

# My day with Oncology Pharmacy - Hungary

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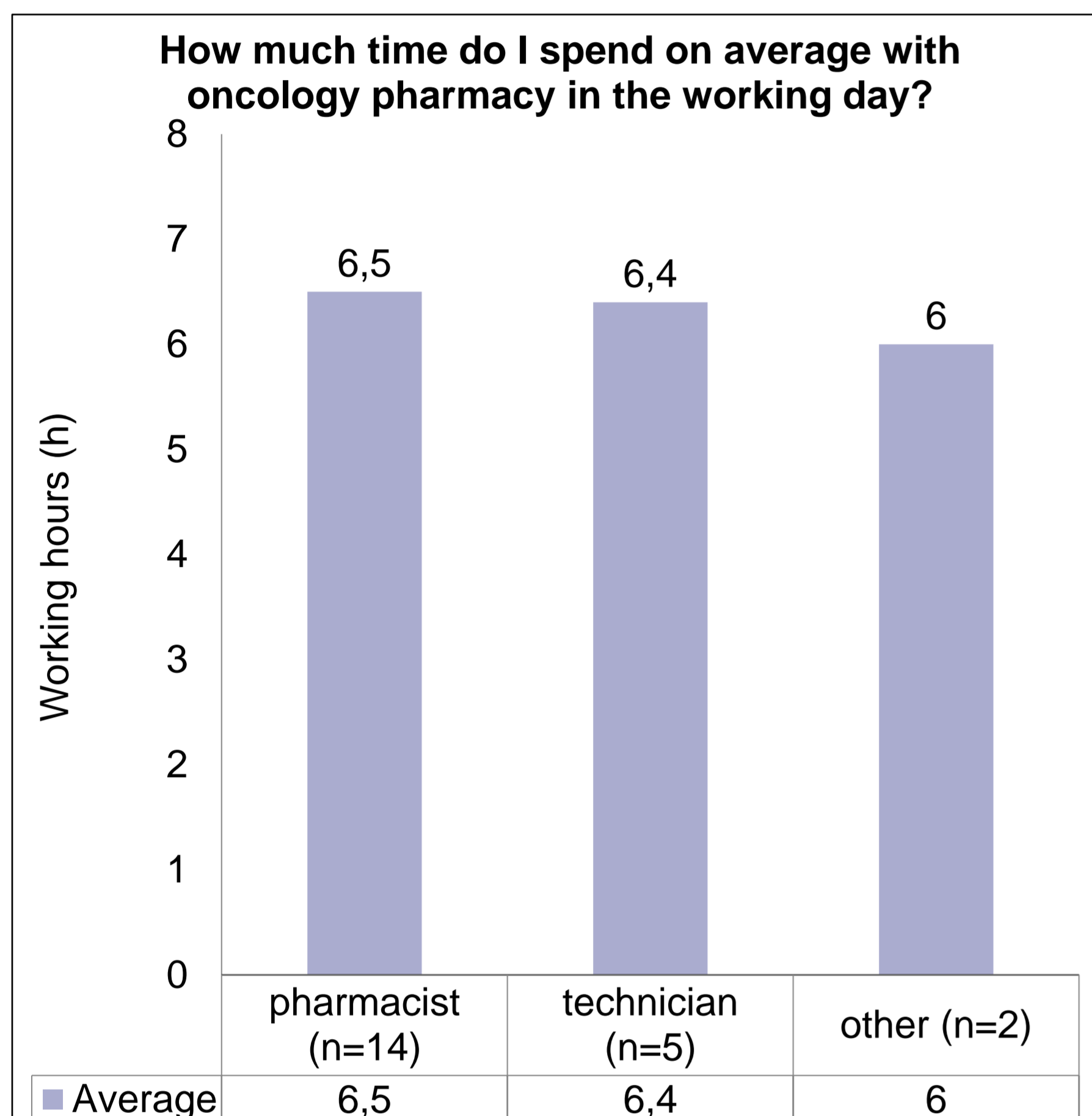
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## 1. Introduction

