

Cardinal Health Oncology Insights: Oncologists Report Social Determinants of Health Play Important Role in Patient Outcomes

Survey shows oncologists want more training to care for growing number of cancer survivors

DUBLIN, Ohio, May 28, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- More than 90% of oncologists said social determinants of health (SDOH) such as financial security, access to food and social isolation are significantly impacting outcomes for cancer patients, according to new research from Cardinal Health Specialty Solutions. The findings provide important insights at a time when the impact of social and economic factors on health are being examined more closely, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These findings were released today in the seventh edition of *Oncology Insights*, a research-based report series analyzing the views of more than 160 U.S. oncologists. This edition focuses on the implications of SDOH on cancer treatment and issues related to caring for a growing number of cancer survivors.

Two-thirds (68%) of the participating oncologists said at least half of their patients are negatively impacted by SDOH. Financial insecurity/lack of health insurance (83%) was by far the most cited barrier for patients according to participating oncologists, with access to transportation (58%) and health literacy (53%) also among the top responses.

The respondents said responsibility for programs to address SDOH falls across all players in the healthcare system, and most (76%) perceive that assistance programs are not readily accessible, while 81% say that they and their staff are constrained in the amount of time they can spend assisting patients with social needs.

"Our survey shows that oncologists believe a patient's social determinants of health are critically important when it comes to outcomes. Yet addressing social determinants isn't a simple matter, and oncologists believe that everyone in the healthcare system must play a role in the solution," said Bruce Feinberg, DO, Vice President and Chief Medical Officer of Cardinal Health Specialty Solutions.

The report also looked at oncologists' views on supporting the growing numbers of cancer survivors - a good news development that also presents challenges to care. Key findings include:

- Eighty-six percent of respondents agree they are seeing a greater number of cancer survivors in their practice than they did five years ago.
- Nearly three-quarters of participating oncologists said they need more training in supporting the needs of cancer survivors, particularly in management of side effects (56%) and stress management (45%).
- Desired strategies for managing the growing number of cancer survivors varied greatly, but most participating oncologists anticipate hiring additional advanced practice providers to help do so.

About the Survey

The findings in *Oncology Insights* are based on web-based surveys conducted in advance of a Cardinal Health Summit conducted in February 2020, with additional responses also collected via web-based surveys in March and April 2020. More than 160 oncologists from a mix of community- and hospital-based practices participated in the research. The report also includes viewpoints from Cardinal Health Chief Medical Officer Bruce Feinberg, DO, and Vice President and Senior Medical Director Ajeet Gajra, MD, MBBS, FACP.

About Cardinal Health

Cardinal Health, Inc. is a global, integrated healthcare services and products company, providing customized solutions for hospitals, healthcare systems, pharmacies, ambulatory surgery centers, clinical laboratories and physician offices worldwide. The company enhances supply chain efficiency for clinically proven medical products, pharmaceuticals and cost-effective solutions. To combat prescription drug misuse, the Cardinal Health Foundation and its education partners created Generation Rx, a national drug prevention education and awareness program. The Foundation actively supports an array of other solutions, including efforts to reduce opioid prescribing, promote drug take back and safe disposal and expand collaborative community work.

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