

# A European Survey of Oncology Nurse Breakthrough Cancer Pain Practices

*Tone Rustøen<sup>1</sup>, Yvonne Wengström<sup>2</sup>, Jenske Geerling<sup>3</sup>,  
Theodora Pappa<sup>4</sup>, Carina Rundström<sup>5</sup>, Isolde Weisse<sup>6</sup>,  
Sian Williams<sup>7</sup> and Bostjan Zavrtnik<sup>8</sup>*

*<sup>1</sup>Oslo University Hospital, Norway; <sup>2</sup>Karolinska Institute, Sweden; <sup>3</sup>University Medical Center Groningen, the Netherlands; <sup>4</sup>Ag. Anargyri Oncology Hospital, Greece; <sup>5</sup>Karolinska University Hospital, Sweden; <sup>6</sup>Universitäts-Frauenklinik Tübingen, Germany; <sup>7</sup>University of Surrey, the UK; and <sup>8</sup>Institute of Oncology Ljubljana, Slovenia.*



# Background

- ▶ Pain management plays an important role in oncology nursing.
- ▶ A European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS) survey amongst European oncology nurses was conducted.
- ▶ **The aim of the survey was to gain insight into:**
  - ▶ Management of breakthrough cancer pain (BTCP).
  - ▶ BTCP practice patterns; assessment and management.
  - ▶ Level of confidence in managing BTCP episodes.
  - ▶ View on BTCP's impact on cancer patients daily life.



# Method

- ▶ A survey was conducted between September 30 and November 15, 2010.
- ▶ 12 participating countries.
- ▶ 1 618 nurses recruited - completion rate 72 % (1 164 nurses).
- ▶ The nurses were recruited through EONS' website ([www.cancernurse.eu](http://www.cancernurse.eu)) and in some countries also by invitation from the national oncology nursing societies or by invitation by email to nurses in cancer care on different wards.



# The questionnaire

- ▶ The questionnaire was developed by the EONS Breakthrough Cancer Pain Working Group with the multidisciplinary advisory board assuming an overall scientific responsibility.
- ▶ The final survey questionnaire consisted of 36 questions.
- ▶ It was made in English and then translated into the local languages of the participating countries using standardized back forward procedure.



# The questionnaire cont.

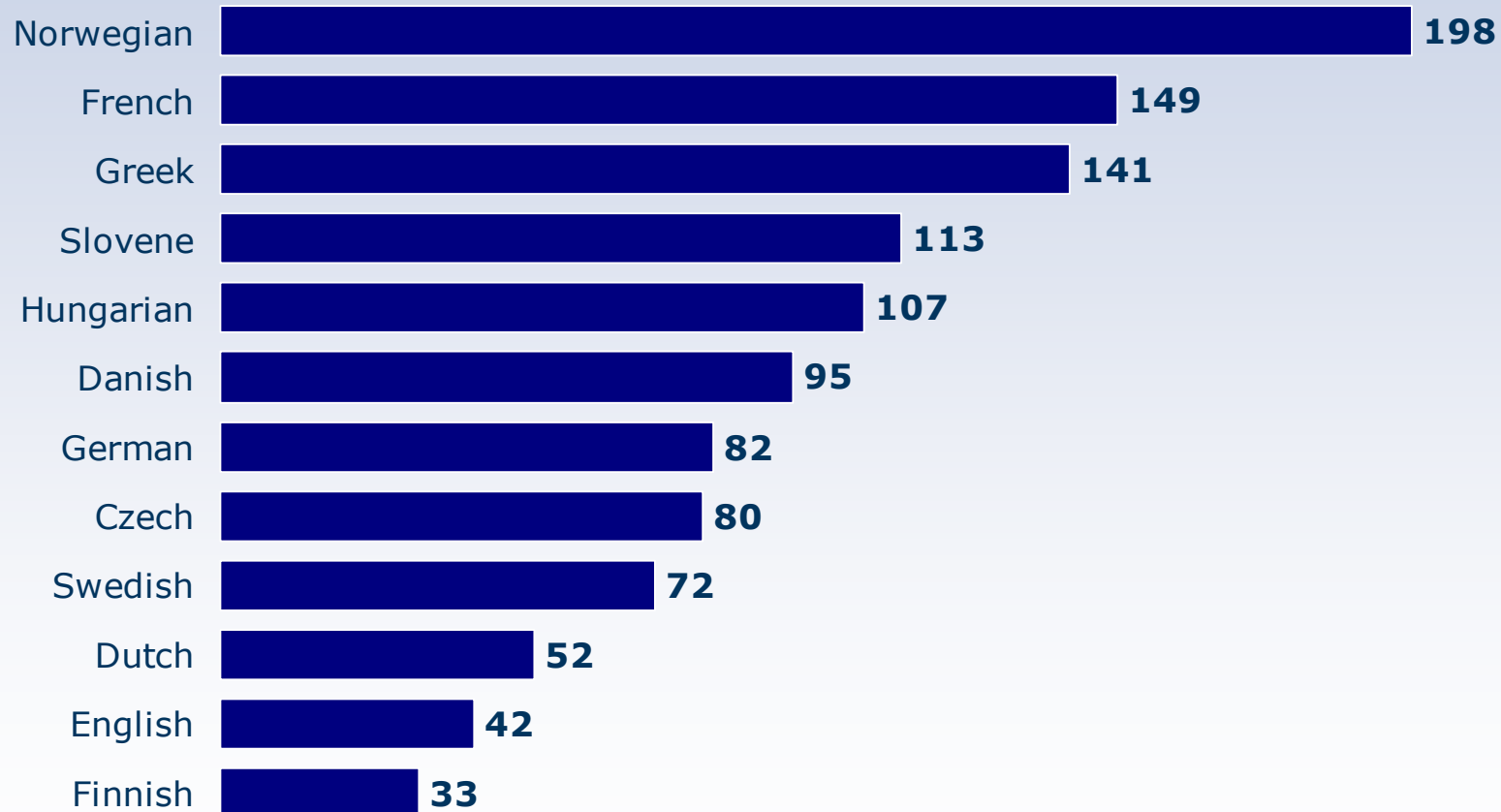
- Background characteristics of the nurse
- Pain management (treatment)
- Nurses' experiences with BTCP
- Characteristics of BTCP (including definition)
- Their view on patients' compliance
- Pain assessment and the use of tools
- Confidence in advising patients
- Impact of BTCP on daily life
- What may exacerbate/prompt the BTCP