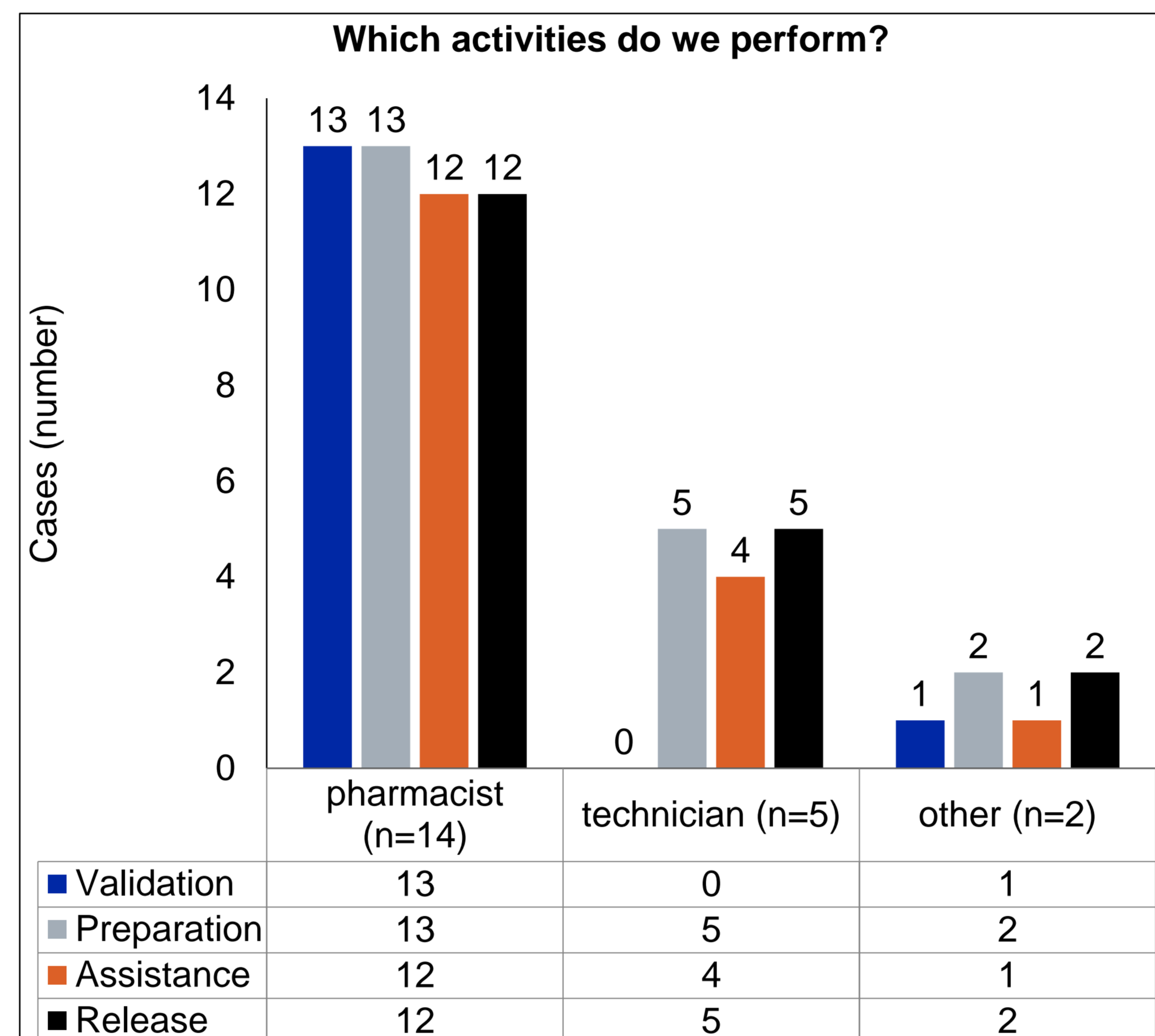
In form of an ESOP survey in March and April 2022, professionals were asked about their working situation in preparation of read-to-use cytotoxic drugs. All relevant daily working processes as activities in prescription and validation of cytotoxic drugs as also their clinical pharmaceutical support in patient care are addressed. This poster presents the country specific evaluation.

