

Patient perception with respect to the overall experience to a patient-friendly equipment design and the impact of patient-assisted compression feature during a mammography exam

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Introduction

European member states agree on the importance of population-based screening to reduce breast cancer mortality. According to the International Agency for Cancer Research, regular mammography screening exams can reduce breast cancer mortality for women between the ages of 50-69 years by up to 35%.¹

Despite this relatively well-known fact, many women who are invited to participate in breast cancer screening programmes throughout Europe choose not to attend or to re-attend in subsequent years. A 2014 study showed that over half of the 24 European Union (EU) countries² that were addressed in this review had screening programme participation rates that were below 65%.

Pain associated with mammography exams has been identified as a key factor limiting women's participation in breast cancer screening programmes in Europe and throughout the world.³

Objectives

The objective of this research was to understand patient perception to a patient-friendly equipment design and the effect of a patient-assisted compression device designed to change the mammography experience.

Methods

A questionnaire was developed with IPSOS Healthcare to collect responses from patients who were attending mammography in two clinics in France and Italy. Approval from hospital's ethical committee was received. This study was conducted during February/March 2017. All respondents were interviewed immediately after having a mammography exam using the new equipment with the new patient-assisted compression device.

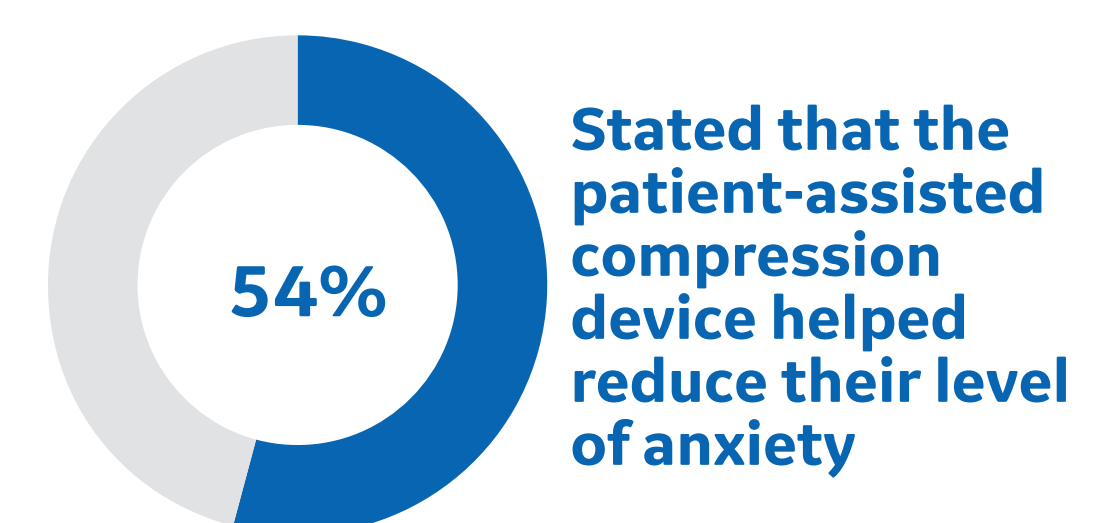
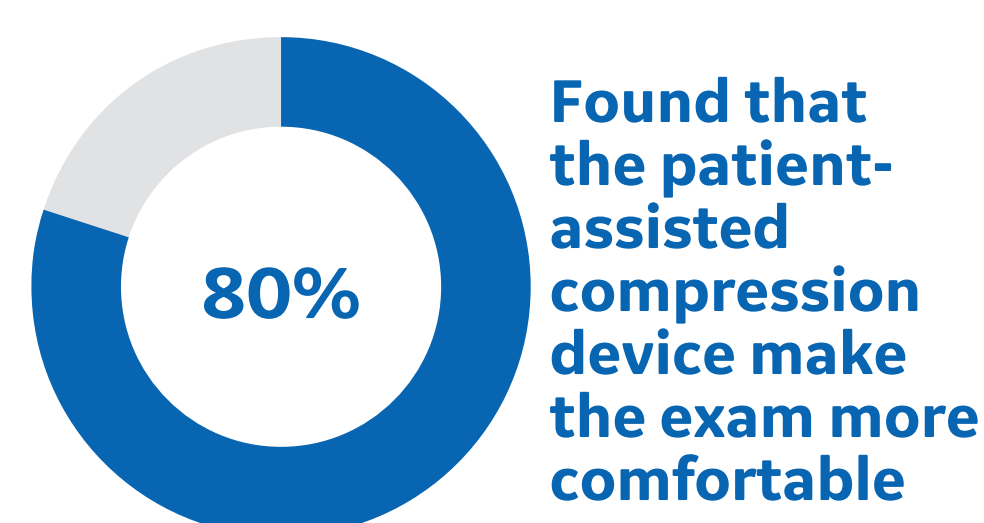
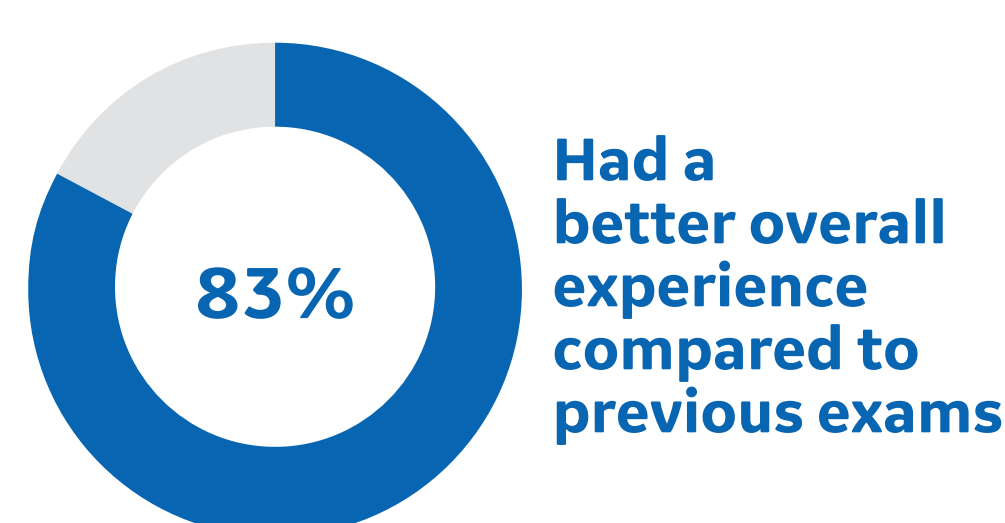
Results

The survey included 315 patients of varying experience with mammography. On an average the patients have had 6 previous mammograms (N=272).

A majority (83%) of patients had a better overall experience than with previous systems (N=296).

In this study, 50% of patients were not at all anxious (N=310) during the exam and 37% were less anxious as compared to their previous exams (N=298).

The study found that 80% of the patients who had their exam performed with the patient-assisted compression option noted that it made the exam more comfortable (N=159). Moreover, 54% of patients indicated that the patient-assisted compression device helped to reduce their level of anxiety (N=156).



Conclusions

Patient-assisted compression may be a valuable feature in mammography. Previous study showed that patient-controlled compression was associated with reduced pain perception than technologist-controlled compression.⁴ To improve patient adherence to screening exams all such factors should be considered. In this study, the patient-assisted compression contributed to improving patient comfort and experience that may also contribute to increasing the participation rate of screening.

Note: Patient-assisted compression feature on this equipment is currently CE marked and commercially available in Europe.

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