

Patients' experiences of lung cancer

Insights from South Africa

Introduction

The Global Lung Cancer Coalition (GLCC), an alliance of 41 patient organisations from 29 countries across the world, wanted to understand the challenges patients are currently facing to inform its patient advocacy work and the work of its member organisations.

In March 2024, the GLCC commissioned Censuswide to conduct a survey of lung cancer patients.

The survey received **905 responses** from patients across **18 countries**. For more information about the global findings, please visit www.lungcancercoalition.org/surveys.



Key findings from South Africa

Demographics

50

lung cancer patients responded



62% identified as male;
38% as female



40% had non-small cell lung cancer

98%

were diagnosed in the last **five years**

** Survey respondents were predominantly male, younger, and included a higher proportion of those with small cell lung cancer than the general lung cancer population.*

Experiences of biomarker testing

86% of eligible respondents **had been spoken to about** biomarker testing



63% did **not understand** what biomarker testing was when they were first spoken to about it

These results suggest a clear need for **improved communication around the topic of biomarker testing**.

Support preferences in coping with lung cancer

66% get help from **family and friends**; **38%** from **in-person support groups**; **36%** from **online support groups and counselling/therapy**



74% would like to get help from **healthcare professionals**, but only **58%** reported **getting help** from them

The respondents sought help from a variety of places. A greater need or desire exists for help from **healthcare professionals, in-person support groups, and family and friends**.

Involvement with treatment teams

88% of respondents said that they felt **involved** in decisions about their treatment and care



Less than half of respondents (**48%**) felt **fully involved**, while **42%** wanted to be **more involved**

While patient involvement was high, **treatment teams need to ensure** patients have the opportunity to be **involved in decision-making as much as they would like** to be.

Preferred methods of receiving information

Throughout the patient journey, **face-to-face interactions** were preferred in all situations and particularly for the **first consultation**



Print materials (34%) were the most popular format for receiving information, followed by **cancer support hotlines (22%)**

Whilst the results indicate a **preference for direct interaction** when receiving information, it remains crucial that treatment teams **understand and accommodate individual patient preferences**.

Call to action

This year's Patient Experience Survey highlighted **encouraging trends, including improved involvement in treatment and care decisions** when compared to last year's results. The results, however, also showed that more needs to be done to ensure all patients feel as involved as they would like in decision-making, that treatment teams clearly communicate to patients on topics relevant to their condition, such as biomarker testing, and that patients can access the support options of their preference.

The GLCC is therefore calling for the **implementation of the rights set out in its Patient Charter**, to ensure that all lung cancer patients have access to quality healthcare; informed self-determination, which includes involvement in decision-making; and physical and mental integrity.

More information

The GLCC member in South Africa is:

- **Campaigning for Cancer:** www.campaign4cancer.co.za/



For more information about this survey and the work of the GLCC, please visit our website: <https://www.lungcancercoalition.org/> or email our secretariat at: glcc@roycastle.org