

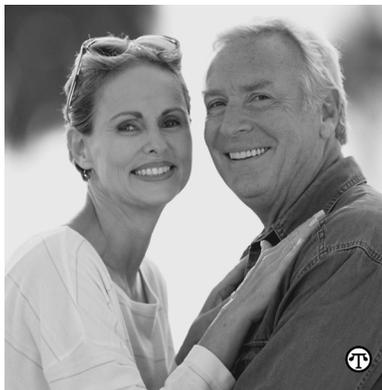
Health Awareness

COPD Patients Breathe Better By Celebrating Life's Moments *Leading COPD Advocacy Group Conducts National Storytelling Campaign*

(NAPSA)—More than 12.1 million people have been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)—a lung condition that includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema or both—and many are now being empowered to speak out about their experience living with the disease through a national campaign, *Celebrate Life's Moments: Share Your COPD Story*. The campaign, launched by the COPD Foundation—a leading advocacy group for people living with COPD—is helping to put patients in the spotlight by providing an opportunity for them to share an experience, memory or story with their friends, family members and others.

As part of the campaign, the COPD Foundation conducted a survey that reveals that when it comes to understanding the emotional impact of the disease, patients and their family members, friends and doctors may not be seeing eye to eye. Survey results demonstrate a need for improved communication between patients and their loved ones. The *Celebrate Life's Moments: Share Your COPD Story* program was created to encourage people to talk about COPD and help them recognize that they are not defined by their disease.

“Because many patients may feel alone or not feel like themselves after their diagnosis, it's no surprise that they could face breakdowns in communication



A new campaign is encouraging those with COPD to speak out and share their experience with friends and family members.

with their doctors and loved ones,” said John W. Walsh, President of the COPD Foundation. “People with COPD need to talk with both family and doctors about their experience, and help people in their lives understand what they are going through.”

COPD is characterized by an accelerated, progressive loss of lung function. Over time, symptoms of the disease, which include shortness of breath, cough (sometimes with phlegm or mucus) and wheezing, may restrict a patient's ability to perform normal activities of daily living. Smoking is the most common risk factor for COPD cases worldwide. Currently, the disease ranks as a leading cause of disability and death in the United States, and is pro-

The national survey of COPD patients and physicians reveals...

- 51 percent of patients say that their loved ones don't understand what it is like to live with the condition, and 30 percent of patients report feeling that they cannot speak with their friends and family members about their condition.
- More than half (53 percent) of physicians believe that patients experience guilt following their diagnosis, but less than one-third (28 percent) of patients report actually feeling guilty, with “relief that there was an explanation for breathing problems” being the most common emotional response to their diagnosis (40 percent).
- Approximately four out of five doctors (83 percent) spend less than one quarter of their time talking with patients about their emotional health related to COPD.

jected by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) to become the third-leading fatal illness by the year 2020.

Patients, caregivers, physicians, family members and friends can visit www.ShareYourCOPDStory.com to learn more about COPD and the campaign, and to hear patients share their personal stories. The program was made possible through support from Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and Pfizer Inc.