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Poster
n° CP-PC019

1 Background and Objective

Oral Transmucosal Fentanyl Citrate (OTFC) is an opioid analgesic indicated for management of breakthrough cancer pain in patients with malignancies who are already receiving and who are tolerant to opioid therapy for their underlying persistent cancer pain.

OTFC are usually use off-label prescription, especially in noncancer patients or patients without opioid maintenance treatment. This practice can expose to iatrogenic risks, lack of efficacy, abuse and addiction.

The Observatory of Drugs, Medical Devices and Therapeutic Innovation of Upper Normandy, conducted a study to assess the knowledge of pharmacists on these medications and assess dispensing practices (pharmaceutical analysis and advice to patients).

A previous study showed that 45% of prescriptions in the region are off-label (2012)

512 patients were treated by OTFC in 2014 in upper Normandy

2 Design

Between June and September 2015, two quizzes were sent to the 1344 pharmacists and 512 pharmacies in Upper Normandy:

- One included questions of knowledge and general practice,
- The other assess dispensing practices of OTFC prescriptions received at the counter, regarding indication, dosage and associated opioid medication.

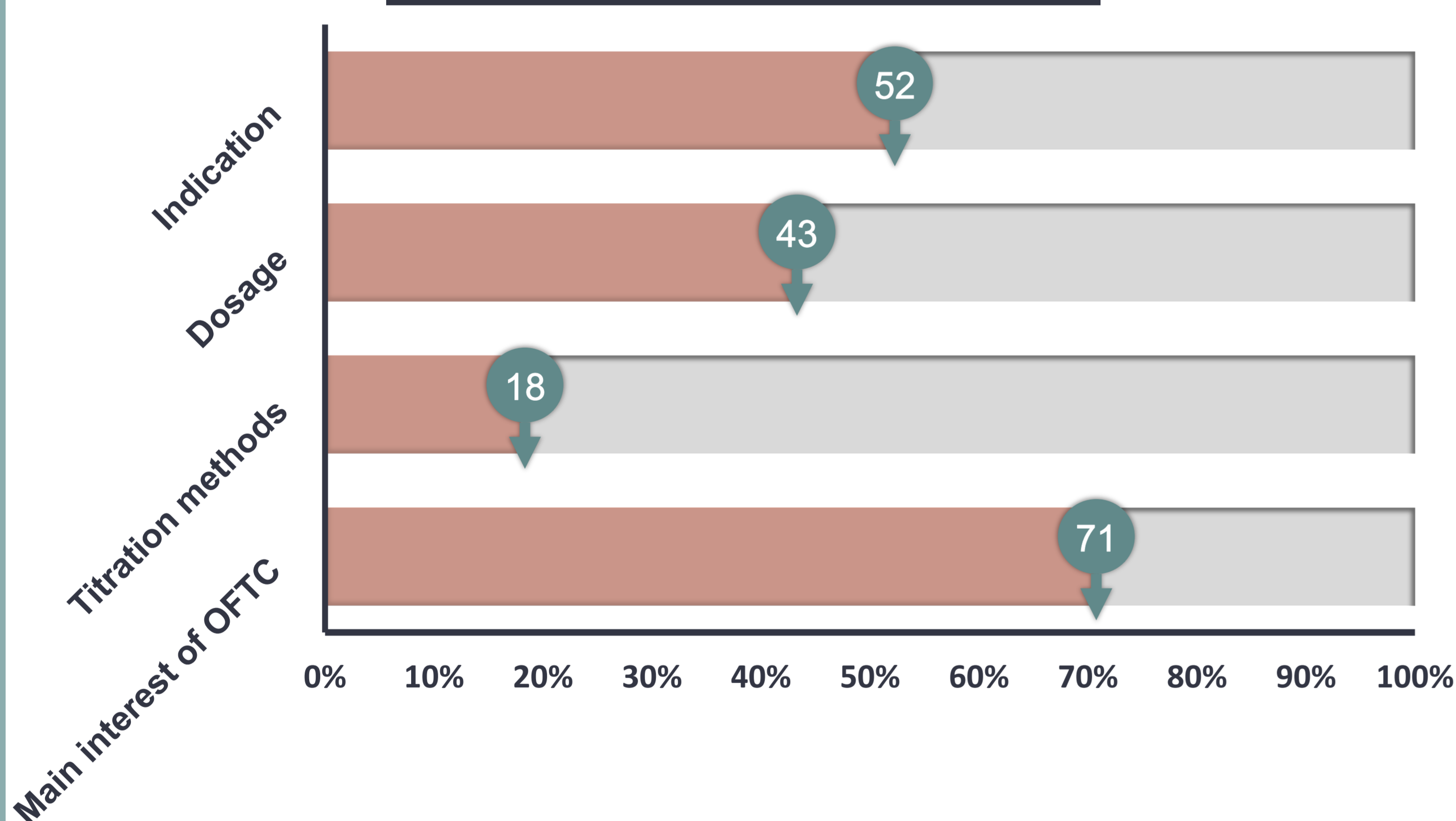


3 Results

knowledge and general practice :

- Of the 93 pharmacists who participate → 21% know the all of the 7 OFTC specialties
- 46% of them confuse transdermal and transmucosal fentanyl specialties

knowledge of pharmacists on:



- Only 30% have dispensed OFTC more than 10 times over the past 12 months, 28% never have.
- Off-label prescriptions and dispensations : They already have dispensed OFTC
 - in noncancer patients (45%)
 - without opioid maintenance treatment (36%)
- They consider not know enough about these drugs to be able to provide the necessary advice to patient (57%) and would like specific training on OFTC (89%).

Evaluation of dispensing practices :

- Of the 21 analyzed prescriptions,
 - Only 24% are consistent with the marketing authorization
 - Only 2 prescriptions have been discussed with the prescriber, and all were approved and dispensed.



- Dosage is higher than four units per day (24%)
- OTFC medicines are prescribing in noncancer patient (52%)
- There is no prescribed opioid maintenance treatment (24%)

4 Conclusion

OTFC specialties are occasionally dispensed and often misunderstanding by pharmacists. A good knowledge of OTFC is necessary to achieve the pharmaceutical analysis and provided appropriate advice to patients, in order to guarantee the good use of these medicines. Support tools for dispensation, recalling indication, dosage forms and strenghts, dosage, dose titration, methods of administration and patient advices for the 7 specialties marketed in France, are being developed.