

Prevalence of Patients with Palliative Needs in the Wards of Portuguese Public Hospitals

Capelas M.L.^{1,2,3} (luis.capelas@ucp.pt), Sapeta A.P.⁴, Mamede A.¹, Belo A.¹, Jorge M.¹, Oliveira M.¹, Simões N.¹, Passos V.¹, Macedo A.P.⁵, Pereira C.⁴, Mendes C.⁵, Macedo E.⁵, Macedo J.⁵, Gomes M.F.⁵, Mendes M.G.⁵, Peres P.⁵, Batista S.⁴, Vilaça S.⁵, Coelho S.P.F.^{6,7}

1)Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Institute of Health Sciences, Lisboa, Portugal; 2)Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Portuguese Observatory for Palliative Care, Lisbon, Portugal; 3)Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Health, Lisbon, Portugal; 4)Polytechnic Institute of Castelo Branco, School of Health Dr.Lopes Dias, Castelo Branco, Portugal; 5)University of Minho, Nursing School, Braga, Portugal; 6)Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Institute of Health Sciences, Porto, Portugal; 7)Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Centre for Interdisciplinary research in Health, Porto, Portugal



INTRODUCTION

The early referral to palliative care is one of the keys to the success of this care, to promote the best quality of life possible of patient and his family and to achieve the most important outcomes.