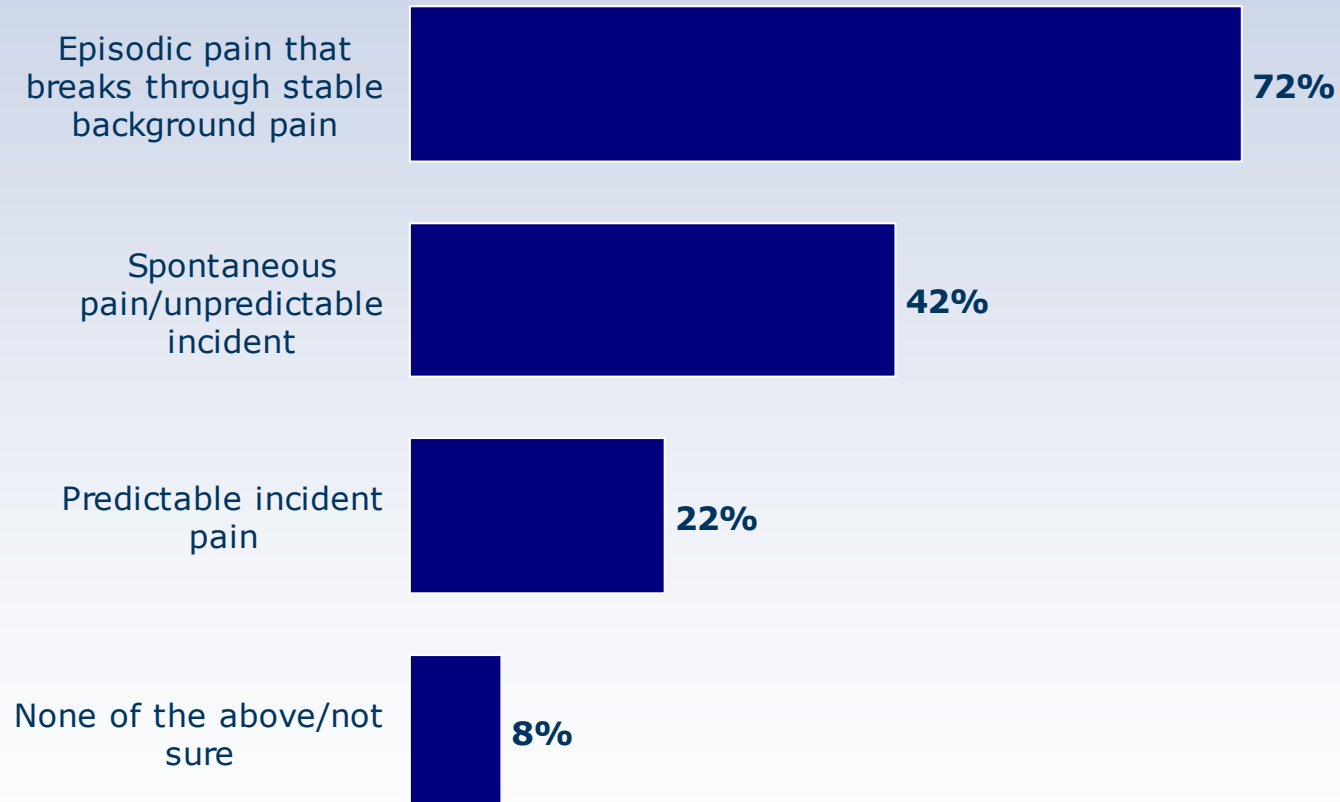
# Results



# Survey completes by country

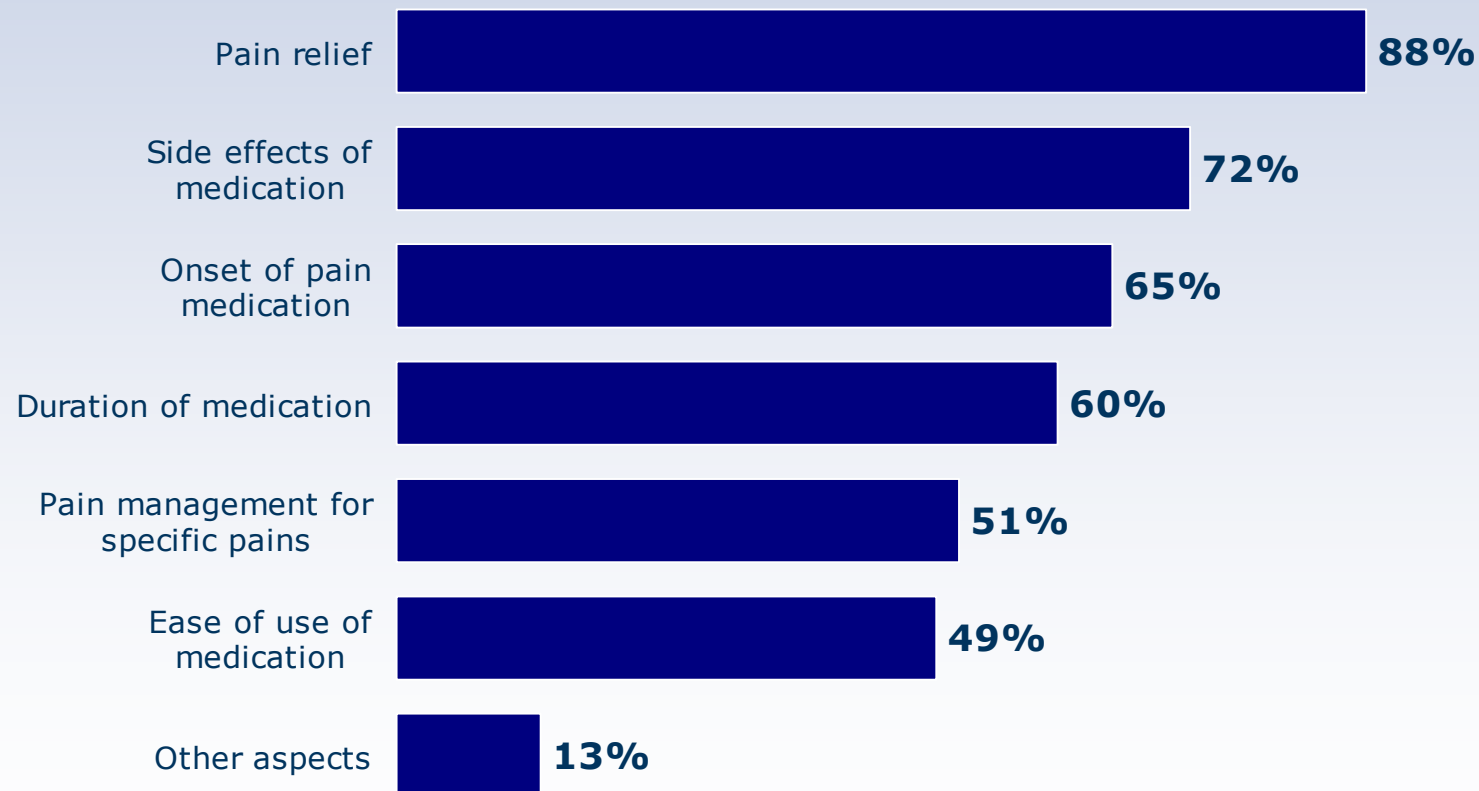


# Definition of BTCP



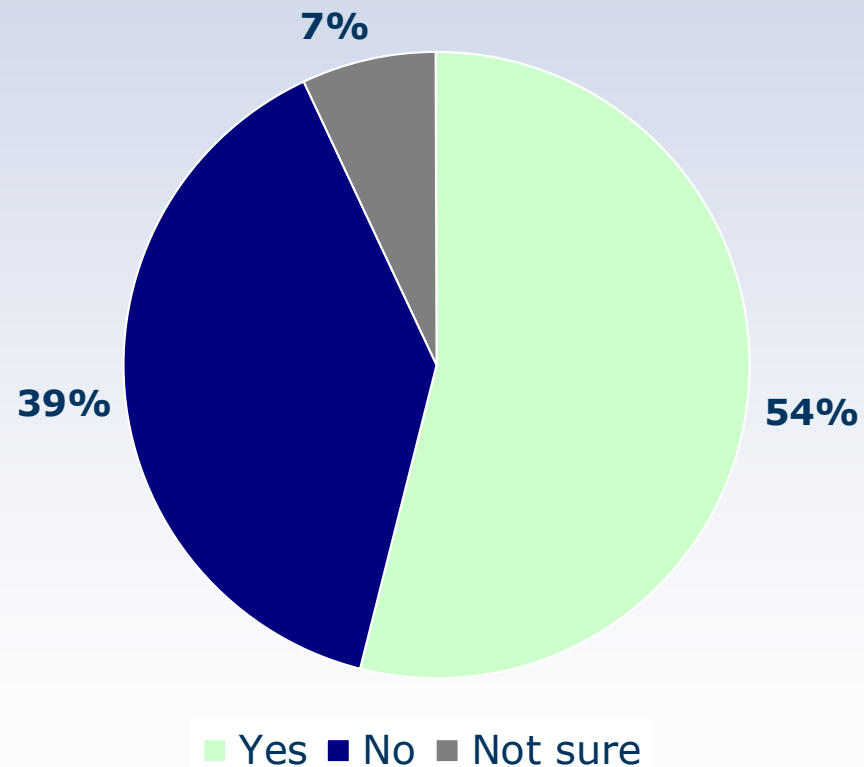
