New National Survey of People Living with Bipolar I Disorder Provides Insights Into Disease-Related Challenges and the Treatment Journey

January 6, 2022

- Respondents Reported Physical and Psychosocial Impacts of Living with Bipolar I Disorder and Side Effects of Medications Used to Treat the Disease -

- More Than Half of Respondents Reported Trying Five or More Medications During Their Treatment Journey -

- 80% of Respondents Agreed They Wished There Were Medication Options that Relieved Their Bipolar I Disorder Symptoms with Fewer Side Effects -

DUBLIN, Jan. 6, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- Results from a newly released survey provide insights from adults living with bipolar I disorder (BD-I)* in the United States (U.S.) on the burden of living with this serious mental health condition and their experiences with treatment. This research was conducted in support of Alkermes' commitment to understanding the unique needs of people living with BD-I and supporting increased disease awareness and education.

The survey was conducted online by The Harris Poll during August 2021 on behalf of Alkermes, Inc., a subsidiary of Alkermes plc (Nasdaq: ALKS), and in collaboration with the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA), a not-for-profit organization that provides support to people who live with depression and bipolar disorder, as well as to their friends and family.

"Living with and managing bipolar I disorder can be a profoundly challenging experience, but it is important to remember that people with this condition can lead stable, enjoyable and fulfilling lives," said Michael Pollock, Chief Executive Officer of DBSA. "The perspectives shared through this survey by people living with bipolar I disorder underscore the need for effective medications and the importance of considering the unique needs and experiences of individuals living with this disease – whether physical, mental or social – as people work with their healthcare providers to evaluate treatment options."

Key findings from the survey include:

- Survey respondents reported that living with BD-I can be a difficult and isolating experience that impacts many aspects of their lives. Approximately four of five respondents (81%) agreed** that they felt like no one understands what they are going through living with BD-I and more than three-quarters of respondents (77%) agreed that living with BD-I makes them feel isolated and alone. Among respondents living with BD-I who had been employed or in school, 51% said they were less productive at work or at school and 47% had tried to hide their condition from colleagues or classmates.
- Survey respondents cited a wide variety of concerns related to managing their BD-I. When asked what worried them most in managing their disease, respondents' most cited responses were sleep quality (28%), motivation and energy to do things they enjoy (28%), and frequency of depressive symptoms or episodes (27%).
- Finding the right treatment can be a lengthy and difficult process. Nearly all respondents (98%) said that effectiveness or symptom relief was somewhat or very important when it comes to making decisions about medication. Despite this, finding the right treatment can be challenging and take a long time. More than half of respondents (54%) had tried five or more medications, including nearly one in five (17%) who had tried more than 10 medications as part of their treatment journey. In addition, 47% of respondents who experienced side effects of antipsychotic medication said that they had often or sometimes taken medication to manage such side effects. Further, more than three-quarters of respondents (78%) agreed that it had taken them a very long time to feel like their BD-I medication regimen worked for them and 70% of respondents agreed that it had been difficult to find a BD-I medication that worked really well for them.
- The vast majority of respondents (93%) said they experienced medication side effects, and of those respondents, 95% said that those side effects have had a negative impact on some aspect of their life. Of those who experienced medication side effects, the three most reported side effects were weight gain (56%), anxiety (56%), and drowsiness and sleepiness (53%); these three side effects were also rated as the most bothersome. Respondents who experienced side effects reported negative impacts on their motivation and energy to do the things they enjoy (41%), sleep quality (34%), and sexual desire or functioning (22%). Finally, 80% agreed that they wish there were medication options that relieved their BD-I symptoms with fewer side effects.

Despite the challenges that some people living with BD-I face in their treatment journey, many respondents (75%) reported feeling well-managed on their then-current BD-I medication regimen.

For a visual representation of the data discussed in this release, please see an infographic at www.alkermes.com/getmedia/1ecd5909-c321-47d2-ad6a-a2294d50376e/Harris-BD1-Survey_Patient-Infographic_FINAL.pdf.

"This research reveals that respondents living with BD-I face a variety of challenges, from the symptoms of their disease to the side effects of medications, and many have tried numerous medications to treat the disorder," said Kathy Steinberg, Vice President of Research at The Harris Poll.

"These data underscore the importance of efficacy and symptom relief to respondents with bipolar I disorder; and also that side effects of medication significantly impacted their lives and contributed to treatment decisions."

