



Addressing Pancreatic Cancer in Europe

Pancreatic cancer is the fourth most common cause of death from cancer in both men and women in Europe, despite its low incidence rate of 3.5% of all cancers. Unlike many cancers, rates of pancreatic cancer are increasing and chances of survival remain stubbornly low.

Pancreatic cancer is widely considered a 'heart-sink' disease, where very little can be done. Patients are often diagnosed at a late-stage and many die within three months.

Many new treatments have failed to make a significant difference to patient's quality or duration of life and the high proportion of failure has discouraged investment in research. However, with early detection, people with pancreatic cancer can be successfully treated.

Prior to launching a new medicine for patients with pancreatic cancer, the company wanted to raise the profile of the disease and present a strong public health argument that patients could and should be better served.

This objective was achieved by:

1. **Gathering Evidence:** Health Consumer Powerhouse were commissioned to develop a Pancreatic Cancer Index for Europe. This index evaluated provision of diagnostic services and compared access to surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. It also evaluated differences in provision of specialist consultants and research. The index demonstrated significant variations in patient care across Europe. These differences correlated with variations in survival rates. While pancreatic cancer was shown to be a highly challenging disease to manage in all countries, there was evidence to demonstrate that across Europe, significant improvements in care were possible.
2. **Communication Campaign:** The results of the Pancreatic Cancer Index were used as the basis of a European and in-country communication campaign to raise awareness of the urgent need to improve public awareness of symptoms and demand greater access to services and investment in research.
3. **Call to Action:** A multi-stakeholder platform of experts from academia, physicians, politics, patient groups, journalists and industry was established. This platform was launched by a cross-party coalition of MEPs in the European Parliament and demanded greater focus on pancreatic cancer. Pancreatic Cancer Europe has become an established platform campaigning for more investment in research, raising public awareness of early symptoms and improvements in treatment.

This ongoing campaign has increased awareness of the impact of pancreatic cancer in Europe and established this disease as an area of high unmet need. Pancreatic Cancer Europe has grown from a single company sponsored platform to a sustainable multi sponsored organisation that continues to advocate on behalf of patients with this devastating disease.



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