Design of a Cross-Sectional Observational Study of Caregiver Burden of Patients who are Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis or are Post-Stroke with Upper and/or Lower-Limb Spasticity in the US

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BACKGROUND
• Spasticity can occur following central nervous system (CNS) injuries such as stroke, multiple sclerosis (MS), spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

STUDY OBJECTIVES
The objective of this study is to determine the effect of upper-limb (UL) and/or lower-limb (LL) spasticity due to stroke or MS on caregiver experiences. The study includes the following objectives:
1) Caregiver HRQoL and emotional status
2) Caregiver time, time lost from work
3) Patient's utilization of healthcare resources
4) Characteristics, history and severity of patient's spasticity
5) Caregiver and patient's activities of daily living
6) Caregiver and patient's participation in social life and coping ability
7) Caregiver and patient's depression
8) Caregiver and patient's negative consequences on social life and coping ability
9) Caregiver and patient's work productivity and activity index
10) Caregiver's clinical characteristics
11) Caregiver's demographics

STUDY DESIGN
• Web-based cross-sectional observational study conducted in the United States.
• Caregiver respondents for this study will be recruited from members of the Lightspeed Research (LSR) panel, the US National Health and Wellness Survey (NHWS), and the US National Health and Wellness Survey (NHWS) panelists who have previously taken the NHWS Disability Assessment Scale (DAS), Short Form 12 (SF-12), Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-4), Zarit Burden Interview (ZBI), Oberst Caregiving Burden Scale (OCBS), Short Form-12 (SF-12), and Caregiver Strain Index (CSI).

STUDY POPULATION
• The US National Health and Wellness Survey (NHWS) is an annual study of the healthcare attitudes and behaviors of nationally representative samples of the adult populations of the United States in 2007. The US NHWS was fielded to 63,000 members of the general panel of LSR in 2009. In 2009, the survey was completed by 75,000 respondents. Through panel identification numbers and recontacted for additional studies such as this one. The remaining respondents will be supplemented from the LSR panel at large.

Inclusion Criteria
• Adult 18 years or older
• Currently living with a patient who has been diagnosed as suffering stroke or diagnosed with MS more than 3 months ago
• Has not participated in a similar study in the past 3 months
• Resides in the United States
• Reads and writes English

Exclusion Criteria
• A formal or paid caregiver

DATA COLLECTION
The following data will be collected: caregiver and patient demographic information, conditions/comorbidities of caregiver and patient, caregiver's tasks and responsibilities, effects of caregiving on the caregiver's health and other activities, clinical characteristics of patient, and resource utilization of patient.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
This work was fully supported by Allergan Inc., Irvine, California. We acknowledge the assistance of KantarHealth, Princeton, NJ, in the design and implementation of this study. We would like to specifically acknowledge the following KantarHealth members involved in this project including:
1. David A. Pomerantz, SVP, Business Development, who is responsible for the development and implementation of this study. We would like to specifically acknowledge the following KantarHealth members involved in this project including:
2. Andera D. Pomerantz, SVP, Business Development, who is responsible for the development and implementation of this study. We would like to specifically acknowledge the following KantarHealth members involved in this project including:
3. Marco DiBonaventura, Ph.D., Manager, Health Economics and Outcomes Research, serving as the leader of the analytic efforts and advanced statistical analysis.

REFERENCES