helps with this is of understandable importance", said Professor Kurz.

AD is the most common cause of dementia. Dementia is a collective name for progressive, degenerative brain syndromes which affect memory, thinking, behaviour and emotion.²

There are an estimated 24.3 million people worldwide with dementia.³ This figure is set to quadruple by 2050 to more than 100 million, at which time 1 in 85 persons worldwide will be living with the disease. More than 40 percent of those cases will be in late stage Alzheimer's requiring a high level of attention equivalent to nursing home care.³

References

1. Kurz A, Schulz M, Reed P et al., Living with Alzheimer's Disease: a Global Survey of Persons with Dementia and Their Caregivers, presented at the 18th Alzheimer Europe Conference in Oslo, Norway

2. Alzheimer's Disease International <http://www.alz.co.uk/alzheimers/>

3. Alzheimer's Disease International <http://www.alz.co.uk/alzheimers/faq.html>

For more information:
<http://>

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