New Survey Reveals U.S. Men with Advanced Prostate Cancer Worry More about Burdening Family and Friends Than Dying

Survey Results: The Caregiver Perspective

Caregivers who participated in the survey reported an average caregiving “duration” of nearly five years. Sixteen percent have been providing care for more than eight years. Thirty-eight percent of caregivers reported caring for a father, 23 percent are caring for a spouse/partner, 12 percent for a grandfather, 10 percent a father-in-law, nine percent a friend, and five percent another relative.

Physical and emotional impact of disease and caregiving

• Caregiver respondents – some of whom are elderly themselves (19 percent age 65 and over) or have full-time work/family responsibilities (55 percent) – expressed a high degree of stress associated with their roles and a desire for support. Eight-five percent reported that caring for someone with prostate cancer creates stress/anxiety related to their patient’s well-being, 61 percent feel stress/anxiety related to their caregiving responsibilities, and 57 percent experience physical issues related to these responsibilities (e.g., fatigue, lack of sleep).

• Seventy-three percent said they are very concerned or concerned about the ability to continue providing care over a long period of time.

• Among the 93 percent of caregiver respondents who report experiencing troublesome feelings as a result of caregiving (e.g., stress, sadness, fear, etc.), 58 percent indicate that they rely on family members to help relieve these feelings.

Education, information and support

• In terms of information priorities, 64 percent of caregiver respondents strongly agree that they would like more information about treatment options available, 53 percent want to know how to help their loved one cope with the physical side effects of treatment, and 51 percent want to understand how specific treatments work in his body.

• Caregivers demonstrated a clear need for additional support as well as guidance around where/how to find desired information: Forty-seven percent of caregivers said there is too much information about prostate cancer to digest it all.

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• On the other hand, about nine out of 10 (86 percent) caregiver participants said they would like more information to be available to them.

Treatment priorities

• Eighty-three percent of caregiver respondents would be likely to encourage their loved one to start or try a new therapy if it extended survival and 76 percent would be likely to do so if the side effects are manageable.

• Caregivers who participated in the survey nearly universally place a high degree of importance on the patient’s comfort during treatment: Ninety-five percent said the discomfort their loved one will experience during treatment and how his quality of life will be impacted are important or very important to them.