# Discuss pain management with their patients

- ▶ 98% of the nurses did discuss pain management with their patients.



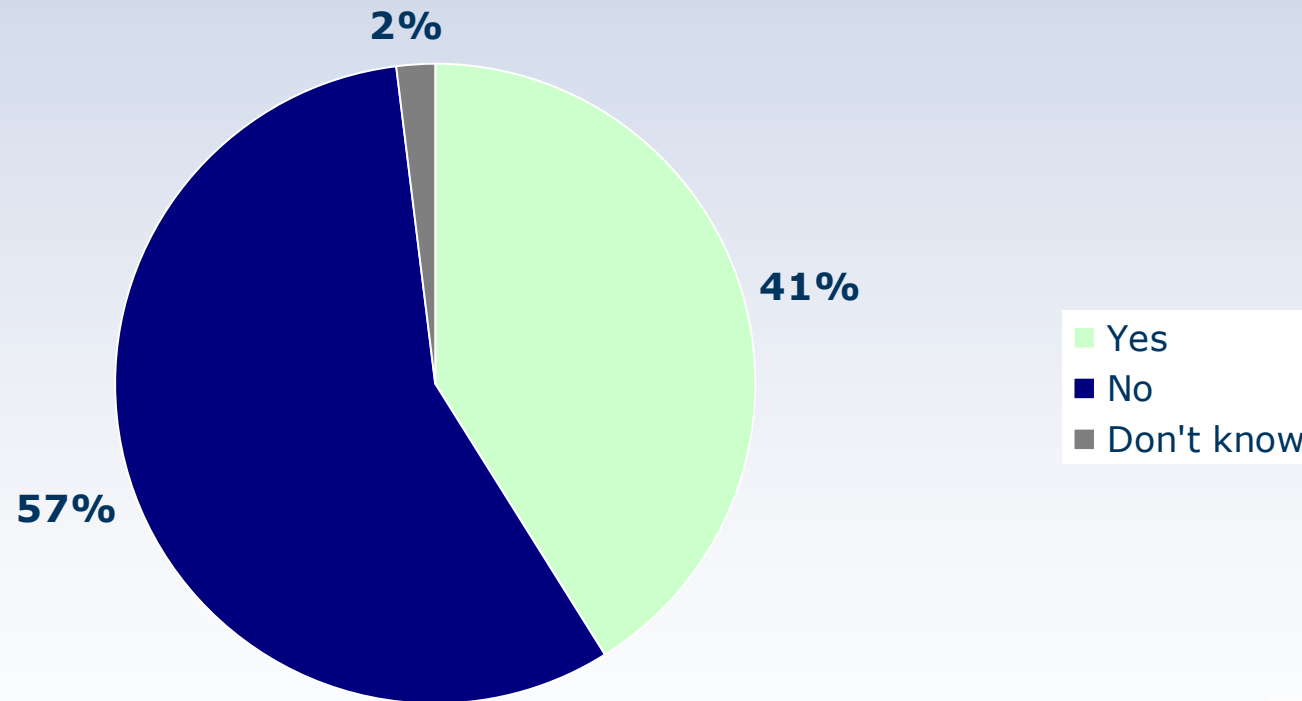
# Pain assessment tool?

- ▶ 46 % of nurses did not have a pain assessment tool to help them diagnose BTCP.



# Training in BTCP management

- 57 % of the nurses did not receive any training on BTCP management.



