

Newsletter - February 1999

Over 500,000 women recruited into the Million Women Study to date

Thanks to the efforts of breast screening centre staff and the enthusiasm of women throughout the UK, recruitment for the Million Women Study passed the 500,000 mark in November 1998.

"This really is a cause for celebration. The Million Women Study is now the biggest and most representative study of women in the screening age group in the world." said Professor Valerie Beral. "The Million Women Study will soon be able to address so many of the outstanding questions about HRT and women's health. The scale of this study and the level of co-operation shows just how important women think these issues are."

Meanwhile, the Million Women Study Co-ordinating Centre staff would like to point out that 500,000 questionnaires amounts to 5 tonnes of paper!



HERS study shows no cardiovascular benefit of HRT use

A randomised trial published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in August 1998 showed that HRT does not prevent further heart attacks in women who already have established heart disease. It also showed an excess of blood clots and gallbladder disease in women randomised to receive HRT.

May 1999: second annual meeting of Million Women Study collaborators

The second annual meeting of collaborators will be held on the 26th of May, 1999 at Lincoln's Inn Fields, in London. There will be talks about the progress of the study, the history of HRT and factors affecting survival in women with breast cancer. It will be a chance for all participating staff to discuss the study and any

suggestions are welcomed. There is an invitation and acceptance form attached to this newsletter. We very much hope that you can make it to London for the meeting.

Follow up

The follow-up for breast cancers diagnosed in women screened during the 1997/98 screening year is now underway. Participating centres can expect a visit from Million Women Study staff to obtain details about breast cancers diagnosed in study participants. So far, the follow-up has been running smoothly and once again, the quality of breast screening data has been excellent.

Desperately seeking oestrogen receptors

In addition to obtaining the usual follow-up information about breast cancers diagnosed at screening in Million Women Study participants, study staff will also be seeking information about the oestrogen receptor status of these cancers. This information should help to clarify if HRT has any effect on this important prognostic factor. If any breast screening centre staff know the best way to obtain this information on the cancers diagnosed at their centre, could they please contact their Million Women Study liaison person.

Publications from the Million Women Study

The study team has almost finished drafting a report describing the design of the study and the characteristics of the first 120,000 women recruited. It will soon be circulated to study collaborators for comments, prior to submission to a peer-reviewed journal.