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## **IRELAND LEADS THE WAY IN EUROPEAN PROSTATE CANCER SURVEY**

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98% of patients with prostate cancer in Ireland are provided with information at the point of diagnoses. This puts Ireland as the front-runners against their European counterparts in a recent survey by Astellas Pharma Co. Ltd who researched the patient's access to information, treatment options provided upon diagnosis, treatment decision support and general patient care management.

An overwhelming 72% of patients felt impact on their lifestyle was the most important factor when diagnosed but 56% of those did not speak to their specialist about it at the time of diagnosis.

The survey also found that treatment decisions are primarily specialist led but the survey shows an overwhelming 97% of patients would prefer this choice be made together.

87% of patients rely solely on their specialist to provide information with remaining numbers seeking further knowledge through websites or books but only 10% found website and 3% find other resources useful, mainly because of the language used can be difficult to comprehend.

In response to the survey results Astellas Pharma Co.Ltd have developed the website [www.unitedagainstprostatecancer.com](http://www.unitedagainstprostatecancer.com) which will provide a post diagnosis information tool for patients, their families and friends to learn in a relaxed environment all they need to help prepare for the road ahead.

“The website is an excellent aid for patients who can be overwhelmed when they are first diagnosed. It will help patients and their family members review the condition, treatments and expected lifestyle changes they may incur. It will be useful for patients to be able to digest the information given and help them prepare further questions for their subsequent consultations” said Mr Paul Sweeney, consultant oncologist Mercy University Hospital.

Entitled “Silent Voices”, the survey took place in France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Germany and Ireland and researched 50 prostate cancer patients in each country. It was undertaken in Ireland by Pivotal Communications, on behalf of Astellas Pharma Ltd., and with the support of St. James Hospital Oncology Dept, Mercy University Hospital Oncology Dept and MAC (Men Against Cancer).

The survey was issued today, Tuesday, 16th February, at the launch of the new information website for prostate sufferers and their families, [www.unitedagainstprostatecancer.com](http://www.unitedagainstprostatecancer.com)

The website and booklet are intended as useful tools to assist urologists, radiation oncologists and clinicla nurse specialists in their consultation with new and existing prostate cancer patients. The website will also prove an invaluable tool for patients post diagnosis. Material for both was reviewed by Professor Bertrand Tombal, Chairman of Urology Services at Universitaires Saint-Luc, Belgium.

“The survey shows us the pivotal role of the specialist physician in educating and informing patients about prostate cancer following diagnosis. The key question is what happens after the consultation. A diagnosis and subsequent treatment plan is a lot of information to take in and consider, so resources are required to help refresh the memory and continue to promote and enhance understanding away from the consultation room” said Professor Tombal.

He added, “UnitedAgainstProstateCancer.com is a highly welcome and valuable resource which helps to fill information

gaps not only for patients but men, their families and anyone touched by prostate cancer. It recognises that it is not just patients who are affected, and that the need for ongoing learning and education about the disease among all those touched by it is high.”

UnitedAgainstProstateCancer.com aims to provide an additional information aid for the clinical nurses and is a further resource made available by Astellas Pharma Co.Ltd to support and help demystify prostate cancer.

UnitedAgainstProstateCancer.com provides a range of straightforward visual representations of the condition and its impact on the body. It also provides up to date information on treatment options and contact information to organisations across Europe who are united in supporting patients.

“There is a need for the right kind of information to be given to patients and their families about the disease. Generally, once diagnosed, you enter a whirlwind of mindboggling decisions and choices which naturally one allows the medical practitioner to lead them in. The website will allow further vital access to patients on their condition and family members who are often forgotten along the way” said Jim Scott, a prostate cancer survivor and Chairperson of MAC (Men Against Cancer).

“I am delighted to support Astellas Pharma continued efforts in adding to the information pool for patients with prostate cancer. It is a difficult and scary time for patients and their families. Easily understood and accessible information is a must for those in need. The hospital specialists do excellent work in the care and support for patients - we must continue to support their efforts in helping patients by providing the tools to make their roles easier” said Aine Brady TD, Minister for Older People and Health Promotion

Please contact Liz McGonigal, (Pivotal Communications) 01 6697684 or 087 3777335 for further information

## Key survey findings

- o 98% of patients with prostate cancer in Ireland are provided with information at the point of diagnoses
- o 72% of patients who felt impact on their lifestyle was the most important factor did not speak to their oncologist or medical practitioner about it
- o 73% of patients in Ireland undergoing surgery
- o The decision is primarily specialist led but the survey shows an overwhelming 97% of Irish patients would prefer this choice be made together
- o 67% of patients relied on their specialist for information regarding treatment decisions while 20% relied on their GP or care physician
- o Treatment cost was the most important factor to patients and one which they felt their medical practitioner needs to take into consideration when making treatment decisions