AIM

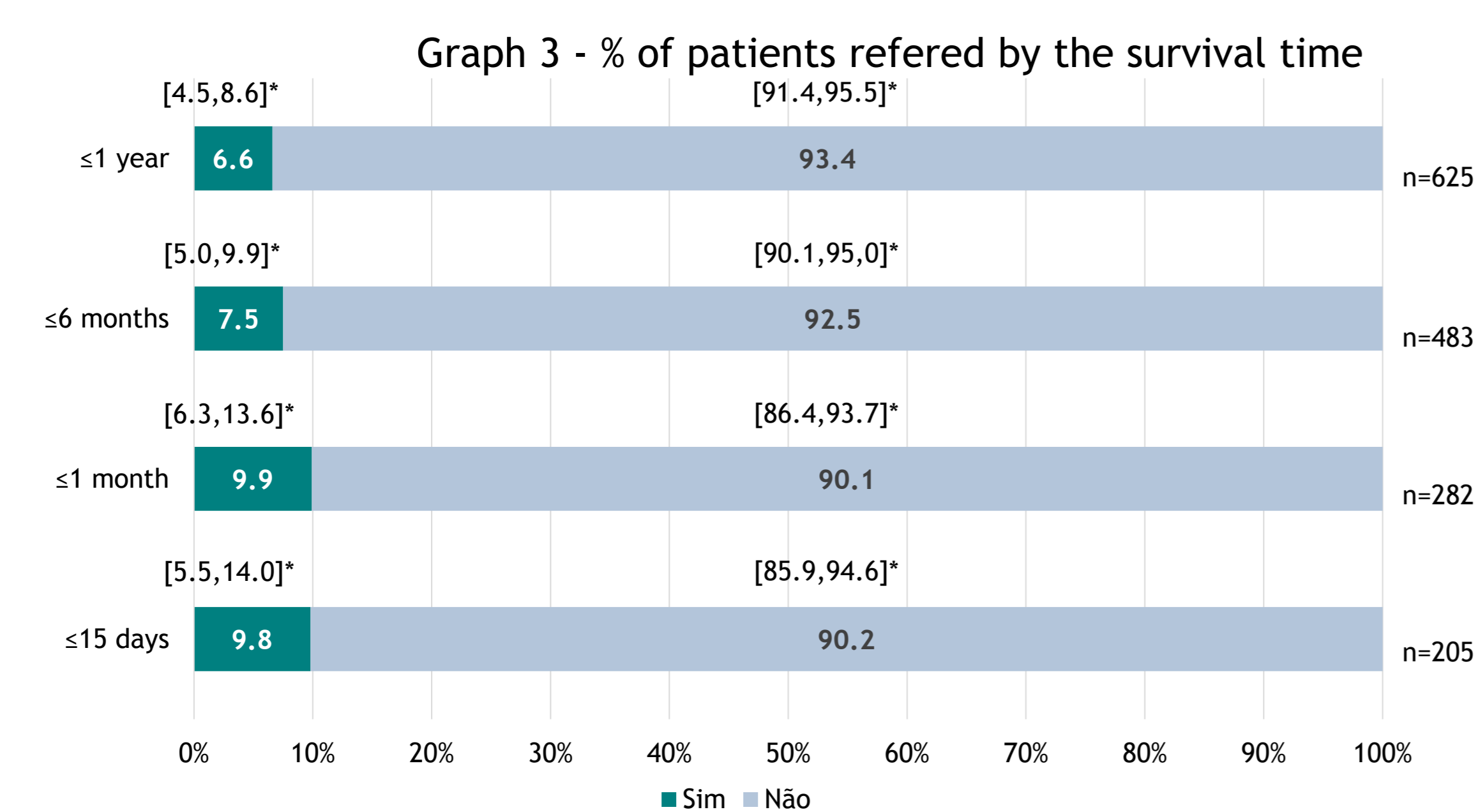
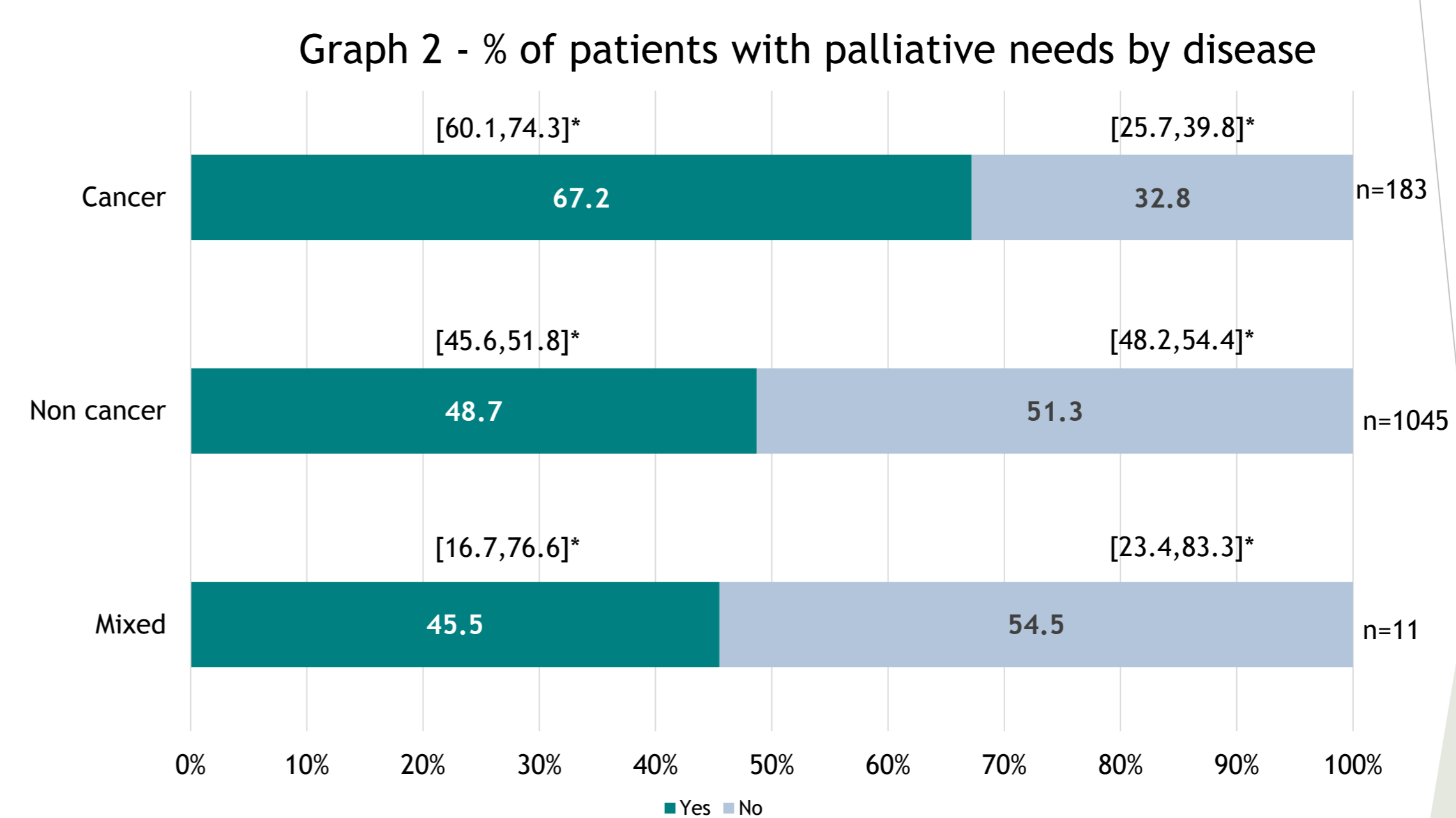
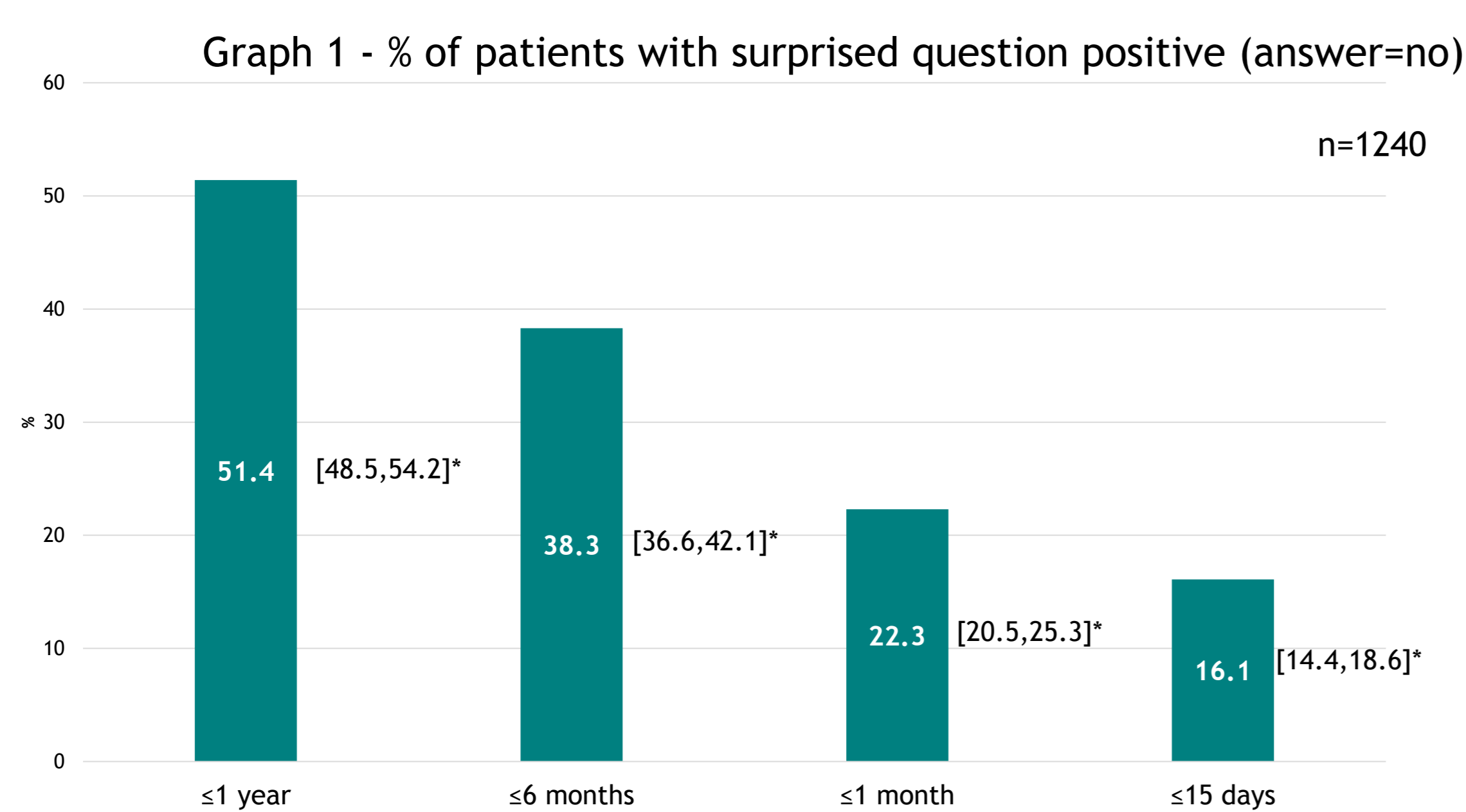
To determine the prevalence of patients with palliative need in the Portuguese public hospitals, from which how many are referenced to palliative care and if not what are the main reasons.

