
Siemens Presents International Survey About Knowledge in Breast Cancer Screening

On behalf of Siemens, the renowned German market research institute Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (GfK) surveyed women aged 25 to 65 about the topic of breast cancer screening. The survey mainly addressed the women's experiences with breast cancer examinations, their general knowledge about early detection, and their personal feelings about the trustworthiness of information sources. That way, Siemens wants to determine which information needs women typically have, and accordingly develop awareness and educational material. A total of 4,000 women from eight countries participated in the survey.

On the occasion of the international Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October 2010, Siemens started a worldwide campaign to increase public awareness for breast cancer. As part of this effort, Siemens commissioned the German market research institute GfK to conduct a survey in order to learn more about women's information seeking behavior and their actual state of knowledge regarding breast cancer screening. The GfK carried out an online survey with respectively 500 women in Austria, Brazil, China, Germany, India, Russia, Sweden, and the USA. "This selection allows us to draw informative, international comparisons, because early detection is managed quite differently in the various countries – and this affects the mindset and the knowledge of the women," says Norbert Gaus, head of the Clinical Products Division at Siemens Healthcare. A total of 4,000 women aged 25 to 65 with different levels of education and income participated in the survey.

The majority of the respondents – an average of 82 percent – state that the topic of early detection is very important to them. Especially survey participants in Germany, Sweden, and Austria believe that regular screening examinations can detect changes in the breast earlier or even prevent diseases. In India, 35 percent of the interviewed women indicate increasing breast cancer awareness as a reason why they find breast cancer screening important – a statement that played virtually no role in the other countries. "One possible explanation for this may be that several non-government organizations currently run massive information and awareness campaigns in India and encourage women to get involved in the topic," says Lucienne Bormann, project leader at GfK.

Accordingly, the majority of survey participants in India rate their own knowledge regarding breast cancer screening as good. However, looking at the average of all surveyed countries, only 40 percent of the interviewed women feel that they are well or very well informed; here particularly Russia and China got low results. Only every other German woman stated that they know an official screening program for breast cancer – although since 2003, women in Germany between the ages of 50 and 69 years have been invited to participate in a public mammography screening program. However, interviewed women in this age group more frequently state to be familiar with a screening program.

Based on the survey results, Siemens plans to prepare country-specific information material for breast cancer screening that, for instance, can support physicians in instructing their patients and increasing their awareness for this disease. "The survey revealed that women most likely trust their physicians when seeking reliable information about the topic of breast cancer," said Norbert Gaus. Particularly the women in Germany (89 percent), Austria (95 percent), and Brazil (73 percent) state they consider their gynecologists to be the most trustworthy information source regarding breast cancer screening. The family physician was also mentioned frequently. In contrast, Swedish women prefer to obtain information from public information centers or governmental agencies. The country average shows that more than two thirds of the interviewed women consider a consultation with the physician before or after an examination to be the most important service in connection with breast cancer screening.

The complete survey results can be viewed following this link:

www.siemens.com/press/breastcare-survey

Printable charts from the survey can be downloaded here:

www.siemens.com/healthcare-pictures/survey

More information about Siemens solutions for early detection of breast cancer:

www.siemens.com/presse-breastcare

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