

(S73) BURDEN OF DISEASE-MODIFYING THERAPY INJECTION ADMINISTRATION FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS CAREGIVERSKevin Smith, MA¹; Benjamin Eckert, MS²; Michael Trisolini, PhD, MBA¹; Timothy Vollmer, MD³*¹Research Triangle Institute International (MA, USA); ²Novartis Pharma AG (Basel, Switzerland); ³University of Colorado Denver (CO, USA)*

Objective: A majority of individuals with relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis (MS) in the United States are currently treated with disease-modifying therapies (DMTs) that require daily to weekly injections. Administration of these injections may be an additional responsibility for caregivers of individuals with MS. The objective of this analysis was to determine how frequently DMT injections were administered by other people, and examine factors associated with caregiver administration.

Methods: A stratified random sample of 3000 users of four common injectable DMTs (Avonex, Betaseron, Copaxone, Rebif) was drawn from the North American Research Committee on Multiple Sclerosis (NARCOMS) registry. Sampled adults were invited to complete a survey regarding their DMT experiences over the past 6 months. The survey collected detailed information about DMT injections and their administration.

Results: A total of 2295 adults with MS completed the survey (response rate, 82.8% of those eligible). Overall, 58% of the sample had at least one injection per month administered by another person, and 23% had half or more of their injections administered by others. Those administering injections were much more likely to be unpaid friends and family members than paid health-care providers. The likelihood of having any injections administered by others was significantly higher for married than unmarried respondents (60% vs 51%), rose with increasing levels of disease severity as measured by Patient-Determined Disease Steps, and remained above 58% even in patients who had 5 or more years of experience with their injectable DMT. Among those receiving assistance, other adults were estimated to spend an average of 7.7 hours per year administering DMT injections, with 25% spending more than 100 hours annually administering injections.

Conclusions: Caregivers often play a vital support role in MS. For caregivers of individuals receiving injectable DMTs, assistance with the administration of injections is frequently an additional aspect of this role.

Supported by: Novartis Pharma AG

Disclosure: Benjamin Eckert is employed by Novartis Pharma AG.