## 2. Material and method

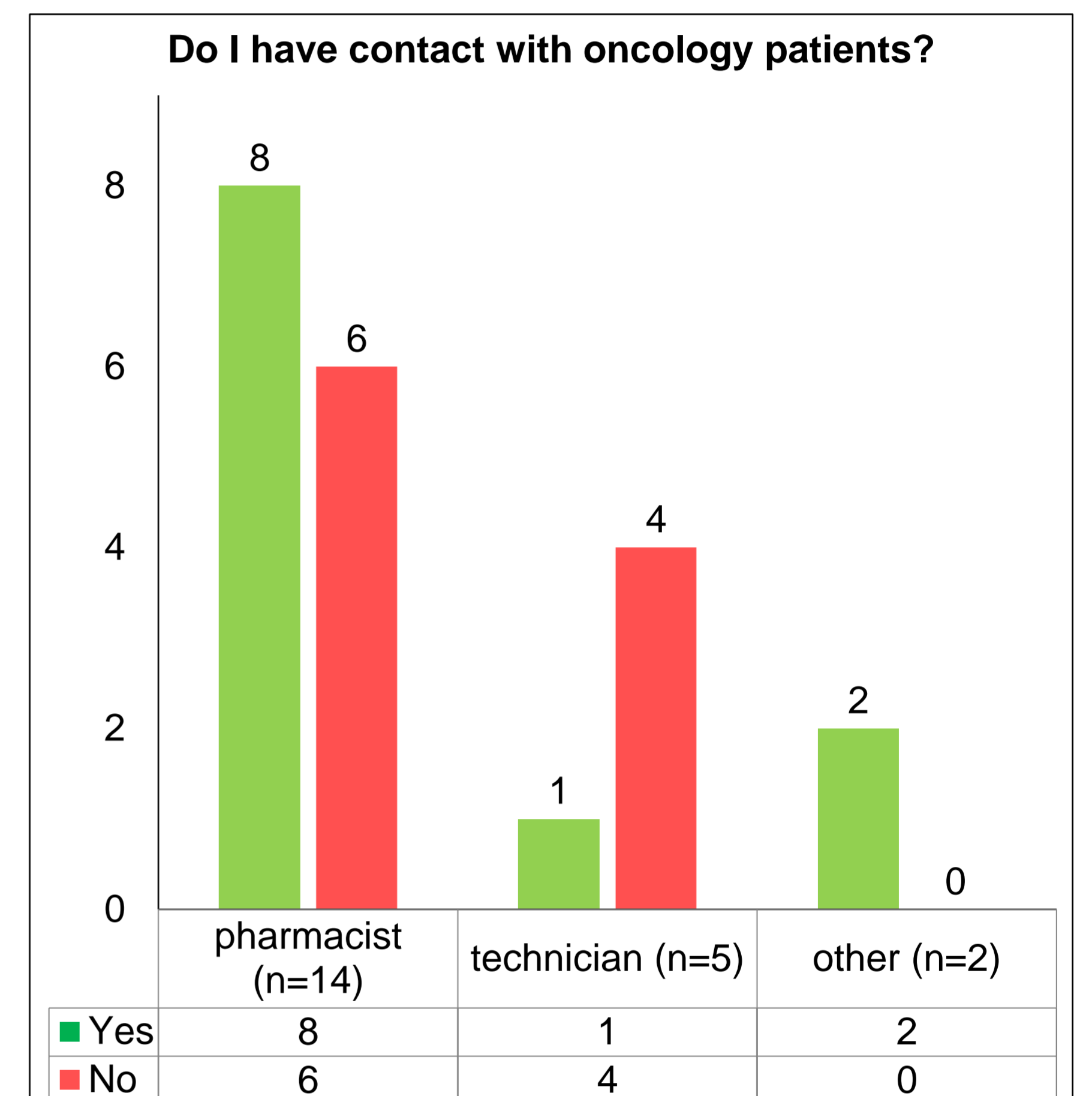
The survey with 18 questions was translated into different languages and performed nationally using a web based application.



