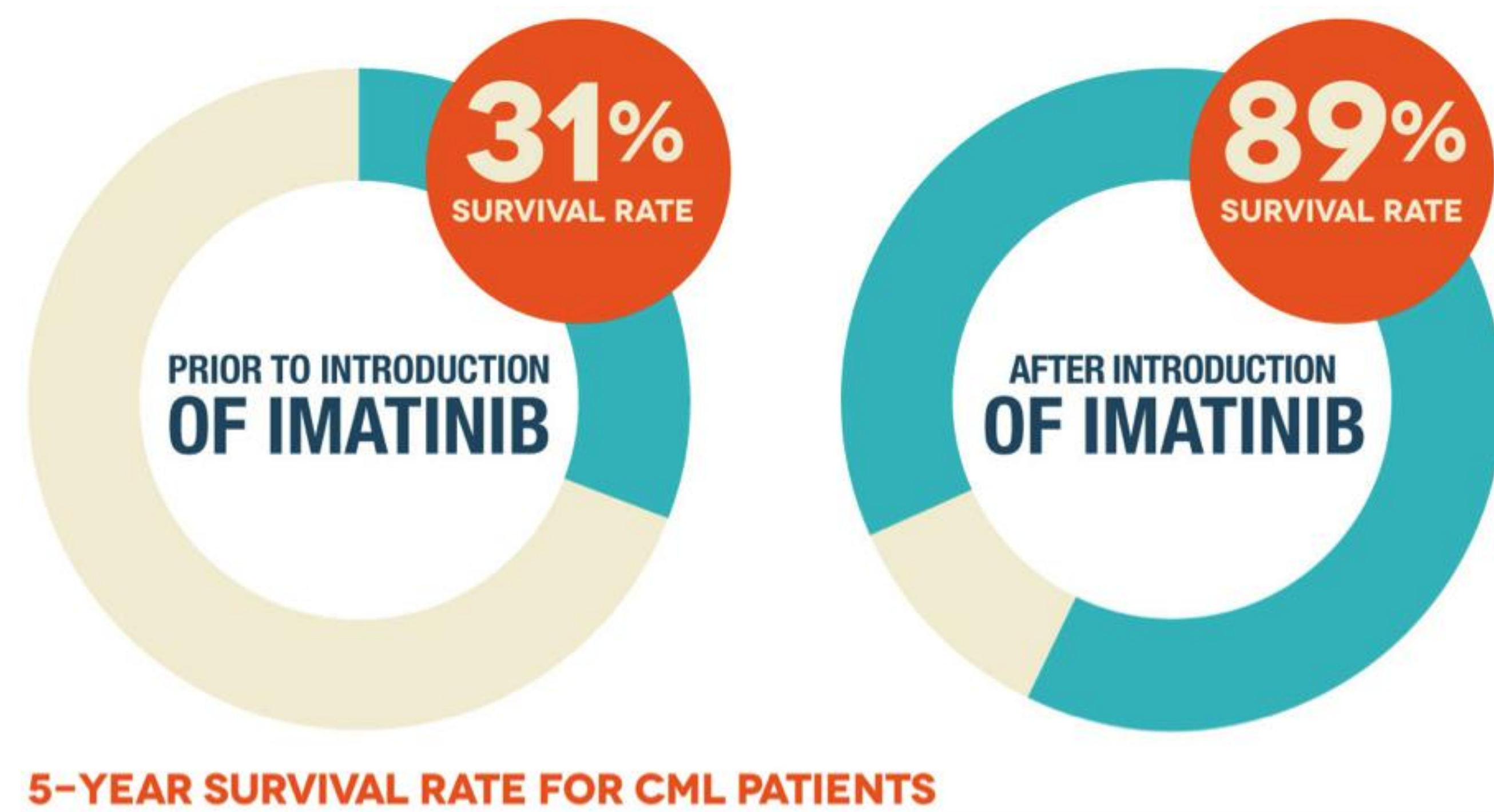




Background

- Chronic Myeloid Leukemia (CML) is one of the four most common types of leukemia.
- Imatinib—an oral chemotherapy—was the first drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat CML
- Imatinib dramatically extended patient survival rates from CML.¹



- However, Imatinib on average costs \$2,717.00/month for 100 mg and \$9,790.00/month for 400 mg

Purpose

- This study explored existing resources that are available to assist CML patients with obtaining financial access to Imatinib.

Methods and Analysis

- Guided by Felder and Bennett's (2013)² outline of patient assistance programs, a web-based search of publically accessible resources was conducted.

Table 1. Felder-Bennett Framework of programs that can assist patients with paying for oral cancer medications	
Organization	Assistance Provided
Aflac www.aflac.com	Cancer insurance policies that provide cash benefits during cancer treatment
HealthWell www.healthwellfoundation.org	Financial assistance with medication/therapy costs
NeedyMeds www.needymeds.org	Directory of public and private resources and programs
Partnership for Prescription Assistance www.pparx.org	Directory of public and private resources and programs
Patient Advocate Foundation www.patientadvocate.org	Case management to resolve patient health care and related cost concerns
RxAssist www.rxassist.org	Directory of public and private resources and programs
Xubex www.xubex.com	Discounted medications and financial assistance

- This study is currently in progress. Final data collected will be summarized in a resource list that can be used by health care providers and patients.

Preliminary Results

- Healthwell does not currently offer help for CML patients.

Results (cont.)

- The manufacturer of Imatinib has 2 PAPs:
 - Novartis Patient Assistance NOW Oncology
 - Novartis Imatinib Copay Program
 - Pays up to \$7,500/month or \$26,000/year on the deductible cost
- Xubex offers a \$25/month discount coupon
- Drugs.com offers a discount card that may cover up to 80% of Imatinib costs based on insurance
- Next steps for this research include conducting follow-up web-based searches using keywords: 'Patient Assistance Programs,' AND 'Gleevec,' OR 'Imatinib Mesylate,' OR 'Chronic Myeloid Leukemia,' AND 'Co-pay Assistance.'

Implications

- Determining if prescription assistance programs are available for Imatinib and similar oral chemotherapies may be particularly important for patients facing financial barriers to accessing their treatment.
- Healthcare providers, such as nurses and pharmacists, can play a major role in informing patients about these resources and helping them navigate the application process.

References:

- Chronic Leukemias-Survival Rates Rise. Retrieved April 19, 2015 from: <http://innovation.org/chronic-leukemias-survival-rates-rise>
- Felder TM, Bennett CL. Can patients "afford" to be adherent to expensive oral cancer drugs? unintended consequences of pharmaceutical development. *Journal of Oncology Practice*, 2013 Nov; 9 (6s): 64s-66s.