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Study Shows Cardiovascular Deaths in Europe Could Be Prevented

Prague, November 8 (ots/PRNewswire) -

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in Europe, killing an estimated 4.3 million people each year.[i] Results from a large pan-European study announced today indicate that many of these deaths could be avoided if at-risk patients received better preventative care.[ii]

The European Study on Cardiovascular Risk Prevention and Management in Daily Practice (EURIKA) estimated the proportion of deaths associated with risk factors for CVD, and assessed how well those risk factors are managed. Results confirmed that people with one or more risk factors - such as smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol and obesity - have an increased chance of dying from CVD and, worryingly, that these risk factors are not being managed effectively in daily clinical practice which could lead to an excessive number of deaths from CVD.[iii]

The experts behind the study believe that through better identification and management of these risk factors, a large proportion of coronary deaths across Europe could be avoided.[ii]

Professor Jean Dallongeville from the Institut Pasteur de Lille, Lille Cedex, France, one of the experts behind the study, said: "These results show us just how crucial it is to manage CVD risk factors effectively - doing so could save thousands of lives across Europe each year, but unfortunately there is still work to be done. With the EURIKA study findings we have a better understanding of where the gaps are and what we can do to reduce the number of avoidable deaths moving forward."

One-third of EURIKA study patients were considered to be at high risk of fatal cardiovascular disease[ii]

The EURIKA study included 7,641 subjects over the age of 50 who did not have CVD, but had at least one risk factor for the condition.iii The experts involved in the study estimated the increased risk of death associated with each risk factor. They found that smokers had a 17% increased risk of CVD death, with rates increasing to 23% for those with high blood pressure, 26% for those with poorly managed cholesterol and 30% for those with diabetes.

Additional findings showed that amongst patients being treated for a risk factor for CVD, nearly two-thirds (60%) did not have their risk factor managed to the standards set by European guidelines.

Use of available risk assessment tools and CVD guidelines[iv]

As part of the EURIKA study, 806 doctors were surveyed to understand their use of risk assessment tools and guidelines and explored factors which influenced how often they were used.

As many as 30% of doctors said they did not use risk assessment tools at all and nearly 13% of doctors said they did not follow guidelines on the management of cardiovascular risk, citing reasons

including time constraints, lack of usefulness and inadequate understanding of risk assessment tools and guidelines as the key reasons.

Professor Julian Halcox, Cardiff University, UK, another of the experts behind the study, concluded: "These systems exist to help doctors identify and manage risk factors well before they become a problem, but we now see that they are widely under-utilised across Europe. It is vital that doctors use these tools effectively to assess and communicate risk whenever they evaluate a patient - in doing so they will help reduce the excessive number of preventable deaths in Europe each year."

The findings announced today at the International Society For Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) annual meeting are the first results from the study. Further data, including a country-by-country breakdown of results, are expected in 2011. The EURIKA study was funded by AstraZeneca as part of its ongoing commitment to improving the management of CVD and its risk factors. The study was designed, executed and analysed by an independent panel of academic experts from across Europe.

About the EURIKA Study

The European Study on Cardiovascular Risk Prevention and Management in Daily Practice (EURIKA) was a large public health study funded by AstraZeneca to assess the level of control of the main risk factors which can lead to CVD. The EURIKA study was conducted across 12 European countries including Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Norway, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK. These countries were selected to represent the whole spectrum of CVD risk, risk factor control, and organisation of health-care services across Europe. Data collection started in May 2009 and was completed in January 2010.

About the EURIKA Study Steering Committee

The EURIKA study was designed, executed and analysed by an independent academic Steering Committee, comprising experts from across Europe. Members of the Steering Committee included:

- Jean Dallongeville, Inserm U 744, Institut Pasteur de Lille, Lille Cedex, France.
- Jose R. Banegas, Department of Preventative Medicine and Public Health. School of Medicine, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid. CIBER of Epidemiology and Public Health. Madrid, Spain
- Fernando Rodriguez Artalejo, Department of Preventative Medicine and Public Health. School of Medicine, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid. CIBER of Epidemiology and Public Health. Madrid, Spain
- Eliseo Guallar, Departments of Epidemiology and Medicine and Welch Center for Prevention, Epidemiology, and Clinical Research. John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Baltimore, USA; Department of Cardiovascular Epidemiology and Population Genetics. National Center for Cardiovascular Research (CNIC). Madrid, Spain.
- Claudio Borghi, Department of Internal Medicine, Ageing and Clinical Nephrology. University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy.
- Guy De Backer, Professor Emeritus, Ghent University. Past-chair of the Department of Public Health, Ghent University, Ghent Belgium. Past -director of the Dept of Cardiology at Ghent University Hospital Ghent Belgium.
- Julian P.J. Halcox, Wales Heart Research Institute, Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK.
- Joep Perk, School of Health and Caring Sciences, Linnaeus University,

Kalmar, Sweden.

- Ph.Gabriel Steg, INSERM U-698, Universite Paris-Diderot and Assistance Publique - Hopitaux de Paris, Paris, France

About AstraZeneca

AstraZeneca is a global, innovation-driven biopharmaceutical business with a primary focus on the discovery, development and commercialisation of prescription medicines. As a leader in gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, neuroscience, respiratory and inflammation, oncology and infectious disease medicines, AstraZeneca generated global revenues of US \$32.8 billion in 2009. For more information please visit: <http://www.astrazeneca.com>

[i] European Heart Network. Cardiovascular Disease Statistics. <http://www.ehnheart.org/cdv-statistics.html>

Accessed on 22 October 2010.

[ii] Banegas J, et al. Prevalence and control of traditional cardiovascular risk factors and anticipated avoidable coronary mortality in primary prevention in Europe: The EURIKA Study. PCV30. Presented at the ISPOR 13th Annual European Congress, 6-9 Nov 2010, Prague, Czech Republic

[iii] Rodriguez-Artalejo F, et al. BMC Public Health. 2010; 10:382

[iv] Dallongeville J, et al. A survey of physicians' attitudes towards the control of cardiovascular risk factors. The EURIKA Study. PCV121. Presented at the ISPOR 13th Annual European Congress, 6-9 Nov 2010, Prague, Czech Republic

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