

Newsletter - February 2001

ONE MILLION WOMEN RECRUITED!

The Million Women Study has recruited one million women! 1 in 4 women in the UK aged 50 to 64 are now involved, making the Million Women Study the largest ever study of women's health. The news was welcomed by the study's principal investigator, Professor Valerie Beral, who said "No one has studied the health of 1,000,000 women in this way before, but thanks to the enthusiasm of women throughout the country, it will now be possible to answer many important questions surrounding hormone replacement therapy and women's health." Principal investigator Dr Emily Banks added "This great achievement would not have been possible without the efforts of breast cancer screening staff throughout the UK. It really is fantastic to think that centres recruited women into the largest cohort study of women's health in the world at the same time as providing a first class screening service. Congratulations are due to everyone involved."

Study progress

Recruitment of women into the study has finished at most screening centre and 750,000 recruitment questionnaires have now been scanned into the Million Women Study database. Many women are now receiving a yellow follow-up questionnaire to allow the study to keep track of their health, to update information about HRT and other factors, and to ask new questions about factors such as diet. Women who report a diagnosis of breast cancer will also receive a supplementary questionnaire asking them for details such as how the tumour was found, any treatment they have had, current symptoms and more details about hormone use and family history.

Report from the 3rd collaborators' meeting

The third Million Women Study collaborators' meeting was held on October 16th 2000 at Lincoln's Inn Fields, London. The meeting was opened by Judith Church, MP and chaired by Julietta Patnick and Martin Vessey. Certificates were presented to screening centres which have completed recruitment. Presentations included talk on MWS progress and disease incidence (Valerie Beral), the effect of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) on recall rates in the NHSBSP (Emily Banks), effect of HRT on incidence of fractures (Isobel Barnes), diet and HRT use (Elizabeth Spencer) and preliminary results on breast cancers (Valerie Beral).

Judith Church visits Million Women Study co-ordinating centre

Judith Church MP, secretary of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Breast Cancer, and a keen supporter of the Million Women Study, visited the Million Women Study co-ordinating centre in Oxford in October to see for herself the scale of the operation.

MWS online

The Million Women Study web site is receiving about 300 hits a month. You can visit the web site at: <http://www.icnet.uk/research/studies/mws/> for latest news and copies of all Million Women Study newsletters.

Collaboration with Cancer Registries

The Million Women Study has begun collaboration with regional cancer registries to allow timely follow-up of participants for cancer. In particular, this collaboration will allow follow-up of recruits for interval breast cancers following breast screening in order to investigate the relationship between hormone replacement therapy and interval cancer.