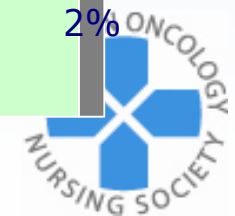
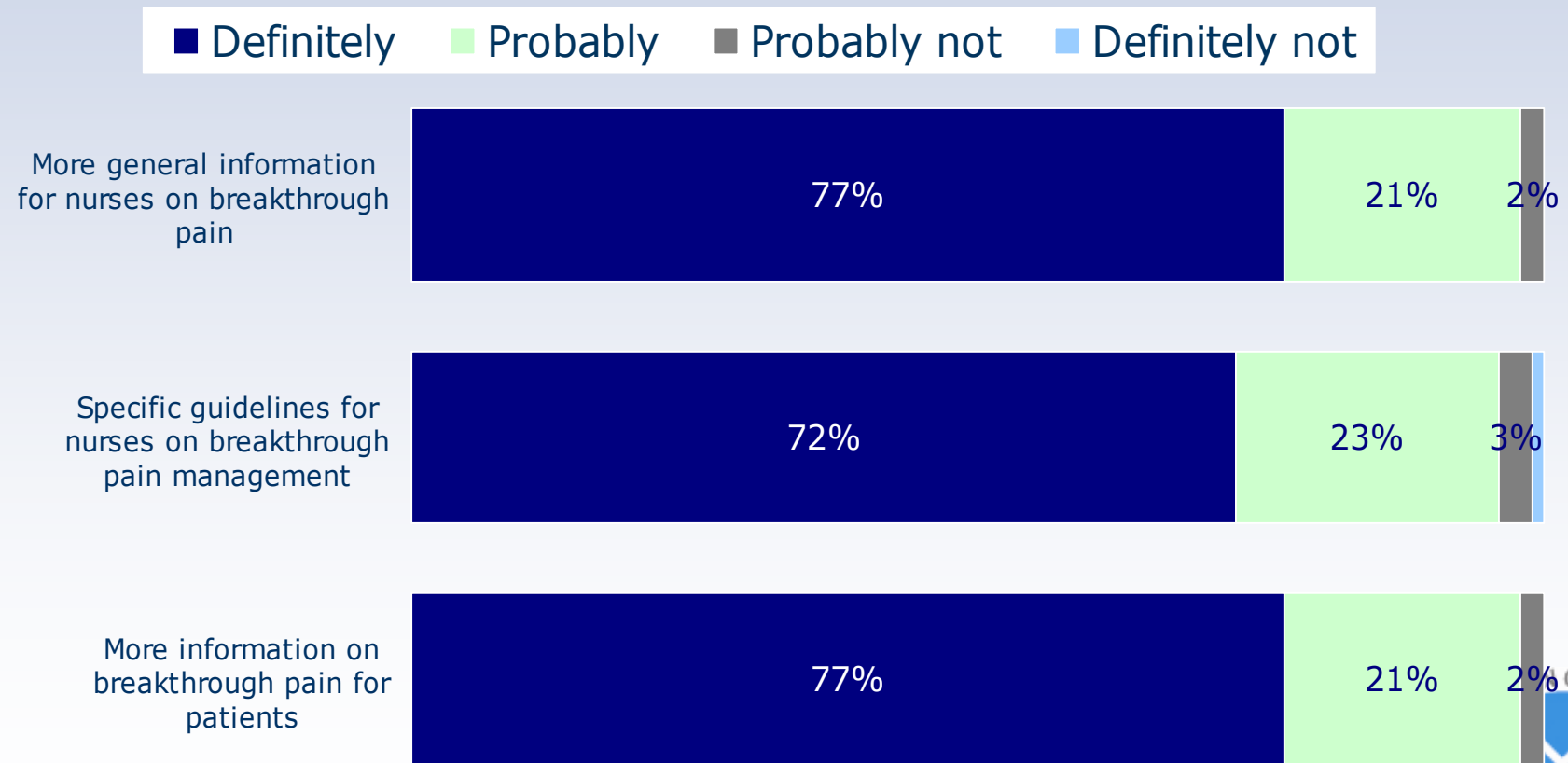
# Confidence

- If the nurses did not use any assessment tool and did not have any training in BTCP- they had more difficulty in distinguishing between background and BTCP.
- 36 % of nurses did not feel confident in advising patients on BTCP management.



