

1 ORIGINAL RESEARCH

2 Chang et al

3 **Impact of a patient support program on patient beliefs**  
4 **about neovascular age-related macular degeneration and**  
5 **persistence to anti-vascular endothelial growth factor**  
6 **therapy**

7 SUPPLEMENTARY TEXT

8 **Supplementary Table 1: Reduced Cox proportional hazards model of persistence**

Patient attribute	Regression coefficient	p value
nAMD high-risk patient <sup>a</sup>	1.469	<0.0001
nAMD low-risk patient <sup>a</sup>	0.829	<0.0001
Age range 61–70 <sup>b</sup>	-0.750	0.03
Age range 71–80 <sup>b</sup>	-0.904	0.004
Age range over 80 <sup>b</sup>	-0.973	0.002
Patient to HCP distance >100 km <sup>c</sup>	0.482	0.006

9 <sup>a</sup>Compared with patients treated prior to introduction of risk screening; <sup>b</sup>Reference category: age  
10 range 51–60; <sup>c</sup>Reference category: patient to HCP distance <20 km.

11 **Note:** Only significant factors were retained in the model.

12 **Abbreviations:** HCP, healthcare professional; nAMD, neovascular age-related macular  
13 degeneration.

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16 **Supplementary Table 2: Patient satisfaction with elements of the patient support program**

Element	Mean $\pm$ SD satisfaction score
Booklets	8.2 $\pm$ 3.0 (n=715)
Outbound calls	7.8 $\pm$ 3.4 (n=717)
Inbound calls	9.2 $\pm$ 1.4 (n=58)
Welcome pack	8.4 $\pm$ 2.9 (n=717)
Recommend to doctor	9.0 $\pm$ 2.9 (n=33)
Recommend to friend	9.0 $\pm$ 2.8 (n=335)
Supportive program	8.3 $\pm$ 3.0 (n=714)

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18 **Note:** Scores range from 0 to 10, with 10 indicating higher satisfaction.

19 **Abbreviation:** SD, standard deviation.

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22 **Figure S1 - Extended Plain Language Summary (see next page)**

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# Does taking part in a patient support program affect whether people with neovascular (wet) age-related macular degeneration stay on aflibercept treatment?

*Date of summary: November 2020*

## The purpose of this summary is to provide an overview of a real-world study

- Aflibercept is an approved treatment for neovascular age-related macular degeneration (nAMD for short).
- Researchers are keen to understand if taking part in a patient support program can help people with nAMD to continue receiving aflibercept treatment.
- This is a real-world study rather than a clinical trial. While clinical trials look at how treatments work in a controlled setting, real-world studies look at people's experiences in a natural setting without any regulations or controls.
- This summary reports the results of only one real-world study, which started in December 2012 and ended in May 2020. The results of this study may be different from the results of other studies that researchers look at.

## How to pronounce medical terms in this summary

Aflibercept <ah-FLIB-er-sept>, which is also known as Eylea® <EYE-LEE-ah>

Endothelial <EN-doh-THEE-lee-al>

Macula <MACK-you-lah>

Neovascular <KNEE-oh-VAS-cue-LAR>

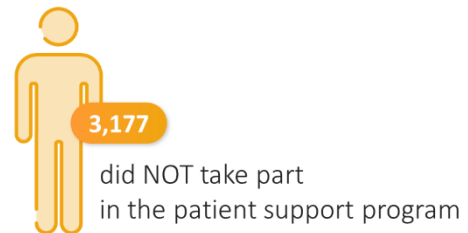
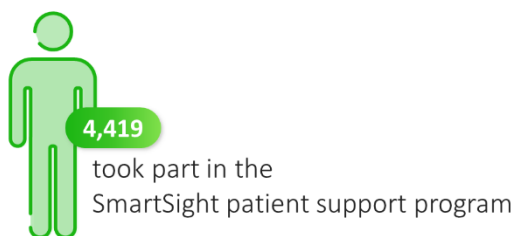
## 1. What did this study look at?

- nAMD is an eye condition that affects central vision. It is also known as wet AMD. It usually affects people in their 70s, but can appear as early as in their 50s and 60s. If left untreated, it can cause vision loss.
  - nAMD occurs when abnormal blood vessels grow in the central area at the back of the eye (called the macula) and leak fluid.
  - The macula is responsible for precise vision, which is necessary for reading, driving, or recognizing faces, especially from a distance.
- Aflibercept (also known as Eylea®) is an approved treatment for nAMD. People receive aflibercept as an injection directly into the eye.
  - Aflibercept blocks a substance called vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF for short).
  - This prevents blood vessels from growing abnormally and leaking fluid in the macula. This helps to improve vision.
- Aflibercept is currently given as three injections a month apart, and then every one to three months as decided by the eye doctor.
- The greatest improvements in vision usually occur during the first few months of receiving aflibercept. Afterwards, the treatment aims to maintain these initial vision gains.
  - This means it is important that people keep receiving aflibercept injections, in order to maintain their vision and independence.
  - One way to help people to stay on treatment is a patient support program. This provides guidance and counselling to help people manage their condition and treatments.
- In this study, researchers looked at people in Australia who were living with nAMD and receiving aflibercept as a treatment. More than half of the people in the study took part in a patient support program called SmartSight, funded by Bayer Australia Pty Ltd.
  - SmartSight provided support to each person over 2 years. It used a variety of resources including a comprehensive welcome pack of tips and tricks for managing nAMD, information booklets, and telephone calls with a nurse.
  - People received additional telephone calls if they were considered at high risk of stopping their treatment (based on an initial questionnaire assessment when they first joined the program).

