

## ‘Bladder Cancer Digital World Tour’ concludes the Bladder Cancer Awareness Month shining a light on bladder cancer impact worldwide

***Dedicated campaign for Bladder Cancer Awareness Month: Providing clearer information about bladder cancer, its causes and symptoms will help reduce the impact of this disease – and save thousands of lives.***

**Brussels, June 1, 2021.** To boost global awareness of bladder cancer, a coalition of dedicated bladder cancer patient groups and advocates has delivered the Bladder Cancer Awareness Digital World Tour which wrapped up yesterday. This is a unique knowledge-sharing initiative that gives insight into bladder cancer impact in 31 countries across the world. The Tour ran throughout Bladder Cancer Awareness Month and is organized by the World Bladder Cancer Patient Coalition (WBCPC) and its member organisations.

Bladder cancer is one of the leading ‘little known’ cancers. It’s the 10<sup>th</sup> most common cancer on the planet but far less visible than other cancers on the global landscape, among healthcare professionals, patients, and the general public. Meanwhile, more than 1,700,000 people live with bladder cancer today and over a half a million new patients are diagnosed with bladder cancer each year worldwide.

### **Boosting dialogue and sharing knowledge**

The Digital World Tour is the first effort of its kind to encourage the exchange of information on countries’ bladder cancer impact, across communities and regions. It presents a picture of bladder cancer across Northern America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Middle East, Europe, and Oceania. Using an interactive ‘knowledge map’ on <https://worldbladdercancer.org/digital-world-tour/> it shares practical data on the impact of bladder cancer in each society, including: incidence, prevalence and mortality figures, and patient advocacy organisations and bladder cancer insights in different countries.

Data on bladder cancer compiled for the first time in this way across these countries reveal, for example that: the Europe and Asia regions have the highest bladder cancer incidence, prevalence and mortality; world’s highest bladder cancer prevalence is in the United States; while Egypt ranks the disease as its third most common cancer.

WBCPC Executive Director Alex Filicevas explains how the Digital Tour is central to the coalition’s aim to build bridges between more bladder cancer patient groups across the world. *“We are working hard to connect a growing network of bladder cancer patient communities. Our aim is for the map to become a living tool – a new resource for knowledge sharing and dialogue that supports bladder cancer communities, stimulates wider cooperation, and educates more people about the disease worldwide. We believe this effort can contribute to reducing the burden of bladder cancer in every country,”* he says.

### **Bladder Cancer Awareness Month – a global initiative**

During Bladder Cancer Awareness Month in May, bladder cancer patient communities around the world have called for:

- better awareness of bladder cancer, its symptoms and risk factors;
- more focus and funding for bladder cancer research and patient care;
- and the creation of more bladder cancer patient support groups and advocacy activities around the world.

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## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

### **Key facts about bladder cancer**

#### **Incidence and Prevalence:**

Bladder cancer is relatively unknown compared to the highest incidence cancers, yet it is the 10th most common form of cancer worldwide, with an estimated 549,000 new cases and 200,000 deaths in 2018. Bladder cancer is the 6th most commonly occurring cancer in men and the 17th most commonly occurring cancer in women worldwide.<sup>1</sup> More than 1,7 million people live with bladder cancer today worldwide.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Diagnosis:**

- When diagnosed at its earliest stage, more than 80% of people with bladder cancer will survive their disease for 5 years or more.<sup>3</sup>
- Bladder cancer is often overlooked by patients and health care professionals Practitioners due to symptoms often being associated with less serious, more common issues such as urinary infections, back pain and needing to urinate frequently, amongst others.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Women at risk:**

- Although bladder cancer is often considered a disease of older men, it also affects women. Some 25% of bladder cancer cases are diagnosed in women. Studies show that women are more likely to be diagnosed with more advanced tumours.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Low levels of research funding:**

- Compared to other types of cancer, bladder cancer is rarely referred to in health policies agendas globally, in the EU and in national policies. Research funding for bladder cancers is low compared to other cancers with similar burdens of disease.<sup>6</sup>
- Despite being the 5<sup>th</sup> most common cancer in Europe, only 1% of money spent on cancer research is spent on bladder cancer.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> American Cancer Society (ACS). ACS Journals. CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians, Global cancer statistics 2018: GLOBOCAN estimates of incidence and mortality worldwide for 36 cancers in 185 countries. Available at: <https://acsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.3322/caac.21492>

<sup>2</sup> The Global Cancer Observatory (GLOBOCAN). Population Factsheets, 2020. Available at: <https://gco.iarc.fr/today/data/factsheets/populations/900-world-fact-sheets.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Ferlay J, Soerjomataram I, Dikshit R, et al. Cancer incidence and mortality worldwide: Sources, methods and major patterns in GLOBOCAN 2012: Globocan 2012. Int J Cancer. 2015;136(5):E359-E386. doi:10.1002/ijc.29210

<sup>4</sup> European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC). Bladder Cancer Awareness Month Campaign, 2020. Available at: <https://ecpc.org/get-involved/bladder-cancer-awareness-month-campaign/>

<sup>5</sup> Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN). Women & Bladder Cancer. Available at: <https://bcan.org/women-bladder-cancer/>

<sup>6</sup> Action on Bladder Cancer / European Association of Urology / European Trade Union Institute. Ref: Expert policy roundtable. Forgotten cancers: the case of bladder cancer, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC). Bladder Cancer Awareness Month Campaign, 2020. Available at: <https://ecpc.org/get-involved/bladder-cancer-awareness-month-campaign/>

### **About the World Bladder Cancer Patient Coalition**

The World Bladder Cancer Patient Coalition (WBCPC) was established in January 2019 by a group of dedicated patient advocates from three major national bladder cancer organisations that saw the need for a global bladder cancer coalition.

Our coalition now brings together 11 patient organisations from four continents, uniting the vision and goals of bladder cancer patient organisations to ensure the best possible outcomes for bladder cancer patients across the world. This coalition constitutes the first time that people affected by bladder cancer have a force connecting bladder cancer patients, groups, and organisations worldwide.

### **Member organisations**

Bladder Cancer Awareness Australia  
Bladder Cancer Australia Charity Foundation  
Bladder Cancer Canada  
Cancer Vessie France - Bladder Cancer France  
PaLiNUro, Italy  
Bladder Cancer Norway  
Norwegian Bladder Cancer Society  
Campaigning 4 Cancer, South Africa  
Fight Bladder Cancer, UK  
Action Bladder Cancer UK  
BCAN - Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network, US

### **Contact information:**

#### **International**

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