

New Survey of People with Crohn's Disease in U.S. Reveals Underestimated Impact of Disease

(NAPSA)—According to a newly released survey, titled *Voices of Crohn's*, 60 percent of people with Crohn's between the ages of 18 and 34 have been hospitalized within the last two years and more than half have required surgery within the past five years. Nevertheless, the majority of these people still find that their employers, families and friends underestimate the impact of the disease on their daily lives.

"Crohn's disease is a chronic inflammatory bowel disorder that commonly affects the lower part of the small intestine and the large intestine and typically begins in late childhood or early adulthood," said Dr. Gary Lichtenstein, Director of the Center for Inflammatory Bowel Disease at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. "The disease causes inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract, typically resulting in symptoms such as unpredictable and persistent diarrhea, fever and severe abdominal pain."

The *Voices of Crohn's* survey examined three populations: the adult segment of Generation Y (people ages 18-27), families and the workplace. The survey results reveal that most people with Crohn's have to visit more than one physician and in some cases, more than five physicians to obtain a proper diagnosis. Nearly half of the people surveyed also reported getting misdiagnosed and treated for other conditions prior to being diagnosed with Crohn's disease.



A new survey reveals the overall effect of Crohn's disease on people's lives. For more information, please visit www.voicesofcrohns.com.

Significant findings among people in the adult segment of Generation Y include:

- Approximately one out of five respondents in the adult segment of Generation Y reported that not only does Crohn's affect their relationships with employers, friends, family members and the general public, but also limits their desire to date and confidence to pursue higher education.

Significant findings among families include:

- The highly bothersome symptoms of Crohn's disease not only affect the person, but can also be disruptive to family and spousal relationships. 93 percent of people with Crohn's report the disease has an impact on their overall emotional well-being and nearly half of all people surveyed felt as though they needed help with routine needs due to the effects of the disease.

Significant findings in the workplace include:

- Based on reporting from survey respondents, it is estimated that the impact of the lost productivity

for employers due to Crohn's disease could be as high as 1.3 billion dollars per year. This estimated impact on productivity takes into account the more than 500,000 people currently diagnosed with Crohn's and the finding that 45 percent of those surveyed missed an average of 25.8 days of work per year.

"As a person with Crohn's, I yearned for a treatment that would help me because my painful symptoms were taking an intense toll on my daily life, and the normal activities that I once enjoyed were restricted," said Kimberly Morgan-Waugh, R.N. and person with Crohn's. "Now that I have received the proper diagnosis and treatment, I am able to take care of my son and have reclaimed my active lifestyle that was put on hold because of my pain and constant need to be near a bathroom."

There are dietary and lifestyle changes that can help treat flare-ups of Crohn's disease. However, the goals of treatment are to induce remission and help alleviate symptoms as much as possible. If diagnosed early and accurately, and treated appropriately, many people with Crohn's can effectively manage their symptoms.

The *Voices of Crohn's* survey findings provide new and comprehensive insight into the debilitating nature of Crohn's disease. The survey was conducted by Manhattan Research, on behalf of the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America and the Digestive Disease National Coalition, and was sponsored by Centocor. To learn more, visit the Web site at www.voicesofcrohns.com.