

## **New Research Shows Chronic Pain is not Being Adequately Measured[1]**

Cambridge, England (ots/PRNewswire) -

Experts call for patients to talk to their doctor to proactively assess their pain

New research released today to mark European Week Against Pain reveals that, in more than half of cases, peoples' levels of pain across Europe are not being adequately assessed.

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More than half (52%) of European primary care physicians use no form of assessment tool to measure peoples' levels of pain[1] despite chronic pain affecting 1 in 5[2] adults across Europe. A study in Finland found that pain is also the reason for 40% of patient visits to a primary care physician each year[3], with approximately 20% of these patients having experienced their pain for more than 6 months.[3]

The survey\* of 1,309 primary care physicians from 13 European countries was initiated by OPENMinds Primary Care (a group of physicians with a special interest in pain) and funded by Mundipharma International Limited. Key findings show 84% of physicians agree that chronic pain is one of the most challenging conditions to treat[1] and 81% agree that the impact of chronic pain on patients' 'quality of life' tends to be under assessed in primary care.[1] Assessment is key to ensuring chronic pain is properly controlled,[2,4] so these findings were a serious concern to the group.

Further pan-European data reveals that chronic pain can severely affect peoples' daily activities including the ability to sleep, exercise and carry out household tasks.[2] Many people with chronic pain are less able, or no longer able, to maintain relationships with family and friends or attend social functions.[2]

The findings of the OMPC survey are supported by a previously published pan-European in-depth survey of over 4,000 adults with

chronic pain, where 71% of people reported that the most common way for their doctor to determine how much pain they were experiencing was for them to tell the doctor about their pain themselves, rather than by the doctor using a pain scale.[2] In fact, only 9% of chronic pain patients reported that they had ever been scored on a pain scale by any doctor or medical professional.[2]

The OMPC group believes there should be a more proactive approach to the assessment of chronic pain, from both people with chronic pain and their physicians, with more frequent and open dialogue.

Discussing the findings, Dr Martin Johnson, of the OPENMinds Primary Care group and RCGP Clinical Champion for Chronic Pain says: "Awareness of the impact of pain and the need for correct assessment and monitoring is crucial. People with chronic pain and their physicians need to work together to ensure that there is regular and comprehensive assessment. Accurate assessment of pain in a consultation is achievable using the right techniques. The correct assessment of pain from the outset, leads to better overall management and care in the long-term."

A new video clip is being launched during the European Federation of IASP Chapters (EFIC) initiated European Week Against Pain to highlight the impact of pain on patients' quality of life and encourage dialogue between patients and physicians, a vital starting point for improved assessment of pain.

Professor Hans G. Kress, President of EFIC added: "Assessment is vital to our understanding of pain. There is a real need to determine whether any notable improvements in pain intensity have occurred during consultation. This cannot be achieved without proper assessment."

\* PROACT (Primary care Resources, Objectives And Challenges in Treatment) in Pain Survey

Notes to Editors:

Pain is a widespread problem across Europe, and an estimated one in five adults is affected with moderate to severe chronic pain.[2] The International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) defines pain as 'an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such

damage.[5]

#### About the survey

The PROACT in Pain survey was carried out amongst 1,309 PCPs from 13 European countries (Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and UK). They completed an online questionnaire, which included four sections: assessment, guidelines and education, use of opioids and policy, attitudes and challenges faced. When answering the survey, respondents were asked to bear in mind the following definition: "Chronic pain is defined as pain present for at least 3 months, several days per month and present in the last month for these patients." Fieldwork started in May 2011 and was completed by July 2011. The research was conducted by Ipsos MORI and commissioned by Mundipharma International Limited.

#### About EWAP

Each October, EFIC holds a centrally coordinated annual event namely "The European Week against Pain" (EWAP). The first "European Week against Pain" was launched at the European Parliament in 2001 and since then, synchronized with the EWAP, European Chapters from all over Europe have held national activities each year during the defined week to gain attention amongst the medical community, the general public and local media. Each EWAP has a defined theme, and besides holding press conferences EFIC provides briefing packs on that theme, so that a general message can be unified across Europe. This year's theme is "chronic back Pain". Meanwhile, the national and international activities on the respective year's EWAP theme extend beyond the dedicated week in October and will more or less continue over the following 12 months.

#### About Mundipharma International Limited

The Mundipharma/Napp/Norpharma independent associated companies are privately owned companies and joint ventures covering the world's pharmaceutical markets. The companies worldwide are dedicated to bringing to patients with severe and debilitating diseases the benefits of novel treatment options in fields such as severe pain, haemato-oncology and respiratory disease. For more information: <http://www.mundipharma.co.uk>

1. Johnson, M., Collett, B., Castro-Lopes, J. What support do primary care physicians need to overcome barriers to effective management of chronic pain? OPENMinds Primary Care initiative. Poster presented at the 7th Congress of the European Federation of IASP Chapters (EFIC), Hamburg, Germany, 21-24 September 2011.

2. Breivik H, Collett B, Ventafridda V, et al. Survey of chronic pain in Europe: prevalence, impact on daily life, and treatment. Eur J Pain. 2006; 10(4): 287-333.

3. Mantyselka P., Kumpusalo E., Ahonen R. et al. Pain as a reason to visit the doctor: a study in Finnish primary health care. Pain. 2001; 89: 175-80

4. Pain in Europe: A report. Available from: [http://www.paineurope.com/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Issues/Pain\\_In\\_Europe\\_Survey/PainInEuropeSurvey\\_2.pdf](http://www.paineurope.com/fileadmin/user_upload/Issues/Pain_In_Europe_Survey/PainInEuropeSurvey_2.pdf). Last accessed: 6 October 2011

5. International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP). IASP pain terminology. Available from: [http://www.iasp-pain.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Pain\\_Definitions&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=1728](http://www.iasp-pain.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Pain_Definitions&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=1728). Last accessed 14 September 2011

Video:

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Rückfragehinweis:

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