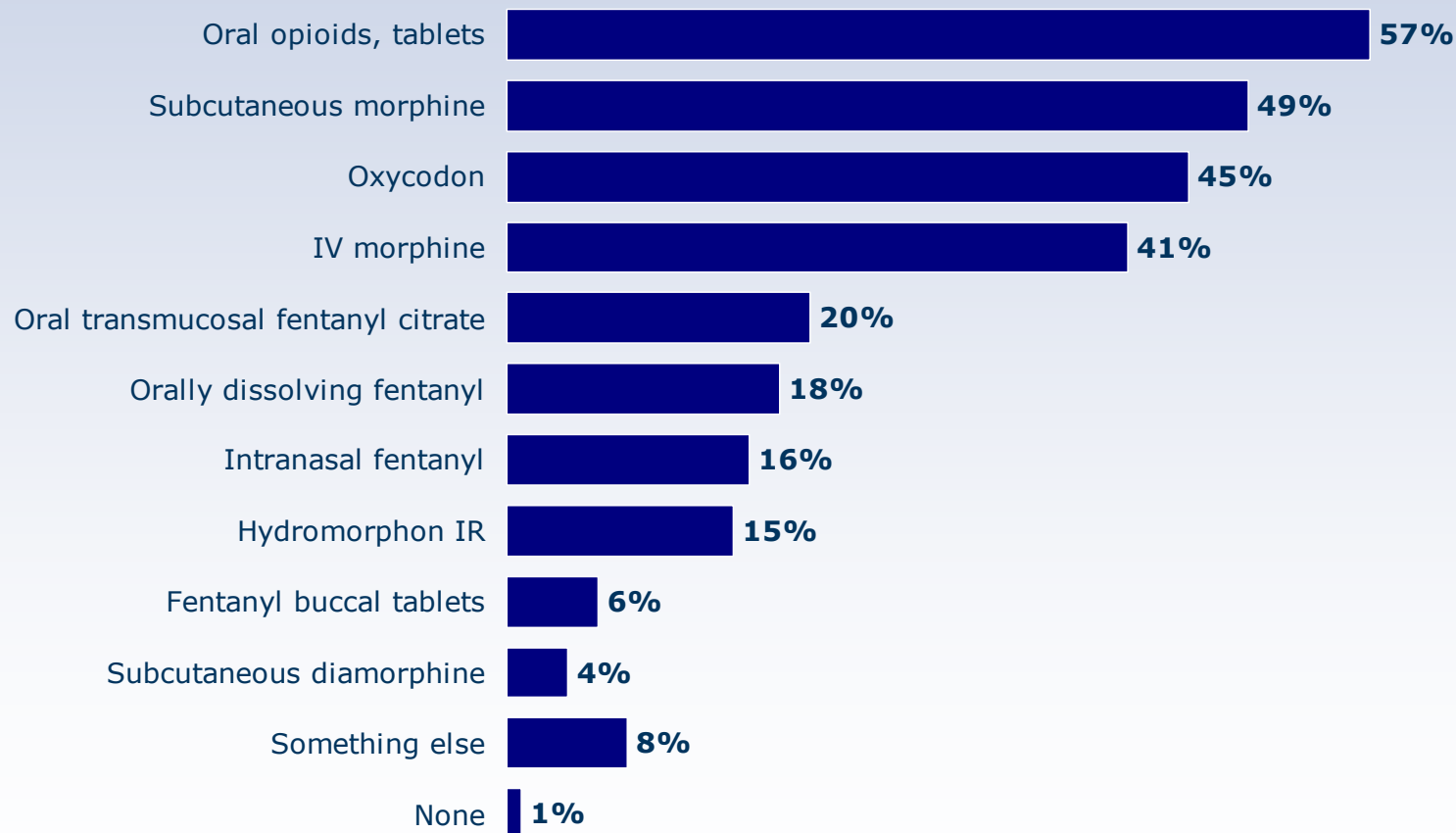
# Need for more information about BTCP

- The majority of nurses felt there was a need for more information on BTCP.



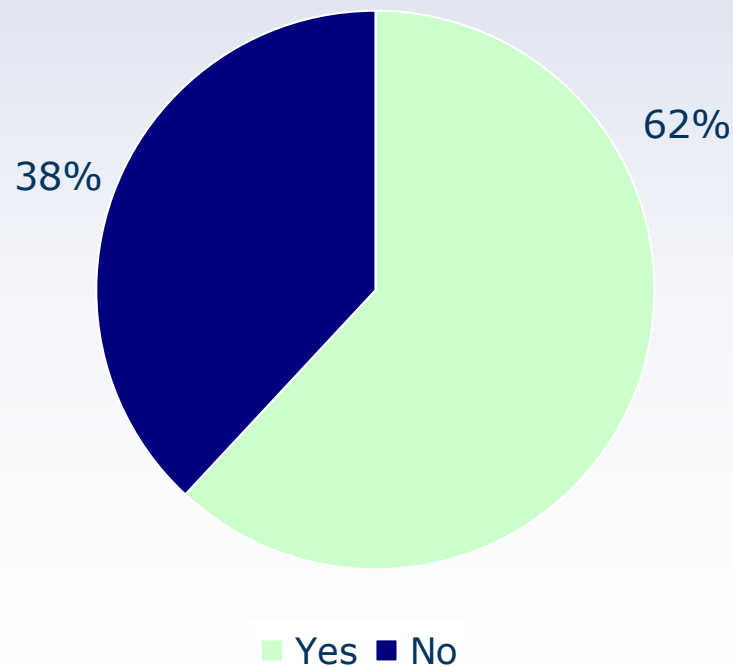
# Treatment

► 57 % of nurses said oral opioids were used to treat BTCP.



