

My day with Oncology Pharmacy – North Macedonia

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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.

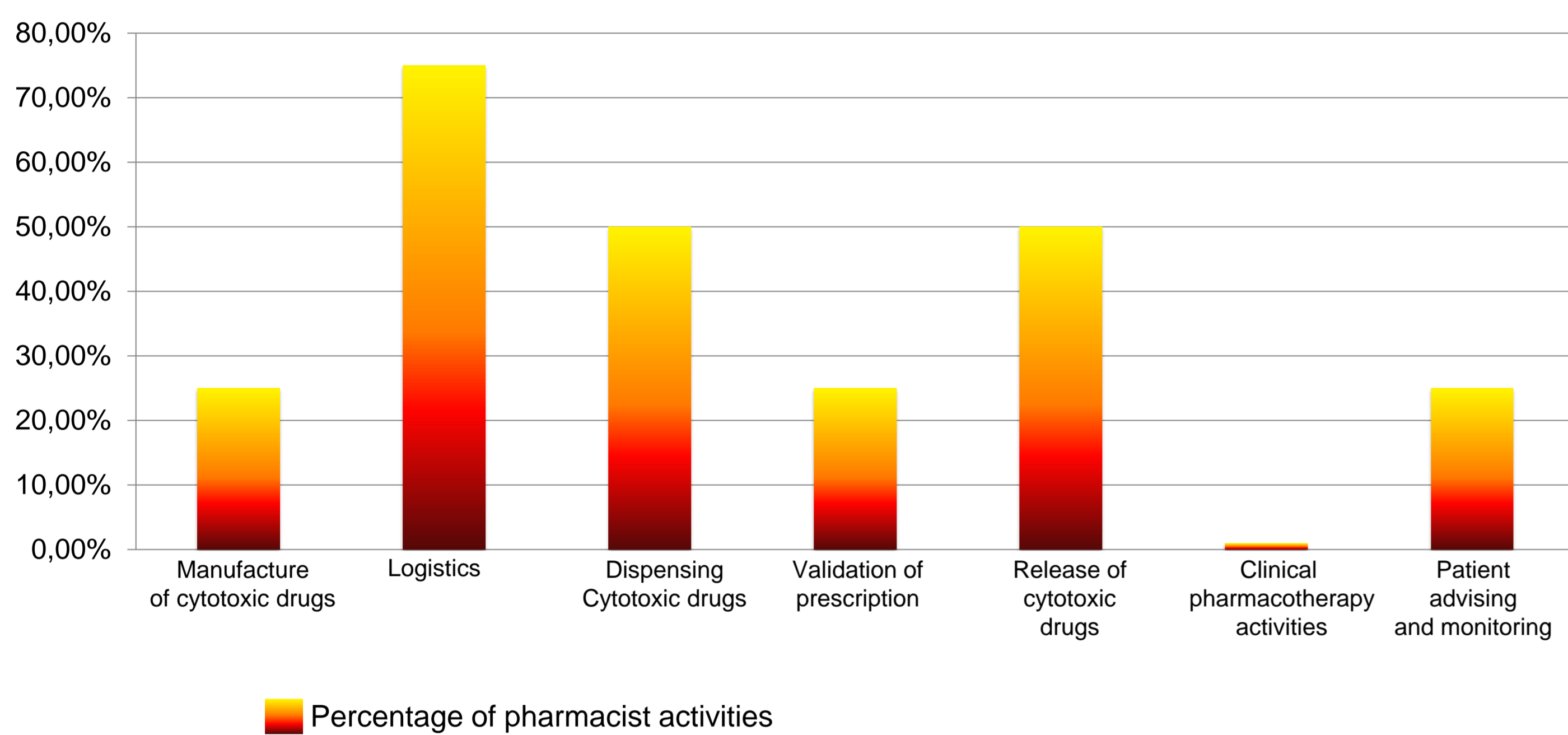


Fig.1: Activities of pharmacists at cancer related areas

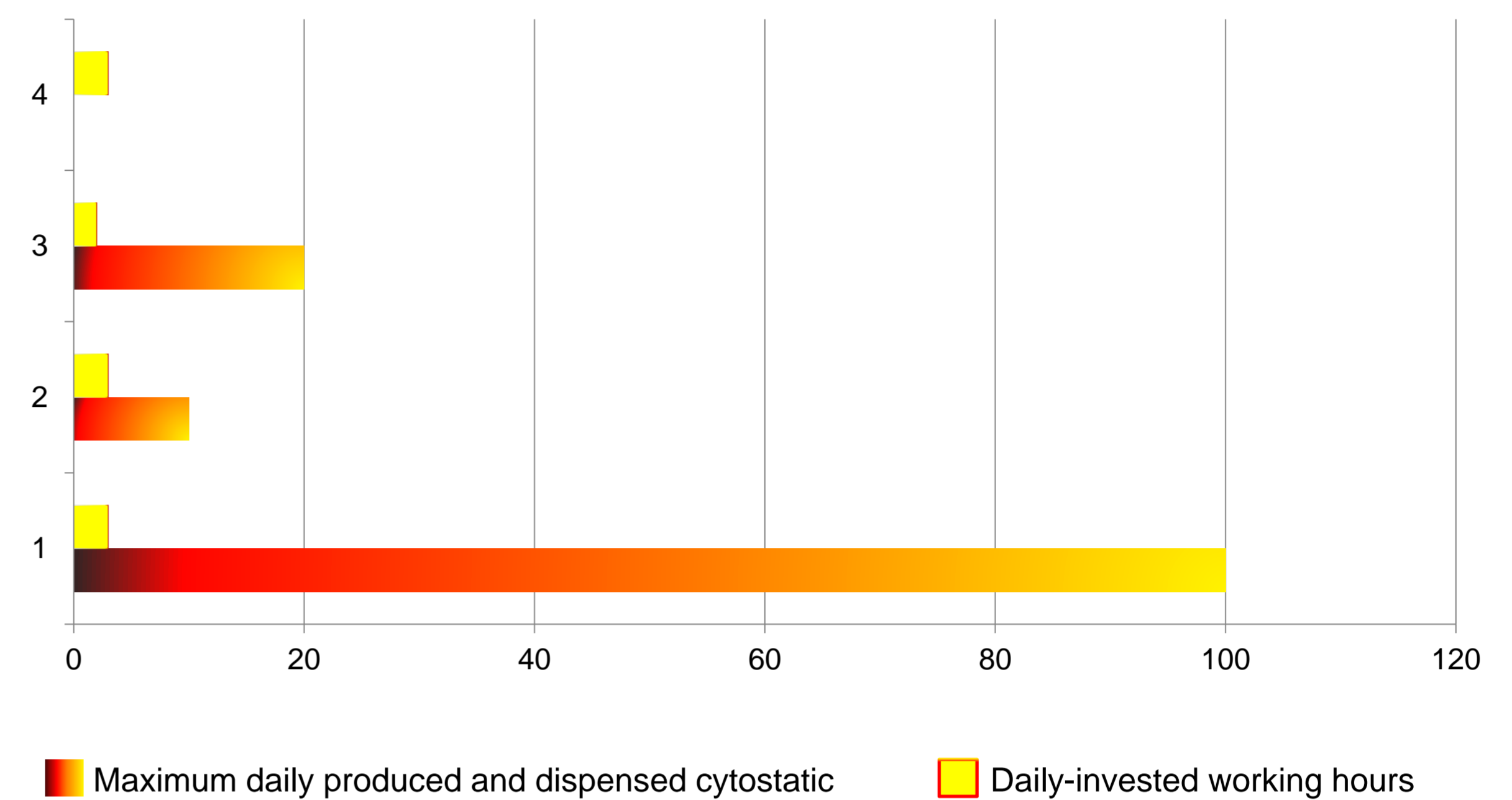


Fig.2: Daily invested working hours of pharmacists in relation to number of daily dispensed and produced ready-to-use drugs

3. Results and discussion

- All pharmacists taking part in this survey work in hospital settings.
- Half of the pharmacists are involved only in dispensing patient related infusions and only one of those two hospitals dispense oral medications as well.
- No automation system for preparation of antineoplastic drugs is currently used in the country.
- One hospital out of the four performs all medication related activities prior to direct patient contact. This includes validation of prescription, preparation or assisting in the preparation process and release of solutions.
- All hospitals receive prescriptions in paper based form and follow up on activities accordingly.
- All evaluated results reveal that only 25% percent of pharmacists engage in interaction with oncology patients and remaining 75% are involved in all other process activities with no direct patient contact.
- None of the participants in the survey pointed out any sort of activities related to collaboration with other health care professionals directed towards pharmacotherapy management and optimization from diagnosis throughout survivorship
- Consumption of time on daily bases for activities related to oncology patients is 2 and a half hour in average for all the participants of each hospital with no significant deviation from the average value.