**Fig.1:** The average time spent with oncology during a working day (8 hr) is the highest among pharmacists, followed by technicians (6,4 hr). The rest is made up of administration, organizational tasks and tasks in other areas.



**Fig.2:** The working structure in general is as follows: the pharmacist validates the physician's prescription, then arranges and oversees the preparation process. The technicians and nurses prepare the infusions and/or manage the preparation in a timely manner.



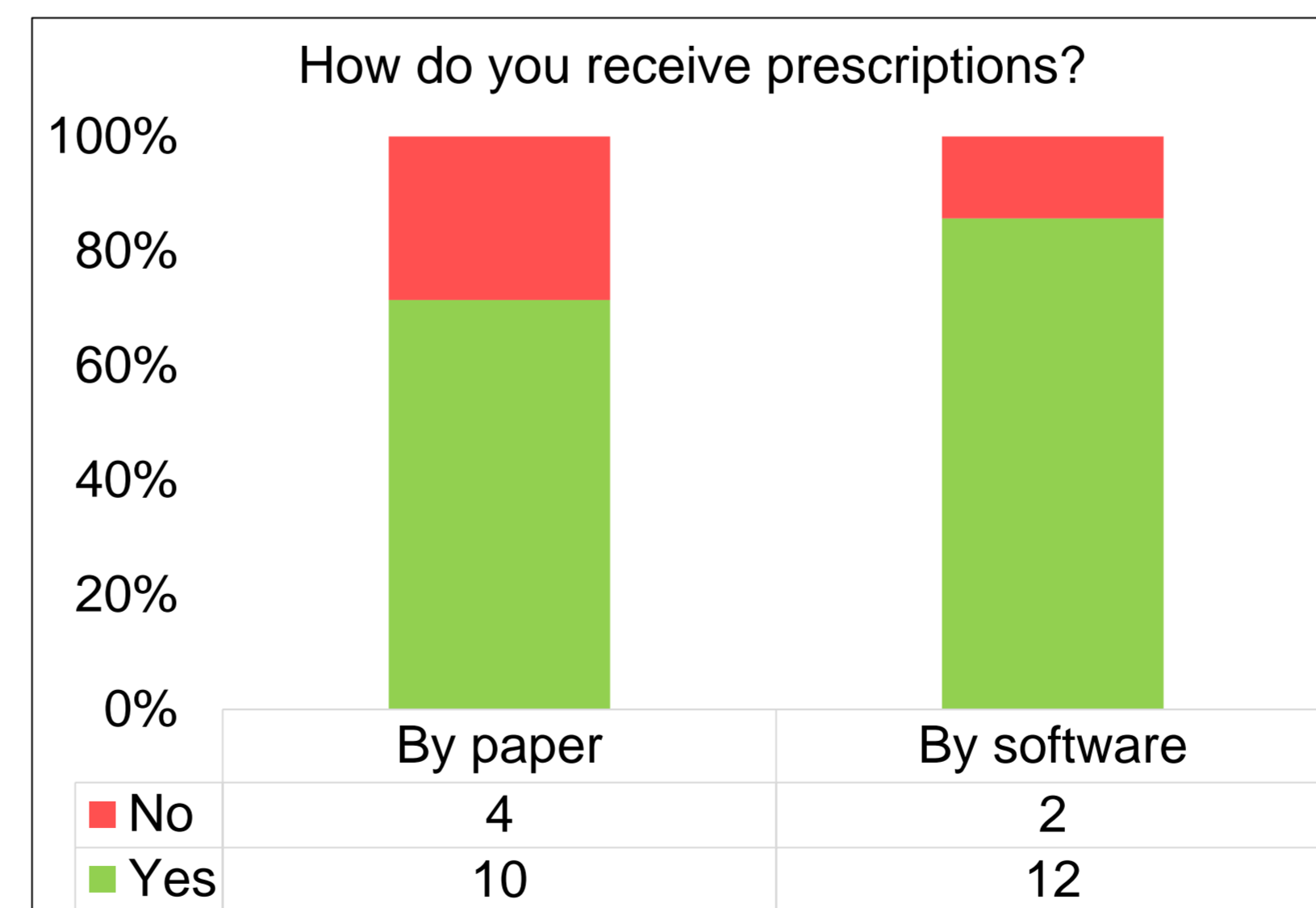
**Fig.3:** Usually the pharmacists carry out consultations with patients. This includes explaining information about the drugs in general, discussing possible side effects and helping the patient to fit the medication in their lifestyles.

