



## **GLOBAL SURVEY OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS (RA) PATIENTS SHOWS PATIENTS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR RA DISEASE MANAGEMENT IS LOWEST IN THE UK**

- Almost two thirds of UK rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients do not feel their RA is well managed
- Just over a quarter of UK RA patients say they have a disease management plan in place, compared to 56% globally
- Global survey prompts calls for increased collaboration between doctors and patients

### **EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01, 11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2013**

**UK, 11 June 2013** – New research launched today shows that almost two thirds (61 percent) of RA patients in the UK do not feel their RA is well managed. In addition, the research found that just 26 percent of UK RA patients say they have a disease management plan in place, compared to 56 percent globally.

The findings formed part of **RA: Join the Fight**, a global AbbVie initiative, which presented the results of a global RA patient survey conducted by AbbVie (carried out in 42 countries with 10,171 patients, including 586 from the UK) at a launch event in Madrid.

This anonymous survey also found that patients in the UK who say they have a disease management plan with their healthcare provider were nearly twice as likely to feel hopeful (25 percent vs. 15 percent) and twice as likely to feel confident (24 percent vs. 10 percent) about living with their RA over the past week as those who do not have a disease management plan.

The survey findings highlight knowledge gaps between what RA patients in the UK may know about RA and how they are managing their RA. Although about nine in 10 patients (88 percent) say that they have a good understanding of why it is important to manage their RA and a majority of RA patients (64 percent) say they know a great deal or a moderate amount about managing their RA, 62 percent are under the misconception that a lack of pain means their RA is under control.

In addition, patients who are more involved in the RA community, including those who are members of patient advocacy organisations and those who interact with other RA patients, are more likely to say they know a great deal or moderate amount about RA and visit their healthcare professional more regularly as part of managing their condition.

The survey also reported that around half of UK RA patients (49 percent) say that their job/career or ability to work was negatively impacted by their RA, and two in five of these patients say they have had to take days off (40 percent) and almost half had to stop working altogether for a period of time (48 percent).

“I was surprised to see that almost two thirds of patients don't feel their RA is being well managed, and in particular that only 26 per cent of RA patients in the UK [say they] have a disease management plan in place,” said Janice Mooney BSc, MS, former Senior Rheumatology Nurse and Senior Lecturer in Primary Care at the University of East Anglia. “Our medical community does great work in the UK, but

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there is clearly a need for patients and doctors to work closely together to develop a long-term strategy to manage RA. If not managed properly, over time, advanced RA can result in permanent joint destruction, disability and loss of work.”

Tracey Hancock, Director of Development at the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society, commented on the results: “This important survey confirms what our research has also told us – that living with RA can have a devastating effect on a person and their family. However, it also shows that patients who manage their condition together with their healthcare professional team can lead a better life with RA.”

Arthritis Care's Head of Information and Helplines, Jo Cumming, added: “[Rheumatoid] arthritis is not a life sentence, but it can be life changing. Proper disease management encourages people to accept that arthritis affects them but that it does not have to control them. The survey findings underline the importance of people getting in touch with organisations like Arthritis Care, and a first step would be to contact our Helplines team on 0808 800 4050.”

At the heart of **RA: Join the Fight** is a pledge. With the endorsement of its advisory committee and more than 40 patient and medical organisations from around the world, **RA: Join the Fight** is issuing a call-to-action for increased patient involvement in RA disease management. Patients are encouraged to visit [www.RAJointheFight.com](http://www.RAJointheFight.com) to take the pledge to start the conversation and collaborate with their doctor to develop a plan to manage their disease.

~ENDS~

### **About the Survey**

The anonymous global RA patient survey was conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of AbbVie in 42 countries via paper (six countries) and online (36 countries) between February 14 and April 11, 2013. The survey evaluated results from more than 10,000 adults with RA from around the world (n=10,171). Survey respondents have been living with a confirmed diagnosis of RA for an average of 9 years, and were more likely to be women than men (74 percent vs. 26 percent), with a mean age of 49.8 years old. 586 adults with RA in the UK participated in the survey.

### **About RA: Join the Fight**

**RA: Join the Fight** is a global AbbVie initiative that aims to be a global source of information to help educate people living with RA and those who support them. **RA: Join the Fight**, endorsed by more than 40 advocacy organisations from around the world, is a truly collaborative effort, with expert partners – patients, physicians, nurses and researchers – involved in the development and implementation of the initiative’s resources and programs. Visit [www.RAJointheFight.com](http://www.RAJointheFight.com) to learn more.

### **About Rheumatoid Arthritis**

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is typically a chronic, progressive disease in which the immune system mounts an immune response against the cells that line the joints, making the joints swollen, stiff and painful. RA is estimated to affect 690,000 adults in the UK.<sup>1</sup> The most common age at onset is 40-60 years old.<sup>1</sup> However it can affect adults of any age and about 1 in 100 people develops RA at some stage in their life. It is about three times more common in women than in men.<sup>2</sup>

FOR EXTERNAL USE

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### **About AbbVie**

AbbVie (NYSE:ABBV) is a global, research-based biopharmaceutical company formed in 2013 following separation from Abbott. AbbVie combines the focus and passion of a leading-edge biotech with the expertise and structure of a long-established pharmaceutical leader. The company's mission is to use its expertise, dedicated people and unique approach to innovation to develop and market advanced therapies that address some of the world's most complex and serious diseases. AbbVie aims to help patients live healthier lives and collaborate on sustainable healthcare solutions. In 2013, AbbVie will employ approximately 21,000 people worldwide and market medicines in more than 170 countries. For further information on the company and its people, portfolio and commitments, please visit [www.abbvie.com](http://www.abbvie.com). Follow @abbvie on Twitter or view careers on our Facebook or LinkedIn page.

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<sup>1</sup> National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS), *Have you got The S Factor*, Available at: [http://nras.org.uk/about\\_rheumatoid\\_arthritis/what\\_is\\_ra/how\\_is\\_it\\_diagnosed/have\\_you\\_got\\_s\\_factor.aspx](http://nras.org.uk/about_rheumatoid_arthritis/what_is_ra/how_is_it_diagnosed/have_you_got_s_factor.aspx) Accessed May 2013

<sup>2</sup> Patient.co.uk, *Rheumatoid Arthritis*, Available at: <http://www.patient.co.uk/health/rheumatoid-arthritis>. Accessed May 2013