- This summary looks at the impact of taking part in the SmartSight patient support program. The researchers looked at:
  - Whether people continued to receive aflibercept injections at 2 years.
  - How people’s beliefs about their treatment changed during the patient support program.
  - How satisfied people were with the patient support program.

## 2. Who took part in this study?

- 3,573 people with nAMD took part in the SmartSight patient support program between December 2012 and November 2019.
  - On average, they were 84 years old.
  - Around two-thirds (61%) were women.
  - Half (50%) had not received treatment for nAMD before taking part in the program.
- The researchers compared results from these people with a group of 3,177 people with nAMD who also received aflibercept but did not take part in the SmartSight patient support program.
  - These people were chosen at random from a national healthcare database, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, which holds information on all subsidized medicines prescribed to people living in Australia.

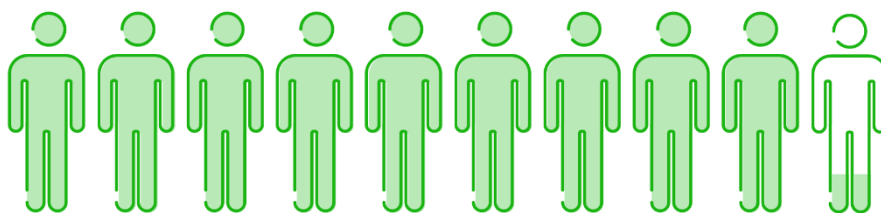


## 3. What were the results of the study?

**People who took part in the patient support program were more likely to continue receiving aflibercept injections**

After 1 year:

Around 9 in 10 people (93%) who took part in SmartSight were still receiving aflibercept injections



Around 8 in 10 people (76%) who did NOT take part in the patient support program were still receiving aflibercept injections



After 2 years:

Around 9 in 10 people (88%) who took part in SmartSight were still receiving aflibercept injections



Around 6 in 10 people (64%) who did NOT take part in the patient support program were still receiving aflibercept injections



However, certain groups of people who took part in the patient support program were more likely to stop receiving aflibercept injections

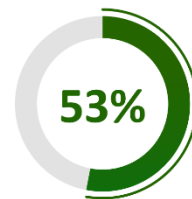
- Researchers classified the people in the program as being at low, medium, or high risk of stopping their aflibercept injections based on:
  - The initial questionnaire completed when they first joined the program.
  - Their age.
  - The distance they travelled to visit their healthcare professional.
- After 2 years:



Around 9 in 10 low-risk people were still receiving aflibercept injections



Around 7 in 10 medium-risk people were still receiving aflibercept injections



Around 5 in 10 high-risk people were still receiving aflibercept injections

Overall, peoples' beliefs about treatment became more positive during the patient support program

- Compared with the start of the patient support program, after 2 years people:
  - Were less concerned about having aflibercept eye injections.
  - Were more confident that aflibercept could help their nAMD.
  - Felt they had more control over their nAMD.
  - Felt they were coping with their nAMD better.

## Overall, people were satisfied with the SmartSight patient support program

- On average, people scored their satisfaction with the patient support program at around 8 out of 10 (where 10 was the highest level of satisfaction).

### 4. What were the main conclusions reported by the researchers?

- Taking part in the SmartSight patient support program may help people with nAMD to:
  - Stay on aflibercept treatment, which could help to improve their long-term vision outcomes.
  - Develop a more positive perception of their condition and treatment.
- Researchers want to look further at which parts of the patient support program help people the most, especially for people who are at high risk of stopping treatment.

### 5. Are there any plans for further studies?

This study has been completed. No further related studies are underway or planned.

### 6. Who sponsored this study?

Bayer Australia Pty Ltd  
875 Pacific Highway  
Pymble NSW  
Australia 2073  
ABN 22 000 138 714

Bayer would like to thank everyone who took part in this study.

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## Further information

- The full title of this article is: Impact of a patient support program on patient beliefs about neovascular age-related macular degeneration and persistence to anti-VEGF therapy
  - You can find the full article here: *<insert link when available>*
  - You can access the full article for free.

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*The original authors of the full article were involved in preparing this summary.*