The National Multiple Sclerosis Society conducted an electronic survey on pricing impact to inform the Society’s priorities and strategies to improve the lives of people with MS.

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For people with multiple sclerosis (MS), disease modifying therapies (DMTs) may change the course of this chronic disease. A growing body of evidence indicates that early and ongoing treatment with a DMT is the best way to modify the disease course, prevent accumulation of disability and protect the brain from damage.

The prices for the MS DMTs have increased annually at rates 5 to 7 times higher than prescription drug inflation and newer DMTs have commonly entered the market priced 25–60% higher than existing DMTs. Between 2004 and 2015, the average price of DMTs increased 300%. While published information is available regarding insurance benefit design and utilization management techniques, information on the impact of the price of DMTs on people with MS is less available.

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An electronic survey, adapted from Kaiser Health and Consumer Report surveys released in summer 2015, was disseminated to 1.3 million constituents in the Society’s database; 124,453 of whom self-identify as living with MS. The survey queried all recipients about their perceptions of the MS medications and queried only people with MS about their experiences with the price and cost of MS DMTs.

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**RESULTS:**

More than 5,000 people with MS responded to an open question about challenges they’ve had in getting the MS medications they need. People shared that even when they are affordably getting their medication through insurance or a patient assistance program, they are constantly concerned about the future. Comments also focused on the complexities and time-consuming logistics of the process to get medications.

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**CONCLUSIONS:**

- People with MS are negatively impacted by the price of the MS disease modifying therapies.
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“Faced with a high cost, I’ve had to choose which medications to pay for. The other half I couldn’t afford.”

“People are paying more for drugs, so I try not to be sick.”

“I have been on treatments for 7 years, trying to determine what works best for me.”

“Between 2004 and 2015, the average price of DMTs increased 300%.”

“With 30% of respondents with MS reported no issues in affording their medication.”

“80% of respondents with MS reported no issues in affording their medication.”

More than 16% of respondents commented about the complexities and time-consuming logistics of the process to get medications.

More than 15% of respondents commented about the challenges of accessing and maintaining access to medications.

More than 10% of respondents commented about the impacts on their financial and lifestyle.

More than 5% of respondents commented about the impact on future work and their family.

Question | National MS Society Survey (Responses to specific MS medications, only people living with MS) | Kaiser Survey (Responses — prescription drugs generally)
--- | --- | ---
Society: Do you think the cost of prescription MS treatments is reasonable or unreasonable? | 79% - Unreasonable | 72% - Unreasonable
9% - Reasonable | 24% - Reasonable
11% - Don’t know | 4% - Don’t know / no response
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Kaiser: In general, do you think the cost of prescription drugs is reasonable or unreasonable? | 72% - Unreasonable | 72% - Unreasonable
24% - Reasonable | 24% - Reasonable
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*The survey took approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. A summary of the findings is summarized in the poster. The findings are based on the experiences of people with MS who responded to the survey. The survey was disseminated in October 2015. More than 5,000 people with MS responded to the survey. More than 16% of respondents commented about the complexities and time-consuming logistics of the process to get medications.

More than 15% of respondents commented about the challenges of accessing and maintaining access to medications.

More than 10% of respondents commented about the impacts on their financial and lifestyle.

More than 5% of respondents commented about the impact on future work and their family.

More than 75% of respondents who commented mentioned cost of the medications.
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