

# Attitudes and barriers as perceived by general paediatricians in paediatric palliative care provision.

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## BACKGROUND

General paediatricians have an important role in medical care provision for children and adolescents, including children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions who may be in need of palliative care. Although the importance of general paediatricians in the provision of paediatric palliative care has been acknowledged, the knowledge about their attitudes is limited.

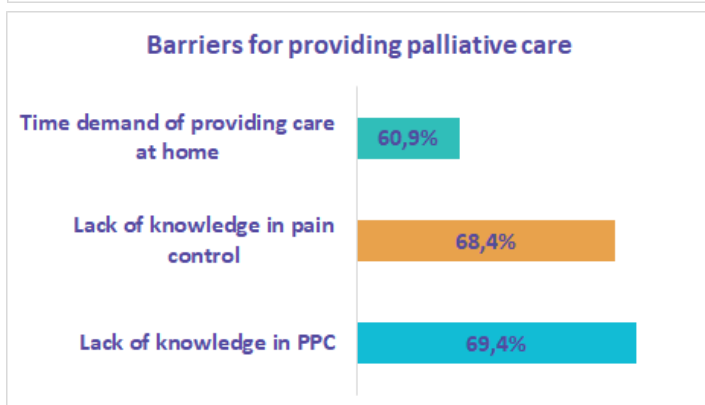
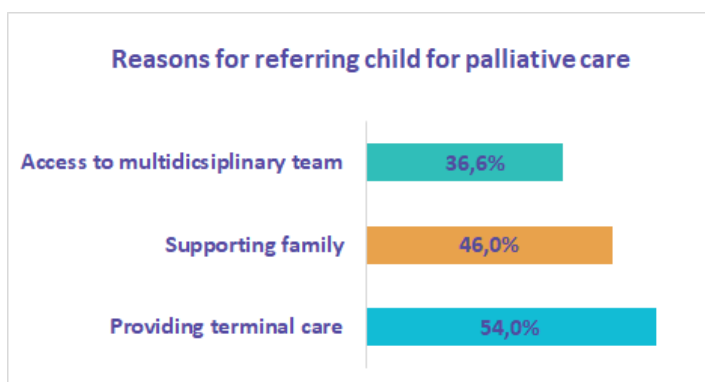
## AIM

The aim of this study was to assess the experience of general paediatricians with providing palliative care and to explore the barriers in palliative care provision in their practice.

## METHODS

Data were collected by questionnaire survey among general paediatricians (N= 340). The questionnaire developed specifically for this purpose was administered online to all practitioners identified through the national health care providers database with response rate 21,3 %.

Data were analysed by descriptive statistics, chi-squared test for independence and adjusted residual. ANOVA test was used to assess differences between groups.



## RESULTS

Overall, 63,2 % of the respondents did not have any experience with palliative care in their practice. Only 12,1 % of respondents used the service of specialised palliative care providers for children in their care. Main reasons for referring child for a specialist care was to provide terminal care (54 %), support for family (46 %), 24 hours care and access to multidisciplinary team (36,6 %).

The main barriers for providing palliative care were lack of knowledge in paediatric palliative care (69,4 %), lack of knowledge in pain control and other symptoms (68,4 %) and time demand of providing care at home (60,9 %).

The use of opioid analgesics in the practice of general paediatricians was minimal (3,2 %).

## CONCLUSION

The results of our study indicate, that general paediatricians have limited experience with providing palliative care in their practice and rarely use opioid analgesics. To enhance the role of the general paediatricians in palliative care provision, more education in paediatric palliative care is needed.