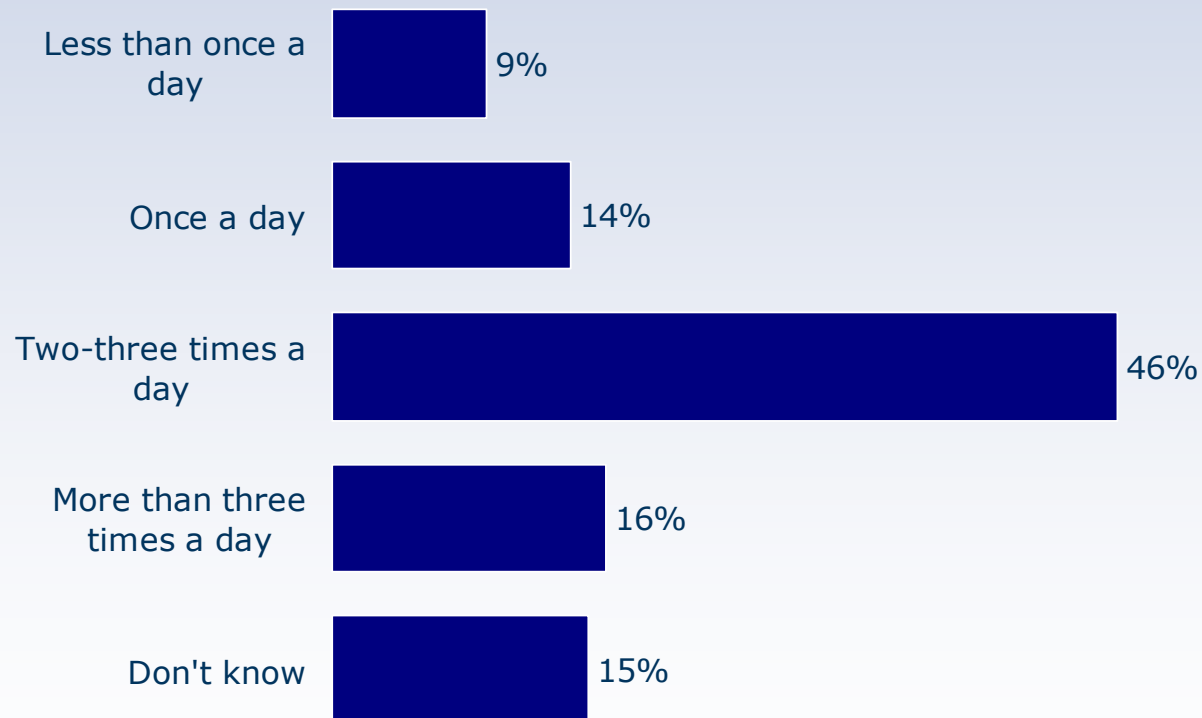
# Treatment

- 38 % of nurses were not aware that medication specifically developed for BTCP exists.
- Nurses who had a pain assessment tool or had received training in BTCP management were significantly more likely to be aware of medication specifically developed for BTCP.



