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PUBLIC PRIORITY SETTING FOR RESEARCH IN OSTEOPOROSIS AND FRACTURE: RESULTS FROM A NATIONAL E-SURVEY

Introduction: Involving members of the public, patients and clinicians in identifying topics for research ensures relevant, impactful research questions and is expected by research funders. This study reports on the second of a two-stage national priority setting exercise to identify public views on topics for research in osteoporosis.

Material and Methods: An e-survey to identify topics for research was co-designed with a research user group (patient and public representatives). The categories and items for the e-survey were derived from 4 focus groups with members of the public and organised under four topics (understanding more about and preventing osteoporosis, living with osteoporosis, services for osteoporosis and treating fracture), each containing 10 items. Responders were asked to indicate their top priority area for research across the four topics and their top three items within each topic. A link to the e-survey was disseminated to approximately 16000 supporters of the UK National Osteoporosis Society (NOS) in a monthly e-newsletter. Descriptive statistics were used to describe demographics and item ranking. A latent class analysis was applied in order to identify clusters with different combinations of binary responses.

Discussion: 1188 respondents completed the e-survey. Of responders (87.4%) were female, 295 (24.8%) aged under 60, 537 (45.2%) aged 60-69, and 356 (30%) aged 70 or over. The top 3 items overall were 'Having easy access to advice and information from health professionals' (758, 63.8%), 'Understanding further the safety and benefit of osteoporosis drug treatments' (593, 49.9%) and 'Identifying the condition early by screening' (585, 49.2%). The highest ranking topic was 'understanding more about and preventing osteoporosis' (470, 39.6%). Latent class analysis of this topic revealed 4 clusters: promoting early diagnosis and public awareness; improving self-management; improving scientific knowledge and identifying causes. Respondents with a previous fracture had a higher probability of rating items in the cluster 'promoting early diagnosis and public awareness' as important (35.9%).

Conclusion: This study has identified research areas of importance to members of the public including early detection and diagnosis, access to information and safety and benefit of drugs. These results have informed research strategies of funders including the NOS.