



## **Irish Experts Launch Global Report and Call for Increased Focus on Metastatic Breast Cancer**

*Early detection does not help survival for metastatic breast cancer patients - average survival for women with metastatic breast cancer is 2-3 years<sup>1</sup>*

**Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> 2016:** A new report - *The Global Status of Metastatic Breast Cancer (mBC) Decade Report<sup>2</sup>* which looks at the unique challenges facing metastatic breast cancer patients was launched today by a group of leading experts at the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland. The report confirms the extent of misconceptions and misunderstandings surrounding the most advanced stage of breast cancer – metastatic breast cancer (mBC) - as well as the level of isolation and helplessness felt by patients.<sup>2</sup> The report was developed by Pfizer in collaboration with the European School of Oncology (ESO).

Despite advances in the treatment of breast cancer, approximately 30% of women initially diagnosed with earlier stages of breast cancer eventually develop recurrent advanced or metastatic disease.<sup>3</sup> Early detection does not help survival for metastatic breast cancer patients and average survival is only 2-3 years – although many women can live for much longer.<sup>1</sup> The report showed that in most countries, a majority optimistically believed that patients who are diagnosed and treated early would not progress to develop mBC and that up to 76% believed that metastatic breast cancer is curable.<sup>4</sup>

“We all recognise the significant and complex challenges that continue to exist for women with a diagnosis of metastatic breast cancer”, said Dr Robert O’Connor, Head of Research at the Irish Cancer Society. “Our aim is to ensure all women have the appropriate information about their condition, available treatment options and ongoing clinical trials, to help them gain control over their disease and become more engaged in treatment decisions”.

The report highlights that progress in mBC has not nearly kept pace with the evolution witnessed in managing early breast cancer.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the report confirms the many misconceptions and misunderstandings surrounding the metastatic breast cancer as well as the level of isolation and helplessness felt by patients.<sup>2</sup>

“While metastatic breast cancer remains a usually incurable disease, most patients are now achieving years of survival. With this expectation of longer life come special challenges. The physical toll of the illness and its treatment is frequently compounded by the psychological effects of loss of independence, change in body image, and an uncertain future,” said Prof John Crown, Consultant Medical Oncologist, St. Vincent’s University Hospital. “Society needs to recognise the unique needs of



these women who will live every remaining day of their lives under the shadow of this serious illness. While newer, less toxic treatments offer the promise of longer and better life, more also needs to be done to provide support for a condition which can be notoriously isolating and indeed stigmatising.”

“We believe that our role as a patient advocate organisation is to campaign to ensure that specialist breast units address mBC in a coordinated way and that from the time of diagnosis of mBC, patients should be offered appropriate psychosocial and supporting care as routine and this care should be personalised to meet the needs of individual patients,” said Tara Byrne, Europa Donna Ireland. “In addition we will continue to work with research organisations to ensure that the pace of research into mBC is increased given the global report has shown a decline in the last decade.”

The general public knowledge of breast cancer issues often comes from survivor stories by patients with early breast cancer, which receive considerable attention and ensure that breast cancer is a disease familiar to many people.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, the report reveals that there is a lack of public knowledge about mBC compared with early breast cancer (eBC) that leads to widespread misperceptions and which can have a negative impact on the lives of patients and their families.<sup>2</sup>

According to National Cancer Registry of Ireland there are approximately 27,000 women living with breast cancer in Ireland.<sup>5</sup> The incidence of female breast cancer in Ireland is 12.5% higher than the EU average<sup>6</sup> with over 2800 new cases of breast cancer diagnosed each year.<sup>5</sup> Irish mortality rates are the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in the EU<sup>6</sup> with over 680 Irish women dying from breast cancer each year.<sup>5</sup>

Michael Riordan, Director of Oncology Pfizer Healthcare Ireland points out: “There is an unquestionable need for more research surrounding metastatic breast cancer. It is our responsibility to support women with advanced breast cancer as much as we support women with early breast cancer. Through our ongoing work, we hope to address the challenges that continue to exist in the metastatic breast cancer landscape.”

Substantial resources have been directed toward breast cancer - education, research and advocacy effects which has resulted in gains that have mainly benefited those with early breast cancer.<sup>2</sup> The goal of this report is to shed light on the challenges and gaps in mBC to inspire change within the breast cancer community and beyond, including physicians, researchers, policymakers, industry, advocates, caregivers, patients, and the public. It is one of the most far-reaching analyses of the key factors that contribute to the care and well-being of those with mBC and provide insight on areas in need of improvement.

