The impact of advanced breast cancer on caregivers

An advanced breast cancer (ABC) diagnosis is devastating for patients, but often times has a significant impact on their loved ones, too.

The Make Your Dialogue Count survey of oncologists, patients and caregivers in the United States uncovered that there are still gaps in dialogue around treating ABC.

Here’s what the caregivers surveyed had to say:

They are committed to their role.

- Consider themselves to be extremely or very involved in treatment decisions: 76%

While 93% of caregivers report being comfortable communicating with their loved ones’ doctors:

- Felt they encountered communication barriers: 41%

99% of caregivers reported being worried about their loved one:

- Reported being worried about their loved ones’ well-being: 74%
- Reported being worried about the cancer getting worse: 65%

Caregivers do their best to maintain a positive outlook, however:

- Say that their role is an emotional burden, which can leave them feeling isolated & underappreciated: 77%

That could be because over half (53%) of caregivers felt as if nobody understood what they were going through.

Nearly 7 out of 10 caregivers felt it was important for their loved ones’ doctor to refer them to support services at the time of the ABC diagnosis, yet only 25% reported receiving such a referral.

- 86% also report that caring for their loved one has had a negative impact on their lives
- One-third or more mentioned that regularly getting a good night’s sleep, finding time for themselves, having a social life, and maintaining financial stability have been negatively impacted

It’s important for caregivers to receive support, too. Go here to find resources specifically for caregivers of those living with ABC.