METHODS

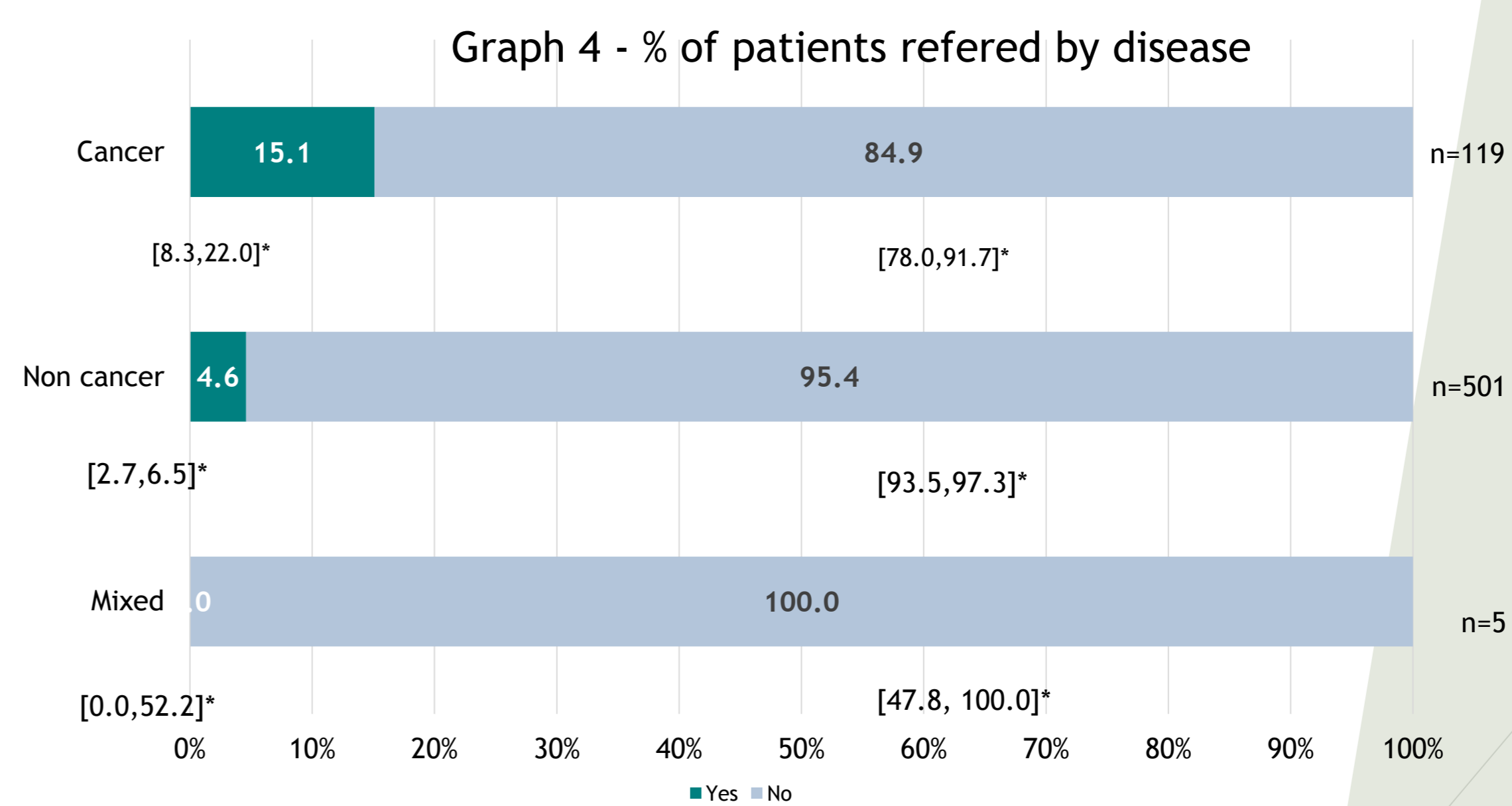
32 physicians from 11 hospitals were asked about 1273 patients (≥ 18 years old) using the surprised question(Would you be surprised if your patient dead within the next year, 6 months, 30 days and 15 days?); when the answer in at least one period was no, they were asked if the patient was referenced to palliative care and if not, they were invited to indicate 5 main reason from a list of 19. Exclusion criteria: patients in wards of paediatric, obstetrics, psychiatry, palliative care units e emergency room.