"This survey provides valuable insights into the complexities of living with bipolar I disorder and the factors that people consider when making treatment decisions together with their healthcare providers," said Sarah Akerman, M.D., Executive Director of Medical Affairs at Alkermes. "At Alkermes, we are dedicated to raising awareness of the unmet needs of people living with serious mental illness and advancing the development of new treatment options that may help address those needs."

*Survey participants living with BD-I have, on average, been living with the condition for about 16 years, with 28 years old being the average age of diagnosis.

**Unless otherwise noted, all "agreed" percentages represent a net, or sum, of the proportion of respondents who selected "somewhat agree" and those who selected "strongly agree" in response to the question asked.

Survey Methodology

The Harris Poll conducted these online surveys on behalf of Alkermes and in consultation with DBSA among 305 people living with BD-I in the U.S. In order to qualify for participation, subjects had to be aged 18-60, must have taken BD-I medication at the time of the survey or in the year prior to the survey, and could not have been managing/receiving treatment for schizophrenia at the time of the survey. Data were collected between August 3 and August 26, 2021, and raw data were not weighted and are therefore only representative of those who completed the survey. The results of this survey do not necessarily represent the experiences of the broader population of people living with BD-I.

For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sample sizes, or for any additional questions regarding the survey, please send requests to mediainfo@alkermes.com.

About Bipolar I Disorder

Bipolar disorder is a brain disorder that is marked by extreme changes in a person's mood, energy and ability to function. Individuals with this brain disorder may experience debilitating changes in mood from extreme highs (mania) to extreme lows (depression). BD-I is characterized by the occurrence of at least one manic episode, with or without the occurrence of a major depressive episode, and affects approximately one percent of the adult population in the U.S. in any given year.[1]

About the Harris Poll

The Harris Poll is a global consulting and market research firm established in 1963 to help support decision making among leaders. The Harris Poll works with clients in three primary areas: crafting brand strategy, building corporate reputation, and earning organic media through public relations research.

About the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that provides hope, help, support and education to serve the estimated 21 million people throughout the U.S. who live with mood disorders. Programs and resources are offered through our website, dbsalliance.org, and through our 500+ support groups and 150+ chapters across the country. DBSA emphasizes the value of peer support as a crucial resource for wellness. The term peer describes someone who lives with a mood disorder. DBSA believes in the strength and resilience of each person and supports the individual's right to create his/her/their own path to wellness. DBSA also serves caregivers, families and friends of people living with mood disorders because family and social support are central to wellness.

About Alkermes plc

Alkermes plc is a fully-integrated, global biopharmaceutical company developing innovative medicines in the fields of neuroscience and oncology. The company has a portfolio of proprietary commercial products focused on addiction, schizophrenia and bipolar I disorder, and a pipeline of product candidates in development for neurodegenerative disorders and cancer. Headquartered in Dublin, Ireland, Alkermes plc has an R&D center in Waltham, Massachusetts; a research and manufacturing facility in Athlone, Ireland; and a manufacturing facility in Wilmington, Ohio. For more information, please visit Alkermes' website at www.alkermes.com.

Alkermes Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

Certain statements set forth in this press release constitute "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended, including, but not limited to, statements concerning the company's plans to advance the development of new treatment options that may help address the needs of people living with serious mental illness. The company cautions that forward-looking statements are inherently uncertain. Although the company believes that such statements are based on reasonable assumptions within the bounds of its knowledge of its business and operations, the forward-looking statements are neither promises nor guarantees and they are necessarily subject to a high degree of uncertainty and risk. Actual performance and results may differ materially from those expressed or implied in the forward-looking statements due to various risks and uncertainties. These risks and uncertainties include, among others: whether the results of the survey conducted by the Harris Poll represent the experiences of people living with BD-I; whether the company can successfully advance the development and regulatory approval of new treatment options that may help address the unmet needs of people living with serious mental illness; and those risks and uncertainties described under the heading "Risk Factors" in the company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2020 and in subsequent filings made by the company with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which are available on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov. Existing and prospective investors are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date hereof. Except as required by law, the company disclaims any intention or responsibility for updating or revising any forward-looking statements contained in this press release.

[1] Merikangas et al. Lifetime and 12-Month Prevalence of Bipolar Spectrum Disorder in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. Arch Gen Psychiatry, 2007 May; 64(5): 543-552. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1931566/

Alkermes Contacts:
For Investors: Sandy Coombs +1 781 609 6377
For Media: Marisa Borgasano +1 781 609 6659

View original content to download multimedia:https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/new-national-survey-of-people-living-with-bipolar-i-disorder-provides-insights-into-disease-related-challenges-and-the-treatment-journey-301455122.html

SOURCE Alkermes plc