



GLOBAL LUNG CANCER
COALITION

Lung cancer care in Europe during COVID-19: findings from a global survey of patient experience

Jackie Fenemore: The Global Lung Cancer Coalition, United Kingdom – Publication #564

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Introduction

The Global Lung Cancer Coalition (GLCC) is a partnership of 42 patient and non-governmental organisations across 30 nations. The GLCC wanted to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on lung cancer patients' experience of their care and therefore designed an online survey for lung cancer patients and caregivers to express their views. The survey asked them for feedback on whether care pathways had changed during the pandemic, and how this may have affected their communication with their medical team.

Methodology

The GLCC established a multi-national steering group of patients, clinicians, and advocates to devise the survey questions. Specific questions were included in the survey to explore:

- How easy patients found it to contact their medical team
- Whether patients had been able to keep attending appointments in person
- Whether patients had experienced virtual (telephone or video) consultations, and their view of them if so

The survey was translated into eight European languages. GLCC distributed it to patients across 10 European countries via their email and social media networks

Participating
Countries:



Discussion and conclusions

The findings show the efforts made by healthcare professionals to continue seeing lung cancer patients in person during the pandemic. We are concerned that some patients held back from contacting their treatment team; all patients should be encouraged to contact their medical team when they need them.

As healthcare systems recover from COVID-19, and teams consider the value of greater use of virtual consultations alongside in person consultations, lung cancer patients' individual perspectives on them must be considered, with alternatives and support available for those who find video or telephone difficult.

The responses from European patients are in line with those seen in the global analysis. To view the global or national reports, please visit : <https://www.lungcancercoalition.org/surveys/2021-patient-experience-survey/>

Acknowledgements

The Global Lung Cancer Coalition is grateful to every patient who answered the survey and to caregivers who submitted responses on a patient's behalf. We thank our members and supporters for distributing the survey. Patients' and carers' views are essential to developing better public policy and healthcare services. For more information about our work please visit: www.lungcancercoalition.org or email the secretariat at: glcc@roycastle.org

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Results: 38% (494/1,291) of the responses to the global survey were from patients in Europe.



Route for contact

Patients were asked if they had had a conversation with their treatment team by telephone, video or in person since the start of the pandemic and to tick all the options that applied to them.



78% (354/456) of the respondents from Europe said they had been seen by their treatment team **in person**, ranging from 67% of respondents in the UK (32/48) and Italy (64/95) to 88% in Spain (37/42).



64% (292/456) of the European respondents said they had also had a conversation with their treatment team **by telephone**, ranging from 32% in Portugal (6/19) up to 94% in the UK (45/48).



Only **8%** (37/456) of the European respondents said they had used **video calls** to speak with their treatment team. Video was most used by patients in the UK (17%, 8/48) and the Netherlands (14%, 23/168). No patients from Denmark, Spain or Portugal had used video to speak to their team.

Ease of contact

Patients were asked if they had found it **easier, harder or no difference** in contacting their team during the pandemic.



50% (225/454) of responding patients from Europe said there was **no difference** in ease of contacting their treatment team. In most countries, a proportion of patients said they had found it easier to speak to their treatment team, while others had found it harder.



In most countries there was a **small proportion of patients said they held back from contacting their treatment team** because their team was so busy. It is important for patients to know that services are open and to contact their team with any health concerns.

Views on virtual consultations

Patients who had experienced telephone or video consultations were asked their opinion on them.



In all countries but Spain, a **majority of respondents said they preferred face-to-face appointments**, ranging from 48% in Spain (12/25) to 86% in Portugal (6/7). In every country a proportion of patients said they found virtual consultations **quicker** and many said they found it helpful **not having to travel** to hospital as much. In most countries there was a proportion of patients who said they found it **more difficult to understand** their treatment team or **make themselves understood** in a virtual consultation.