



EVALUATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE OF THE GREEK ONCOLOGY COMMUNITY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SIDE EFFECTS ATTRIBUTED TO IMMUNOTHERAPY

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BACKGROUND

Early and accurate recognition of immune-related side effects arising from treatment with checkpoint inhibitors and modern immunotherapy drugs is of paramount importance for the optimal management of cancer patients. The goal of our study was to evaluate the grade of experience and knowledge of the Greek medical oncology staff regarding the management of side effects attributed to immunotherapy.

On our first interim analysis we collected 101 questionnaires (equally balanced between the 2 arms). The level of objective familiarity on managing and recognizing immune-related side effects, in clinical practice were similar between 2 arms. Greek Oncologists seem to have a relative very good experience in combining immunotherapy with chemotherapy, and a very good objective level of knowledge regarding the early recognition of immune-related side effects. However, it seems that there is an unmet need both in Greece and internationally for the oncologists to cooperate in the everyday clinical practice with a center of excellence in Immunotherapy in order to redirect a patient if needed.

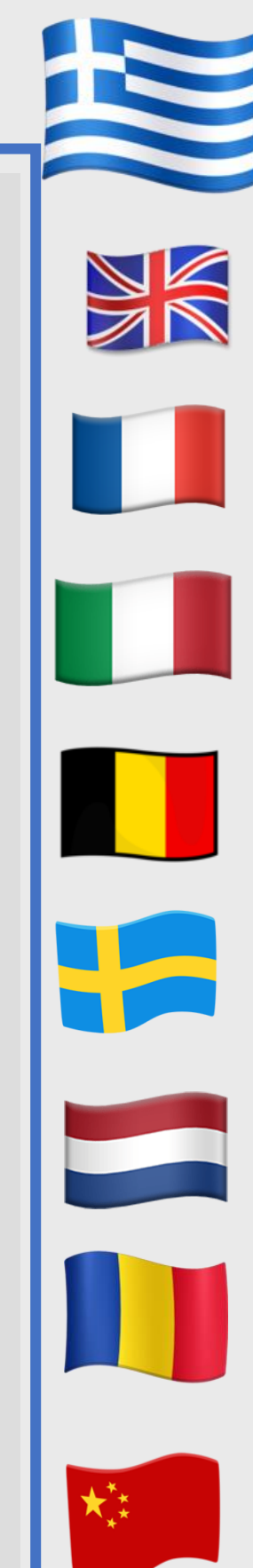
RESULTS

Another point of our study is that Greek Oncologists exhibit their need to cooperate more with consultants from other specialties experienced in immunotherapy (pneumonologists, neurologists, dermatologists, rheumatologists, endocrinologists, gastroenterologists, hematologists, cardiologists, clinical pharmacologists) that can help you with the management of immunotherapy-induced adverse events.

Greek oncologists rank as their first priority for the future, the need of better cooperation of Greek oncology centers with centers of excellence in immunotherapy and as their second the need of clinical practice guidelines, whereas their international colleagues rank as their first priority for the future the need of web-based continuing medical education and as a second the cooperation with a center of excellence in cancer immunotherapy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this cross-sectional 2-arms study that started on January 2019 and is ongoing, we used Google forms to collect data from Greek medical oncologist using a novel 25 questions questionnaire, consisting of 3 type of questions: type A questions evaluated the demographic characteristics of medical oncologists, type B questions evaluated the objective level of knowledge of the participants on the management of side effects of immunotherapy and type C questions evaluated the personal needs, concerns and thoughts of the participants regarding the optimal management of immuno-related side effects. In order to compare the differences in the level of knowledge and experience on immunotherapy between Greek oncologists (arm A) and their colleagues worldwide we translated the questionnaire in English and allow the participation of Oncologists from Europe, Russia, China, Latin America and USA which consisted the arm B of our study.



		Εθνικότητα		P value
		Ιατροί εξωτερικού	Ιατροί Ελλάδας	
Λίμνα	Αριθμός	29	46	0,138
	%	80,6%	93,9%	
Την επόμενη εργάσιμη ημέρα	Αριθμός	6	3	
	%	16,7%	6,1%	
Στην επόμενη προγραμματισμένη επίσκεψη	Αριθμός	1	0	
	%	2,8%	0,0%	

Charts 1,2,3. Familiarity and experience of medical oncologists on the management of immunotherapy related side effects

		Εθνικότητα		P value
		Ιατροί εξωτερικού	Ιατροί Ελλάδας	
Έχετε στην ομάδα σας γιατρούς-επαγγελματίες υγείας άλλων ειδικοτήτων με εμπειρία στην ανοσοθεραπεία που μπορούν να σας βοηθήσουν στη διαχείριση των παρενεργειών των σχετιζόμενων με την ανοσοθεραπεία;	Αριθμός	4	13	0,079
	%	11,1%	26,5%	
Ναι	Αριθμός	32	36	
	%	88,9%	73,5%	

		Εθνικότητα		P value
		Ιατροί εξωτερικού	Ιατροί Ελλάδας	
Όχι	Αριθμός	5	6	0,823
	%	13,9%	12,2%	
Ναι	Αριθμός	31	43	
	%	86,1%	87,8%	



CONCLUSIONS

Our study evaluated the level of knowledge and experience of the Greek Medical Oncologists regarding the management of side effects attributed to the use of immunotherapy in the daily practice and analyzed their concerns and unmet needs for a better and optimal use of immunotherapy in Oncology.



Chart 4. Optimal educational and learning unmet needs for better understanding and management of immunotherapy related side effects

		Εθνικότητα		P value
		Ιατροί εξωτερικού	Ιατροί Ελλάδας	
Διεθνείς κλινικές οδηγίες	Αριθμός	9	9	0,290
	%	25,0%	18,4%	
Συνεργασία με Κέντρο Αναφοράς	Αριθμός	1	2	
	%	2,8%	4,1%	
Εθνικές ομάδες εργασίας που συντάσσουν τις εθνικές κλινικές οδηγίες	Αριθμός	1	0	
	%	2,8%	0,0%	
Δια βίου μάθηση μέσω Internet	Αριθμός	2	3	
	%	5,6%	6,1%	
Ενημερωμένο σύστημα φαρμακοεπαγρύπνησης	Αριθμός	0	1	
	%	0,0%	2,0%	
Μεταπτυχιακά προγράμματα σπουδών στην ανοσοθεραπεία καρκίνου	Αριθμός	3	0	
	%	8,3%	0,0%	
Όλα τα παραπάνω	Αριθμός	20	34	
	%	55,6%	69,4%	

CONTACT

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