

Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany Honors World MS Day by Launching Care Partner Survey with IACO

- **Preliminary research indicates most MS carers are between the ages of 18-34, the prime of their lives**
- **Largest global MS carer survey with International Alliance of Carer Organizations (IACO) to help identify unmet needs and social impact**

Mississauga, ON May 31st, 2017 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company operating as EMD Serono in Canada, honors World MS Day 2017 by announcing a collaboration with the International Alliance of Carer Organizations (IACO) to launch the most comprehensive multiple sclerosis (MS) care partner survey to date.

The survey is being launched in response to preliminary findings from research commissioned by Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany which indicate that while 18-34 year-olds make up the largest group of MS care partners, the impact of caregiving during the prime of their lives and the challenges faced by this group are poorly understood. The global survey aims to provide a deep understanding of these unmet needs as a first step towards developing better resources and solutions for MS care partners in the future.

“We know that for many, providing care and support for someone with MS can be an overwhelming prospect – and this is particularly true for young people in the prime of their lives, building careers or families for example,” said Rick Greene, Executive Advisor, International Alliance of Carer Organizations (IACO). “The findings from the Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany data highlight the stark reality that faces many care partners in MS – anxiety, depression and pain being just a few. Therefore, in collaboration with Merck KGaA Darmstadt Germany, we are announcing a large-scale survey that will help us to build a comprehensive picture

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of the problems facing MS care partners and, importantly, look to develop solutions to address these needs.”

Preliminary findings from Merck KGaA Darmstadt Germany-commissioned research showed the following:

- Highest number of care partners were aged 18-34 (41% of males and 39% of females in this group)
 - The US had a higher percentage of care-partners aged 18-34 (46% for male and 45% for female care partners vs. 35% male and 33% female care-partners within Europe)
- Family members caring for a mother with MS generated the majority of social media conversations related to MS caregiving, reflecting the prevalence of younger care partners in MS
- Problems identified among care partners included anxiety, depression, insomnia and pain, along with concerns about the financial impact of MS for families.

“There are more than 2.3 million people with multiple sclerosis (MS) worldwide. MS affects their quality of life and that of carers, family and friends” said Peer Baneke, CEO of the MS International Federation. “This year’s World MS Day campaign encourages anyone affected by MS to share their tips for managing the challenges of #LifeWithMS’.

The global care partner survey, which is being launched on World MS Day and will be fielded in the following months, will uncover insights from care partners from Europe, the US and Canada. Results from the survey will be announced in the next 12 months along with recommendations on how support can be shaped to address the needs of MS care partners, including younger care partners.

“We are committed to improving understanding of the needs of MS patients and care partners to help inform our programs and initiatives,” said Ali-Frédéric Ben-Amor, Vice President Global Medical Affairs, in the Neurology & Immunology business of Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany. “The global survey will help us

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identify new ways to support those affected by MS, including the families and friends of those with this overwhelming condition.”

About Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an autoimmune, chronic and inflammatory condition that affects the central nervous system (CNS) and is the most common, non-traumatic, disabling neurological disease in young adults. Relapsing remitting MS (RRMS) is the most common form of MS, and around 85% of people with MS are diagnosed with this type.ⁱ The exact cause of MS is unknown but it is thought that the body's immune system attacks myelin, disrupting the information flow along the nerves. There is currently no cure for MS, but treatments are available to help slow the course of the disease.

About World MS Day 2017

World MS Day is officially marked on the last Wednesday of May. Events and campaigns take place throughout the month of May. It brings the global MS community together to share stories, raise awareness and campaign with and for everyone affected by multiple sclerosis.

In 2009, the [MS International Federation \(MSIF\)](#) and its members initiated the first World MS Day. Campaigns are rolled out globally which focus on a different theme each year. The theme for World MS Day 2017 is 'Life with MS'.

About the International Alliance of Carer Organizations (IACO)

Incorporated in 2012, the International Alliance of Carer Organizations (IACO) serves as an umbrella organization that provides cohesive direction, facilitates information sharing, and actively advocates for carers at an international level.

IACO provides research, awareness and education regarding family carers on a global scale. By bringing visibility and an understanding of the growing numbers of carers worldwide, IACO facilitates international collaboration by bringing together countries from around the globe that advocate for family carers.

About Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany

Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 50,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2016, Merck generated sales of € 15.0 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Performance Materials.

About EMD Serono, Canada

EMD Serono, Canada, is the Canadian biopharmaceutical business of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. EMD Serono, Canada has integrated cutting-edge science, innovative products and devices, and industry-leading patient support and access programs. EMD Serono, Canada has deep expertise in neurology, fertility and endocrinology, as well as a robust pipeline of potential therapies in neurology, oncology, immunology and immuno-oncology. Today, EMD Serono, Canada has more than 100 employees across Canada with headquarters in Mississauga, Ontario.

ⁱ MS Society. Relapsing Remitting (RRMS). <https://www.mssociety.org.uk/what-is-ms/types-of-ms/relapsing-remitting-rrms>. Accessed April 25, 2017