RESULTS

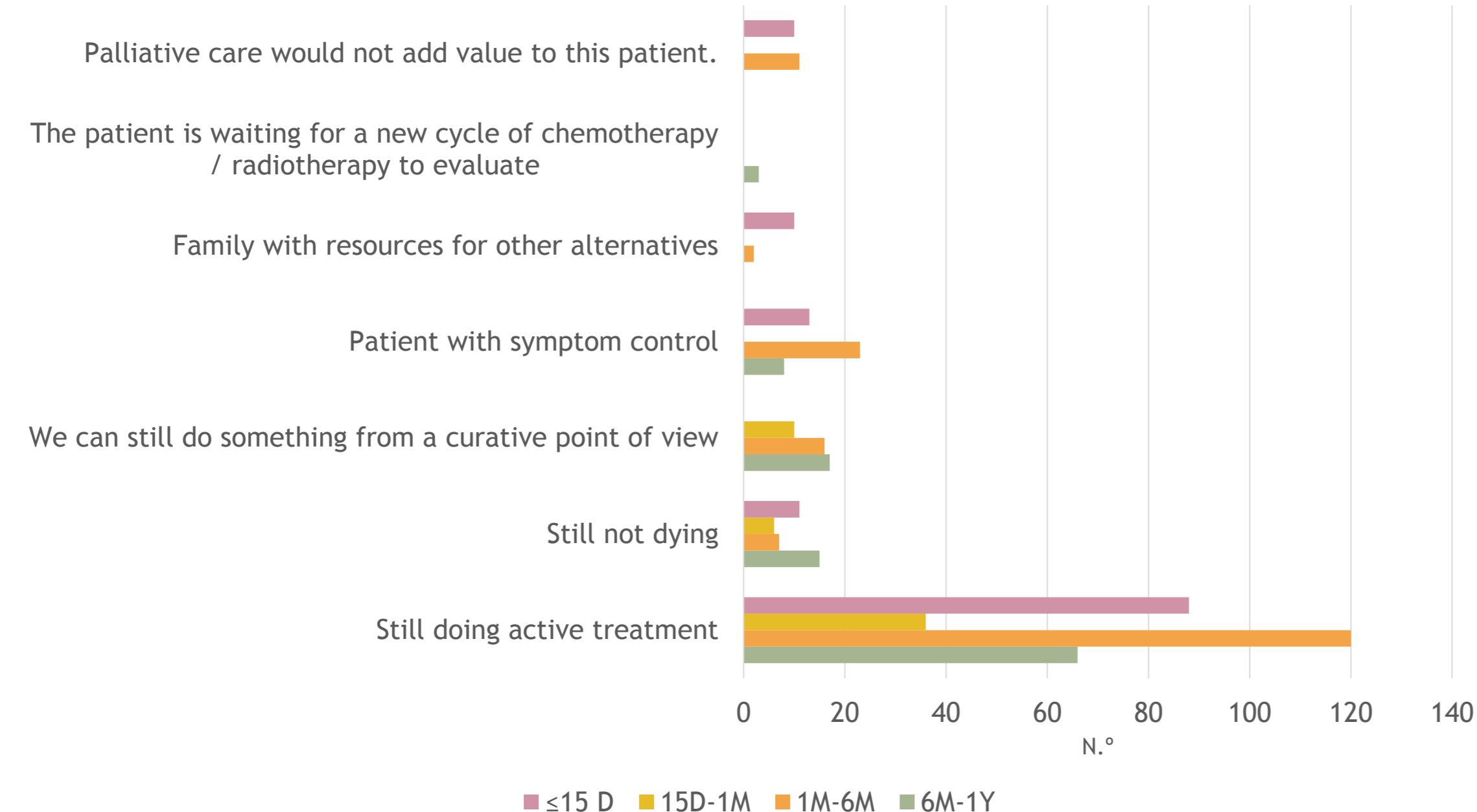
The dead was expected within 1 year for 51.4% (prevalence of patients with palliative care needs), within 6 months for 38.3%, within 30 days for 22.3% and within 15 days for 16.1%. 67.2% of cancer patients, 48.7% of non-cancer patients and 45.5% of mixed disease have palliative care needs. Only 6.8% of the patients whose dead was expected within 1 year, 7.5%, 9.9% and 9.8% of those dead was expected within 6 months, 30 days and 15 days, were referred to palliative care. The 5 main reasons for not referral were: the patient is still actively treated to the disease, we still can treat (cure) the patient, the symptom control was achieved, the patient is not dying and the palliative care was not the best for the patient.