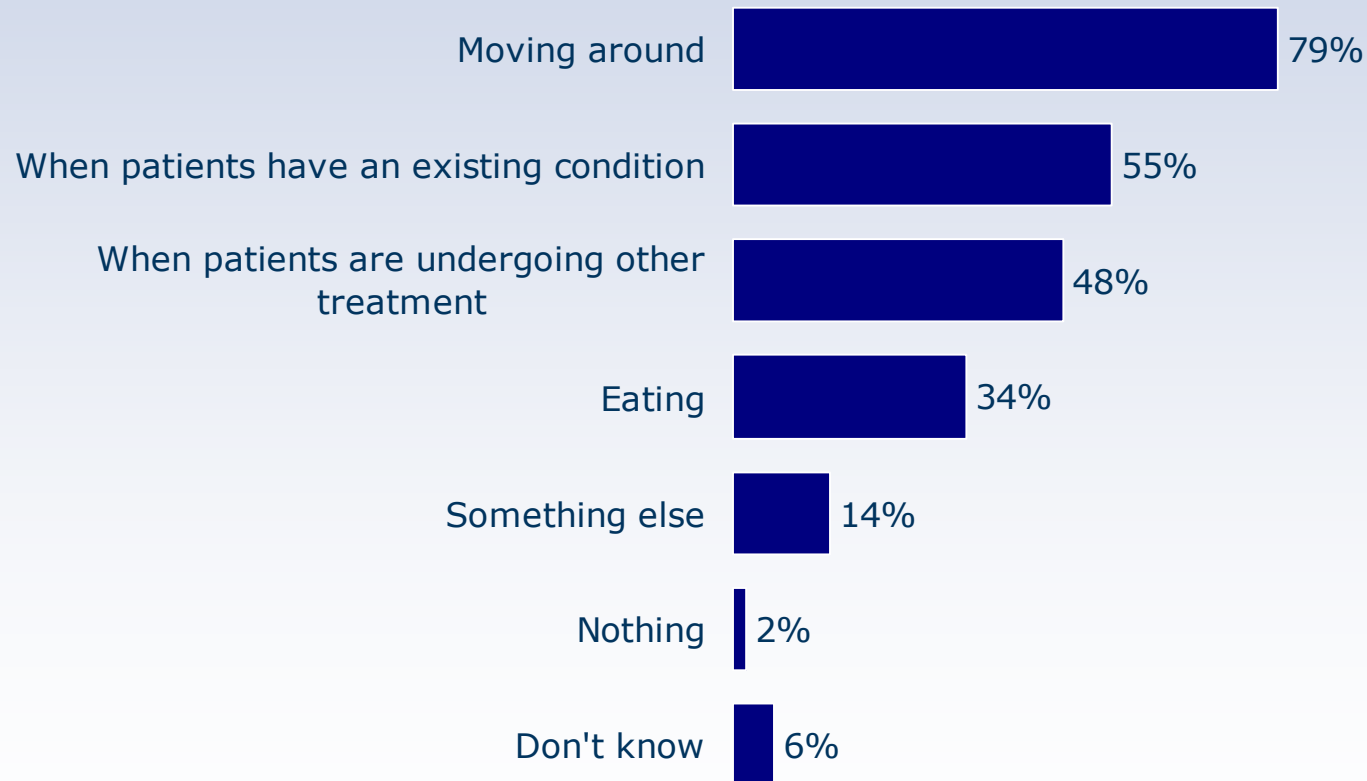
# Living with BTCP

- ▶ 46 % of nurses said they think BTCP tends to affect patients 2-3 times a day.



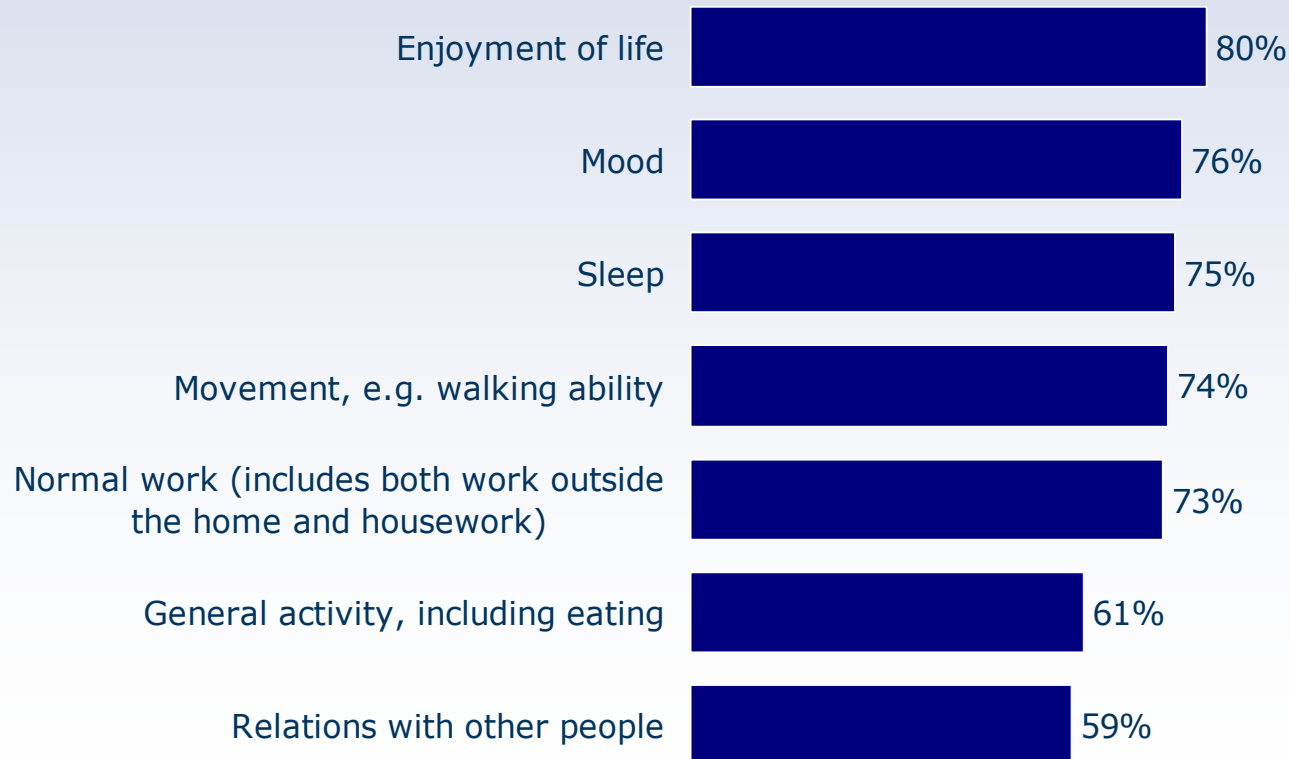
# Living with BTCP

- Moving around was seen as the activity which most exacerbates or prompts BTCP.



# Living with BTCP

- Nurses reported that 75 % of their patients tended to describe their BTCP as severe.
- 77 % of nurses said that BTCP had a significant impact on their patients' lives.



# Conclusion

- **Need for:**
  - Relevant training in assessment, management and treatment of BTCP.
  - Information about BTCP's impact on quality of life.
  - BTCP guidelines.
  - Variations across countries

