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New Survey Showed That Most People Living With HIV Were More Concerned About Their Other Chronic Health Conditions Than Their HIV

KENILWORTH, N.J., November 30, 2015 – Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, announced today that a new survey of U.S. adults living with HIV showed that 66 percent of respondents were more concerned with their other chronic health conditions than their HIV. The aim of the survey was to gauge the unique challenges and concerns of individuals who have been living with HIV for ten years or longer, and who have at least one co-existing chronic medical condition, such as depression, high blood pressure or diabetes. The survey results also will inform the evolution of the *I Design* campaign to better meet the particular needs of this important patient population.

“Tremendous progress over the past three decades has yielded important treatment advances in HIV. Today, people with HIV are living longer, and understandably, their concerns are shifting. This survey was developed to understand the specific needs of people as they age with HIV,” said Joann Gaughran, U.S. Regional Marketing Leader, HIV.

A diverse group of more than 500 people living with HIV who were at the time taking anti-retroviral medication and who widely ranged in education, length of time since diagnosis, age and income level were surveyed. On average, survey respondents were managing three other chronic conditions, and the majority (66 percent) reported that they wished they could spend more time talking to their HIV health care provider about them.

As people age, including people infected with HIV, it is more likely that they develop a chronic health condition.

“As someone who has been living with HIV for 20 years, chronic conditions are top of mind, particularly as I get older,” said Maria Davis, music industry insider and HIV advocate. “It is important to discuss with all members of your health care team other conditions you may have or

medications you are taking, beyond your HIV therapy, including any over-the-counter medicines or supplements.”

According to survey respondents, their chronic health conditions had an effect on their HIV therapy. The majority (58 percent) of all people surveyed reported that their HIV healthcare provider had changed their HIV medicine treatment plan at least once because of their other chronic health conditions. More than one in five respondents under the age of 40 years (23 percent) reported their HIV medicine treatment plan had been changed more than five times since they started antiretroviral therapy, each time due at least in part to one of their chronic health conditions.

“In just the past 20 years, we have seen the HIV treatment landscape shift from limited or no treatment options, to the wide variety of therapies available today,” said Dr. Michael Gottlieb, Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine, David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA. “As physicians, we now have the flexibility to tailor treatment plans for our patients living with HIV, taking into consideration factors like their age and any chronic conditions.”

Most respondents (85 percent) indicated that they were at least somewhat concerned about how their HIV medication would affect their other chronic health conditions. Conversely, nearly as many respondents (80 percent) were concerned about how their medication treatment for their other chronic health conditions would impact their HIV.

The survey also revealed important insights about the conversations between respondents and their HIV health care providers:

- Most people surveyed (55 percent) spoke to their HIV health care provider about their other chronic health conditions more often than they did the first twelve months after they were diagnosed with HIV.
- During the majority of their visits with their HIV health care providers, most respondents talked about their HIV (95 percent) and their other chronic conditions (80 percent).
- However, more than one in four respondents (27 percent) reported they had difficulty prioritizing topics for conversations with their HIV health care provider because of their other chronic health conditions. This was particularly true for respondents younger than 40 years old (57 percent), compared to respondents who were 40 years of age or older (21 percent).

Key demographics of the final sample included:

- Majority (52 percent) were 50 years of age or older
- Majority (55 percent) had health care coverage from Medicaid or Medicare
- Nearly four in ten (39 percent) were married or living with a partner

- About three-quarters (76 percent) did not have any children under the age of 18 living with them
- Nearly a quarter of all respondents (24 percent) reported being unable to work; about one in three (34 percent) aged 50 years of age or older reported being unable to work
- About six in ten (61 percent) reported earning a household income of less than \$50,000 in 2014
- More than six in ten (63 percent) were of minority ethnicities
- About half (51 percent) considered themselves to be gay/lesbian
- 72 percent identified as male and 28 percent identified as female

About the Survey

The survey was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of Merck, Kenilworth, NJ, from September 14 – October 9, 2015, among 519 U.S. adults 18 years of age and older who had been living with diagnosed HIV for ten years or longer, were at the time taking anti-retroviral medications for their HIV and had at least one co-existing chronic health condition. Data were weighted where necessary by age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, education and income to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population of U.S. adults living with HIV. Respondents for this survey were selected among those who have agreed to participate in online surveys, as well as through various AIDS service organizations (ASOs) across the country to achieve as representative a total sample as possible. For complete research method, including subgroup sample sizes, please contact Kim Angelastro.

About *I Design*

I Design is a national HIV education campaign led by Merck that aims to empower people living with HIV to take an active role in their health care by “getting vocal” with their health care team about how they are feeling and doing on treatment to individualize their care. To learn more, visit ProjectIDesign.com to download tools such as a [conversation checklist](#) and a [medication tracker](#). These tools help patients to facilitate open and honest dialogue with their health care providers, and track symptoms, medications, vitamins and supplements.

Merck’s Commitment to HIV

For 30 years, Merck has been at the forefront of the response to the HIV epidemic, and has helped to make a difference through our proud legacy of commitment to innovation, collaborating with the community and expanding global access to medicines. In the United

States, we are helping to address healthcare disparities through educational programs and resources that align with the National HIV Strategy. Merck is dedicated to applying our scientific expertise, resources and global reach to deliver healthcare solutions that support people living with HIV worldwide.

About Merck

Today's Merck is a global health care leader working to help the world be well. Merck is known as MSD outside the United States and Canada. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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