

PainSTORY demonstrates that the burden of chronic pain on individuals, families and society is immense

There is an urgent need for a focused and coordinated response by healthcare providers and planners across Europe

Cambridge, UK, 8 February 2012. Published today in The Scandinavian Journal of Pain, **Pain Study Tracking Ongoing Responses for a Year (PainSTORY)** demonstrates the heavy burden of chronic non-cancer pain on individual patients, their families and society. **PainSTORY**, commissioned by Mundipharma International Limited and conducted by Ipsos MORI, followed 294 adult patients in 13 European countries suffering from chronic non-cancer pain for one year¹.

Some of the key findings include:

- At 3 months, 95% of study participants rated their worst pain level as 4 or more on an 11-point numeric pain rating scale (NRS-11), and most had felt this pain level for one year or more
- 47% reported pain scores of 8–10 for over 2 years
- At the final assessment, 93% of participants still rated their worst pain level over the past week as 4 or more

At the end of the twelve month assessment period, 58% of participants agreed with the statement that 'everything possible is being done to help relieve their pain'. This is particularly surprising as the overwhelming majority (93%) continued to experience pain scored at equal to or greater than 4. This finding suggests that participants had come to the view that pain is inevitable and untreatable. Sadly, only a minority of participants (13%) were under the clinical care of a specialist pain service.

Pain negatively affected quality of life

The participants reported their pain as having a huge impact on their lives, and the ability to perform every day activities. At 12 months, 68% agreed that their pain affected their ability to work, 46% agreed it affected their relationships with family, 58% agreed that pain prevented them from sleeping and 41% agreed that their sexual relationships were affected. Some participants described everyday activities; such as putting on socks, lifting shopping bags, doing paperwork or holding a baby, as a challenge.

Discussing the findings, Dr Tony O'Brien, Consultant Physician in Palliative Medicine at Cork University Hospital, said: *"PainSTORY demonstrates the heavy individual and societal burden of uncontrolled chronic pain. Sadly, patients evolve to a position where they believe that chronic pain is inevitable and untreatable. This silent epidemic has clearly not attracted the focus of attention that it deserves among healthcare providers and planners across Europe, and now there is an urgent need for a more focused and coordinated response. All patients with persistent pain that is not responding to standard measures should have access to a comprehensive inter-disciplinary specialist pain service"*

PainSTORY concludes that minimum standards of care should be developed and implemented at national level. Healthcare professionals and students of these disciplines must be educated to recognise, assess and manage pain effectively and within a reasonable timeframe. Patients who are not responding to standard measures must have rapid and easy access to a comprehensive, inter-disciplinary pain service.

Reference

1. O'Brien T. et al, Scandinavian Journal of Pain 3 (2012) 23-29

About the research

PainSTORY (**Pain Study Tracking Ongoing Responses for a Year**) is the first survey of its kind to track patients with chronic pain over one year, providing in depth insight into how pain impacts the daily lives of patients and the management of pain in 13 European countries.

The **PainSTORY** survey was conducted by an independent research company, Ipsos MORI, in collaboration with:

- European Federation of IASP Chapters
- World Institute of Pain
- OPENMinds

The survey was sponsored by a restricted educational grant from, and prepared in association with, Mundipharma International Limited.

Method

294 adult patients suffering from non-malignant (osteoarthritis, back pain, osteoporosis, neuropathic pain, mixed pain, other long-term pain), chronic pain (i.e. lasting for more than three months) rated as >4 on a 0-10 pain scale at screening stage (where 0 = no pain and 10 = the worst pain imaginable) and who had visited their doctor about their pain for the first time in the last 2 years completed the survey.

At the evaluation stage of the survey from the first qualitative interview after the inclusion, patients' pain levels were ranked as mild (1-3), moderate (4-7) or severe (8-10). Respondents were studied for 12 months and research was carried out in 13 countries across Europe: The United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Norway by an independent research company, Ipsos MORI.

The survey consisted of four waves of qualitative interviews between April 2008 and May 2009. Interim engagement activities such as diaries and self-evaluation forms were sent to patients between the four waves to provide additional insight. Comparisons between baseline data and subsequent wave results showed how the impact of pain and pain management changed over the course of a year.

For more information, please visit www.painstory.org or contact:

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