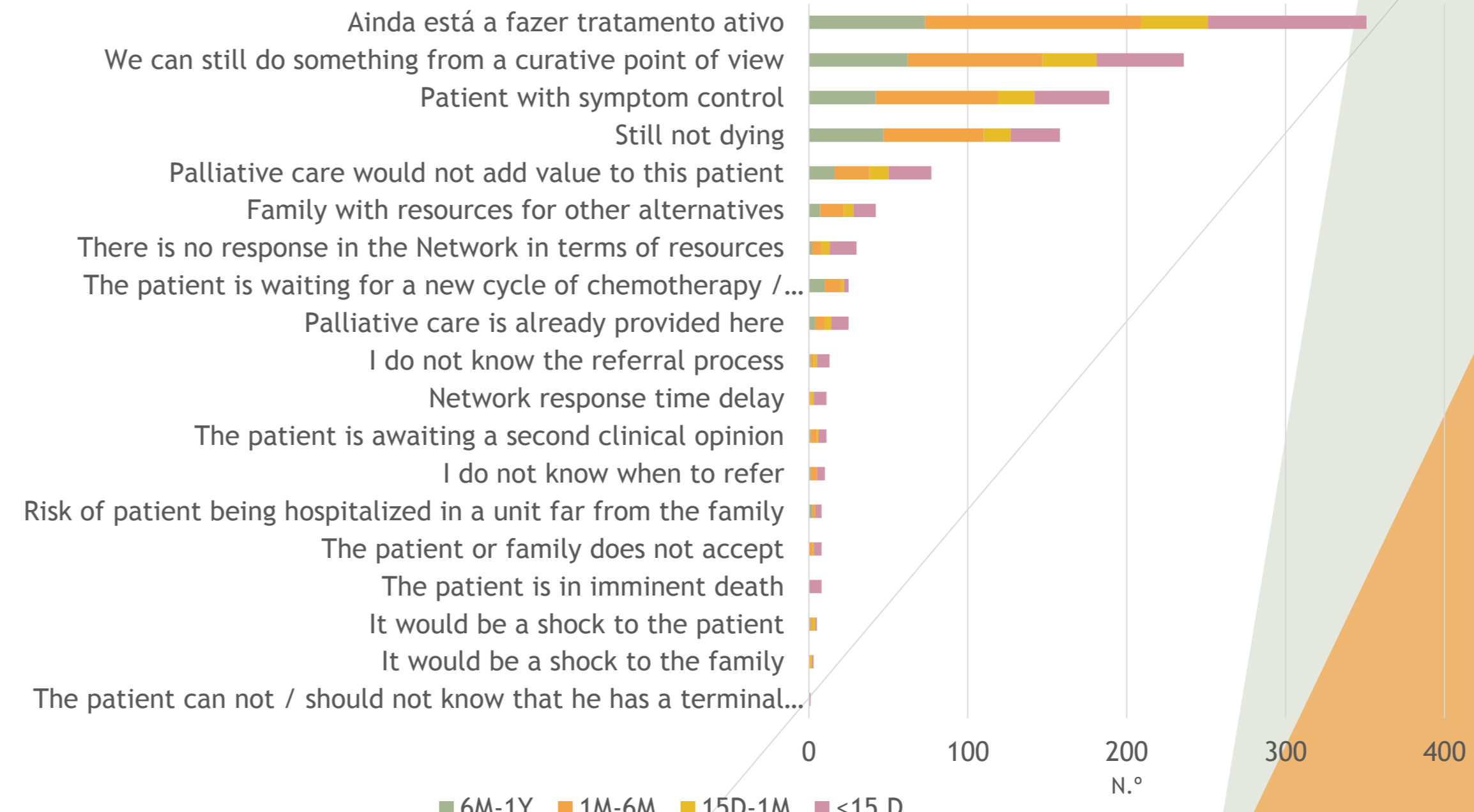
*-CI 95%



Graph 5 - number of patients by reason to not being referred and survival time (1st priority)



Graph 6 - number of patients by reason to not being referred and survival time



CONCLUSIONS

The wards of a general hospitals have a high prevalence of patients with palliative care needs but only a very few of them are referred to palliative care. More education of the physician in palliative care is needed to increase the proportion of patients referred ant to increase the early referral as one of the keys to success of health care