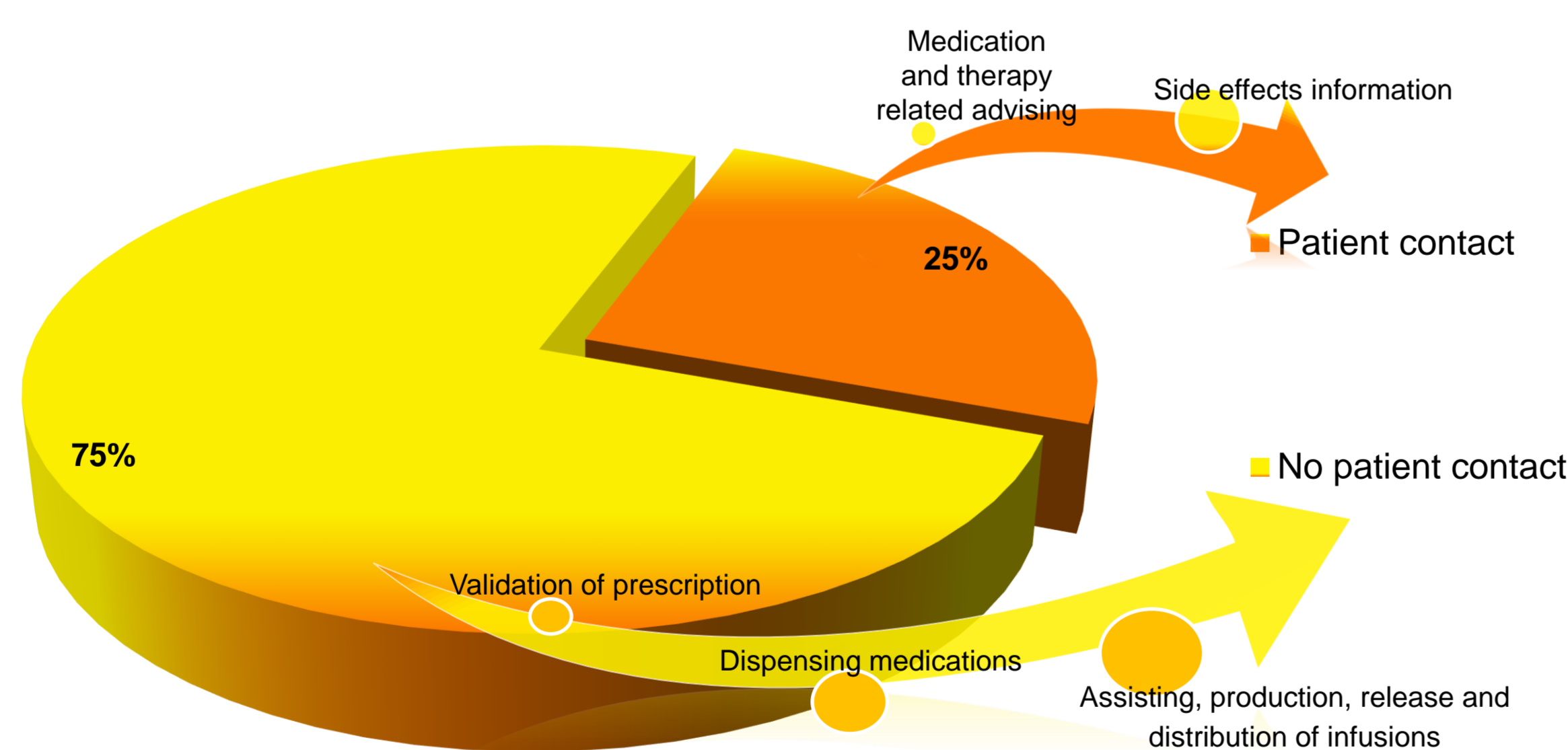


Fig.3: Patient and non-patient related activities of pharmacist



Fig.4: Chemotherapy preparation by pharmacist

Conclusion

Evaluated results from the conducted survey confirmed the current status of pharmacists in the field of Oncology Pharmacy in North Macedonia. Majority of pharmacist are involved in cytotoxic drug preparation and release, dispensing of oral solutions or activities in supplying medications and necessary materials.

Pharmacist spend only one third of their work hours on Oncology related activities. Replacing time spend in preparation of ready-to-use cytostatic with automated process or time spend for logistic activities redirected to employees with close related profession as economics, will lessen pharmacist workload and give them the opportunity to invest themselves in patient therapy control and monitoring.

Continuous improvement and moving pharmacist closer to the patients alongside other health care professionals will give the field of Oncology the ultimate potential. Such measures will take time, lot of effort and coordination from all medical professionals and authorities, but it is the future we look forward to accomplish.

Contact

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