

REALISE™ survey backgrounder

Asthma remains a problem across Europe

Asthma is a debilitating long-term health condition that remains a major problem for almost 30 million people in Western Europe despite a range of available treatments.^{1,2} Every week one in four Europeans with severe asthma has an asthma attack so intense they cannot call out for help, while in Western Europe at least one person dies due to asthma every hour.³ Asthma exacerbations are associated with a negative impact on the day-to-day lives of patients and significant societal costs.^{1,4} Poor asthma control is associated with increased risk of exacerbations, impaired quality of life, increased healthcare utilisation and reduced productivity.⁵⁻⁷ Lost productivity accounts for almost £10 billion per year.⁸ European studies have shown little apparent improvement in the levels of asthma control over the last decade, with many patients failing to meet the criteria as outlined in the global clinical guidelines by the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA).^{2,5,8}

The REALISE™ survey offers a new perspective

In the quest to find better solutions in asthma management through collaboration with leading respiratory experts, Mundipharma initiated the REALISE™ (**RE**cognise **A**sthma and **LI**nk to **S**ymptoms and **E**xperience) survey to uncover some of the underlying reasons for sub-optimal asthma control in Europe, focusing on patient attitudes and behaviours towards their condition.

The REALISE™ survey, conducted in 11 European countries among 8,000 individuals who used social media, was the largest and most recent survey of its kind.^{5,6,9-12} Participating countries included Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.⁸

REALISE™ highlighted that the level of GINA-defined asthma control in Europe remains low, and revealed a number of psychological factors that may affect a patient's experience of asthma, such as identity, recognition of symptoms and confidence in disease management.⁸ These insights highlight the role patient attitudes and behaviours play in asthma management.⁸

REALISE™ insights and findings

Results from REALISE™ provide an important view of asthma control across Europe, as well as new insights into patient attitudes towards asthma:

- ✓ People with asthma are still experiencing largely preventable symptoms that disrupt their daily lives⁸
- ✓ The level of GINA-defined asthma control in Europe remains low, with only one-fifth of respondents having controlled asthma⁸
- ✓ Most respondents did not want to be labelled as sick; the majority regarded their asthma as controlled and not serious – even among respondents with uncontrolled asthma⁸
- ✓ Most respondents did not recognise symptoms as indicators of poor control, suggesting a continuing disconnection between patients' perceptions of control and guideline-defined control⁸
- ✓ Many respondents simply put up with symptoms, often because they believe they have control over their asthma and do not realise it can be better managed⁸
- ✓ There is a clear need to assess patients' control, risk, and inhaler technique, and to ensure that they are prescribed, and take, appropriate treatments⁸
- ✓ Educating patients will help to improve their understanding of asthma, and enable them to work with their healthcare professionals (HCP) to manage their disease⁸

REALISE™ in numbers

- **91%** of respondents considered their asthma to be well controlled, however, only 20% are controlled according to the GINA definition⁸
- Over **80%** of respondents who had experienced acute exacerbations in the previous year regarded their asthma as controlled⁸
- **One third** of all REALISE™ respondents (33%) agreed asthma stops them living their life to the full¹³
- **36%** of all REALISE™ respondents reported that they have had time off work at least once in the last year because of their asthma¹³

- Almost **1 in 8** (12%) REALISE™ respondents reported that they had been hospitalised and had to stay overnight because of their asthma once or more in the past year^{8,13}
- **44%** of all REALISE™ respondents reported experiencing acute asthma exacerbations requiring oral steroid use in the past 12 months, and this was evident even among those meeting the GINA criteria for current clinical control⁸
- **Less than half** of those prescribed a preventative inhaler used it regularly as advised by their doctor⁸
- **53%** of all REALISE™ respondents had not had their technique checked in the last 12 months⁸
- **7 in 10** REALISE™ respondents had experienced other health problems, related to asthma, in the past year¹³

REALISE™ – an example of Mundipharma collaboration

Mundipharma International worked with the following European respiratory experts to design and conduct the REALISE™ patient survey:

- Professor David Price, Centre of Academic Primary Care, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, UK
- Monica Fletcher OBE, Education for Health, Chief Executive Office, Warwick, UK
- Professor Thys van der Molen, University of Groningen, University Medical Centre Groningen, Department of General Practice, Groningen, Netherlands

Additional advice and input on the survey concept was provided by:

- Dr Peter Haidl, Schmallenberg, Germany
- Professor Chantal Raheison-Semjen, Bordeaux, France

REALISE™ survey framework and inclusion criteria

The survey was conducted online using validated consumer panels and respondents were recruited via a range of sources, mainly online.⁸ Multiple panels were used in each market to remove bias. In Finland and Norway, press advertising was also used to recruit participants. In order to take part in the survey, participants had to be aged 18-50, have received an asthma diagnosis from their doctor and at least two prescriptions for asthma medication in the past two years. In addition, all participants

had to be active on social media and had not participated in other market research studies within the past three months.⁸

For more information

If you have any questions about REALISE™, please contact Charlotte James, Communications Manager, Mundipharma International on +44 (0) 1223 397162 or communications@mundipharma.co.uk

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