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DGDDispatch

ASTRO: Clinicians Urged to Expand Dialog with Low-Income Prostate Cancer Patients

By Charlene Laino

ATLANTA, GA -- October 4, 2004 -- American men with prostate cancer who are in low-income brackets are receiving substandard information and treatment, according to an online survey of 4,587 prostate cancer patients and their caregivers.

"This study shows that prostate cancer patients in lower income brackets often lack information on treatment options, are less likely to receive a second opinion and are more often unhappy with their treatment afterwards," said Peter Grimm, DO, Radiation Oncologist, Seattle Prostate Institute, Swedish Medical Center, Seattle, Washington. "We must work harder to educate prostate cancer patients, particularly those in the lower income levels, about the disease and the treatment options."

Dr. Grimm presented the findings here on October 3rd at the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology 46th Annual Meeting.

The study showed that men whose total annual household income is less than \$20,000 a year are less informed about their treatment options, less likely to seek a second opinion, and more often unhappy with their treatment decisions than patients from higher income brackets.

Among survey respondents, 87% were men with prostate cancer, 72% of these had been diagnosed within the past 2 years and 36% were diagnosed in the previous year, 93% were Caucasian and 66% had completed college.

The survey results show that 95% of patients whose household income was \$120,000 or more said they felt informed about prostate cancer in general, compared with 69% of those whose households earned less than \$20,000 per year.

Prior to treatment, 79% of those in the highest income bracket sought a

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second opinion versus 47% in the lowest income range. After diagnosis, 92% of patients with higher household incomes said they would make the same treatment decision again, compared with 77% of those with the lower income range.

The study was funded and conducted in collaboration with Us TOO International, Inc., based in Downers Grove, Illinois, United States, and NexCura, Inc., Seattle, Washington.

[Presentation title: "The Effect of Income on Prostate Cancer Patient's Satisfaction, Awareness and Discussion Levels of Treatment Options." Abstract 2387]



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