## 3. Results and discussion

In Hungary there are 36 oncology institutes, where oncology patients are dealt with. Regarding this survey, overall, we received 21 answers from different professions: pharmacists (14), pharmacy technicians (5), nurses (2). Each pharmacist who answered the survey is from a different institute. Out of the 14 places, 9 preparation labs declared to prepare more than 100 infusions per day. Every institute manufactures patient specific infusions. The receipt of the prescription is done by software, but not at every institute (see Fig. 4.). However, out of the 21 answers, 10 people have direct contact with patients, mostly pharmacists and nurses. It would be beneficial if a pharmacist was present at the oncology unit in favour of maximal patient safety. The pharmacy technicians mainly prepare and release the solutions, that is why they do not have contact with patients. In Hungary, it is possible to dispense oral anticancer medication in both outpatient unit of hospitals and public pharmacies. 8 pharmacists answered that they dispense oral cancer medication to patients, and neither of them said it occurs often or very often a week. 6 pharmacists answered that they educate patients on oral anticancer drugs. Patients mostly obtain their oral medications locally, where their therapy takes place and this way pharmacists are able to finalize their treatment with essential information on their medication both verbally and in written form. The aim should be that drugs are dispensed by a well educated oncology pharmacist. Education on drug information and providing an intake plan are common, but opinions on how patients should be educated about side effects vary. Some say it is needed to inform patients about possible side effects before they receive the medication, while others say we only need to educate patients so that they recognise side effects when they occur.



**Fig.5:** A pharmacy technician prepares a cytotoxic infusion, in a laminar air flow box. Closed system transfer devices are used, and a digital scale can also be seen, that has been connected to the software.



**Fig.4:** There are multiple ways of receiving prescriptions: the most often used and preferred way is by medical software communication: more than 80% of the 14 institutes use softwares to receive prescriptions. However, in case of extraordinary situations (e.g. IT problems, other medical units who cannot reach the software) paper written form is also acceptable. In preparation labs, where fewer solutions are formulated, offline communication (prescriptions written on paper, phone calls) is more common.

## Conclusion

We are glad to participate in this survey, since it helps us to clarify that our country has to improve our oncology pharmacy activities, especially at the area of patient consultation. We already have many pharmacists who are in direct contact with patients. This activity improves patient and drug safety. A working group consisting of Hungarian oncology pharmacists was established recently, and it is made up of pharmacists from the majority of Hungarian oncology centres. The aim of this working group is to get to know and help each other, encourage to publish articles in this topic, and to improve communication with ESOP through the delegates.

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## References

- "A day with oncological pharmacy., - national answers
- Hungarian Pharmaceutical Company/Community, Hospital Pharmacists Association, Oncological Working Group establishment meeting 2022.05.21.
- Fig.5. (picture about producing the infusion) taken by Artúr György Balogh, 2022