===== ENDS =====



### **About the Global Decade Report**

The *Global Status of Metastatic Breast Cancer (mBC): A 2005 – 2015 Decade Report* was developed by Pfizer Oncology, working collaboratively with the European School of Oncology (ESO) under the framework of the International Consensus Conference for Advanced Breast Cancer (ABC). A steering committee of global multidisciplinary mBC advisors comprised of physicians, patients support organisation leaders, and patients advised on the development of this report. The report assesses the status of mBC in terms of patient care, the wider breast cancer environment and scientific advances and developments.

The analysis is based on three newly commissioned primary surveys examining current perceptions of the state of breast cancer among the general public, patient advocacy groups, Breast Cancer Centres, oncologists and nurses in 34 countries around the world. This included the first survey of the global population's perceptions of mBC fielded in 14 countries and involving 14,315 adults (both mBC patients and non-patients). In Europe, the UK, France, Germany, Poland and Turkey participated. In addition, secondary analyses were conducted, and included an analysis of existing breast cancer resources and more than 3,000 previously published articles and abstracts, to determine the global mBC landscape over the past decade.

This report is the most comprehensive analysis to date of the global advanced and metastatic breast cancer landscape over the past decade, and was developed with guidance from a global steering committee of multidisciplinary leaders in the mBC community. The report covers three core areas; Patient Care Perspective - Examines information and communication needs, decision making, quality of life and daily living, supportive care and end of life care.

Policy, Society and Community Impact - Assesses health policy, economic burden, public understanding of mBC, the impact of patient support and advocacy organisations, workplace perspectives, and the impact of mBC on caregivers and social relationships.

Scientific Landscape - Details the global burden of BC, history of progress in BC, the mBC innovation plateau and the focus for the future.

Broadly, the Global Status of mBC Decade Report finds that:

- There is a lack of public knowledge about mBC compared with eBC that leads to widespread misperceptions.
- Access to supportive and palliative care is not yet globally achieved.
- A greater focus on mBC-specific patient support and advocacy is needed to help patient support organizations overcome barriers to implementing mBC-specific support and resources.
- Patient and physician communication needs to be improved.



- Scientific advances for mBC have not kept pace with those for other cancers.

The late breaking abstract *Global Status of Advanced/ Metastatic Breast Cancer (ABC/mBC): A Decade Report 2005-2015* (7LBA) was presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> European Breast Cancer Conference (EBCC) by Fatima Cardoso, MD, director, Breast Cancer Unit at Champalimaud Clinical Center in Lisbon.

For more information on the report, including methodology, please visit:

[www.BreastCancerVision.com](http://www.BreastCancerVision.com).

### **About Pfizer Oncology**

Pfizer Oncology is committed to the discovery, investigation and development of innovative treatment options to improve the outlook for patients worldwide. Our strong pipeline of biologics and small molecules, one of the most robust in the industry, is studied with precise focus on identifying and translating the best scientific breakthroughs into clinical application for patients across a wide range of cancers. By researchers, cooperative research groups, governments, and licensing partners, Pfizer Oncology strives to cure or control cancer with breakthrough medicines, to deliver the right drug for each patient at the right time.

### **About the European School of Oncology**

The European School of Oncology (ESO) mission is to help improve the standards of treatment and care for cancer patients across Europe and to contribute through education to reducing the number of cancer deaths and to ensuring early diagnosis, optimal treatment, and holistic patient care.

To find out more about ESO, please visit: [www.eso.net](http://www.eso.net).

### **Media contact:**

Caoimhe Graham

0872062803

caoimhe.graham@pfizer.com



## References

---

- <sup>1</sup> Cardoso F, et al. 1st international consensus guidelines for advanced breast cancer (ABC1). *Breast* 2012; 21:242-252.
- <sup>2</sup> The Global Status of metastatic breast cancer (mBC) Decade Report. Available at [http://www.breastcancervision.com/sites/default/files/Global\\_Status\\_of\\_mBC\\_Decade\\_Report\\_Summary\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.breastcancervision.com/sites/default/files/Global_Status_of_mBC_Decade_Report_Summary_FINAL.pdf). Accessed May 9th 2016.
- <sup>3</sup> O'Shaughnessy J. Extending Survival with Chemotherapy in Metastatic Breast Cancer. *The Oncologist*. 2005; 10 Suppl 3:20-29
- <sup>4</sup> General Public Survey. Sponsored by Pfizer Oncology. Data on file. July 2015
- <sup>5</sup> National Cancer Registry Ireland. Cancer Factsheet Female Breast. Available at [http://www.ncri.ie/sites/ncri/files/factsheets/FACTSHEET\\_all%20cancers.pdf](http://www.ncri.ie/sites/ncri/files/factsheets/FACTSHEET_all%20cancers.pdf). Accessed February 2016.
- <sup>6</sup> Cancer in Ireland 2013: Annual report of the National Cancer Registry. Available at <http://www.ncri.ie/publications/statistical-reports/cancer-ireland-2013-annual-report-national-cancer-registry>. Accessed March 2016.