

News Release

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Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany Launches Global Initiative to Recognize and Support the Pivotal Role of Unpaid Caregivers

- **New findings address the emotional, financial and health implications of being an unpaid caregiver**
- **42% of unpaid caregivers surveyed report putting the health of the person they are caring for above their own; more than half report their physical health has suffered**
- **Leading organizations come together to raise caregiver challenges as a public health priority**

Darmstadt, Germany, October 5, 2017 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany today launched Embracing Carers™, a global initiative to recognize and raise awareness of the crucial role of unpaid caregivers. At the International Carers Conference in Adelaide, Australia, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany unveiled the findings of the Embracing Carer™ International Survey which concludes that a strong need for increased support to caregivers exists globally. Since caregivers are people who provide unpaid assistance to someone in need, their own needs are often overlooked.

Belén Garijo, Member of the Executive Board and CEO Healthcare of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, said: “Working with caregiver thought leaders, we aim to elevate caregiving as a global public health priority. Not enough services and programs exist today to help caregivers address their own health and well-being and it’s our aim to champion caregiver support and become a long-standing partner for the caregiver community. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany’s responsibility and commitment to helping patients live longer, more fulfilled lives, stretch beyond medical innovation for patients.”

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Advised by leading caregiver organizations from around the world, Embracing Carers™ is a multi-dimensional initiative to fill the need for better support and recognition of caregivers. As its first steps, Embracing Carers™ has undertaken to:

1. **Support** the caregiver infrastructure by making possible the International Alliance of Carer Organizations' (IACO) Carer Toolkit, providing countries without a caregiver infrastructure the information to develop a national caregiver organization.
2. **Convene** caregiver organizations from across the world to serve as strategic advisors in increasing support and recognition of caregivers.
3. **Develop** calls to action to broaden stakeholder engagement, increase global awareness of challenges, drive legislative action and engage with healthcare systems.

The survey¹, which questioned 3,516 unpaid caregivers across seven countries (Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom, United States), revealed a strong need for increased support to caregivers. In fact, more than half (55%) of unpaid caregivers feel that their physical health has suffered as a result of their caregiver duties and 54% of unpaid caregivers don't often have time to book or attend medical appointments for themselves.

Co-created with the Embracing Carers™ strategic advisors, the Embracing Carers™ Carers Report: *Embracing the Critical Role of Carers Around the World* was also presented at the conference. The report concluded that caring for a loved one is an activity that cuts across most demographic groups, including age, race, educational attainment and household income.

"The Embracing Carers™ International Survey and Carers Report clearly demonstrates the need for more action to be conducted on an international level to address the challenges that family caregivers face when caring for a family member or friend," said Rick Greene, Executive Advisor, International Alliance of Carer Organizations. "The coming together of industry and advocacy results in greater expertise, resources and support for caregivers within healthcare systems wherever they live."

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Embracing Carers is advised by leading caregiver organizations including the [Caregiver Action Network](#), [Carers Australia](#), [Carers UK](#), [Carers Worldwide](#), [Eurocarers](#), [National Alliance for Caregiving](#), [International Alliance of Carer Organizations](#) (IACO) and [Shanghai Roots & Shoots, China](#).

For more information on Embracing Carers™, the International Survey of Carers Report, visit our website at www.embracingcarers.com.

About the Embracing Carers™ strategic advisors

Caregiver Action Network

US-based Caregiver Action Network (CAN) serves a broad spectrum of family caregivers ranging from the parents of children with special needs, to the families and friends of wounded soldiers; from a young couple dealing with a diagnosis of MS, to adult children caring for parents with Alzheimer's disease. CAN (the National Family Caregivers Association) is a non-profit organization providing education, peer support, and resources to family caregivers across the country free of charge.

Carers Australia

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's carers, advocating on behalf of Australia's carers to influence policies and services at a national level. It works collaboratively with partners and its member organisations, the Network of state and territory Carers Associations, to deliver a range of essential national carer services.

Carers UK

Established in 1965, Carers UK is the UK's only national membership charity for carers, offering a supportive community and leading a movement for change. Its mission is to make life better for carers, through giving expert advice, information and support; connecting carers so no-one has to care alone; campaigning together for lasting change; and innovating to find new ways to reach and support carers.

Carers Worldwide

Carers Worldwide develops and promotes cost effective, sustainable and easily replicable methods of providing support to carers in low and middle income countries. In partnership with local agencies, it aims to enable service providers, policy makers and other stakeholders to recognise and respond to the needs of carers in the developing world, ensuring balance and equal value is given to the needs of the carer and the person receiving care.

Eurocarers

Eurocarers is a European network representing informal carers and their organizations, seeking to advance the recognition of informal care acting on behalf of all carers, former carers, and their organizations, irrespective of their age or the particular health need of the person they caring for. Eurocarers brings together carers' organisations as well as relevant universities & research institutes to ensure that care is valued and unpaid care is recognised as central to the sustainability of health and long term care systems.

National Alliance for Caregiving

Established in 1996, the National Alliance for Caregiving is a non-profit coalition of national organizations focusing on advancing family caregiving through research, innovation, and advocacy. Based in the United States, the Alliance conducts research, does policy analysis, develops national best-practice programs, and works to increase public awareness of family caregiving issues.

International Alliance of Carer Organizations (IACO)

Incorporated in 2012, the International Alliance of Carer Organizations (IACO) serves as an umbrella organization that provides cohesive direction, facilitates information sharing, and actively advocates for carers at an international level. IACO aims to investigate and address issues of international family caregiving with the intent of increasing public awareness of the needs of the family caregiver on a global scale.

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Shanghai Roots & Shoots, China

The Shanghai branch of Roots & Shoots was founded as a volunteer organization in November, 1999. Five years later, in November, 2004, Roots & Shoots was granted a Non-Profit Organization status by the Shanghai Municipality Government. The program aims to foster respect and compassion for all living things, to promote understanding of all cultures and beliefs, and to empower and inspire individuals to take action to make a positive difference in our world.

About the Embracing Carers™ International Survey

The Embracing Carers™ online survey was conducted by Censuwide on behalf of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. It questioned 3,516 unpaid carers aged 18-75 years including 2,106 respondents aged 35-55 in Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, UK and the US between 27 July and 8 August, 2017.

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About Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 50,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2016, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, generated sales of € 15.0 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, holds the global rights to the „Merck“ name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Performance Materials.

References:

1. Embracing Carers International Survey. Censuwide 27 July – 8 August