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**NEUROPATHY ACTION FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES RESULTS FROM NATIONAL  
DIABETIC PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY (DPN) SURVEY**

Santa Ana, CA, January 10, 2017 - The Neuropathy Action Foundation (NAF) announced the results from a nationwide Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy (DPN) Quality of Life (QOL) Patient Survey. The survey focused on three primary areas: timely and accurate diagnosis, the impact of the disease on patient's quality of life and access to treatment.

The majority of the 978 patients completing the survey were from California (41%), Washington (9.5%), Oregon (6.7%), Nevada (6.5%) and Colorado (5.1%) with respondents from 23 other states also contributing to the results. Most patients reported that they were misdiagnosed multiple times before they were accurately diagnosed with DPN (59%). More than 52 percent reported that it took more than a year to be accurately diagnosed. Of these individuals, more than 49 percent reported that it took over two years to be accurately diagnosed.

"The long delay in proper diagnosis of DPN means that many patients receive multiple rounds of inappropriate treatments. As a consequence, their neuropathic pain is almost always under-treated. The challenge our Foundation faces is broadening Americans' awareness of DPN, including the early warning signs of it," said Jeffrey Ralph, MD, Board Member of the Neuropathy Action Foundation.

Sixty-four percent of survey respondents reported that they currently experience nerve pain. Nearly three-quarters (73.8%) of respondents said DPN impacts their overall quality of life. Basic tasks such as typing on a computer or phone, was reported to be either difficult or impossible for 55.7 percent of respondents. Sixty-six percent of patients reported having difficulty falling asleep at night and 59 percent of respondents reported more pain at night.

Over 61 percent of survey respondents reported that they have experienced step therapy. Step therapy occurs when an insurance company requires a patient to try and fail multiple DPN/pain medications before the patient is allowed to have the prescription originally prescribed by their provider. Of these patients, 36 percent were required to try two or more medications.

"The NAF is dedicated to ensuring neuropathy patients have unhindered access to treatment and therefore was disappointed to see the results of this survey show such a high use of step therapy," said Leslie MacGregor Levine, V.M.D., Ph.D., J.D., neuropathy patient and Board Member of the Neuropathy Action Foundation. "The impact of step therapy for patients in pain results in needless suffering - all because insurers have taken decisions about how to best treat patients away from providers," said Levine. "The good news is that elected officials have the power to make changes to eliminate this practice."

### **About Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy (DPN)**

Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy (DPN) is a type of nerve damage that can occur if you have diabetes. High blood sugar (glucose) can injure nerve fibers throughout your body, but DPN most often damages nerves in your legs and feet. DPN is the most common neuropathy in the United States and the world. It is estimated that there are 15-20 million cases of DPN in the United States. About 60% to 70% of all people with diabetes will eventually develop neuropathy, although not all suffer pain.

### **About the Neuropathy Action Foundation (NAF)**

The Neuropathy Action Foundation (NAF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is dedicated to ensuring neuropathy patients obtain the necessary resources and tools to access individualized treatment to improve their quality of life. The NAF increases awareness among providers, the general public, and public policy officials that neuropathy can potentially be a serious, widespread and disabling condition, which may be treatable when appropriate medical care is provided. For more information please visit [www.neuropathyaction.org](http://www.neuropathyaction.org).

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