

# Pharmacists taking up a role in the detection and referral of patients with (unmet) mental and psychosocial needs

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## Background

Pharmacy level : evolution from a medication-centered to a patient-centered basis (↗ counseling and advice)

Patient level : psychosocial and mental health needs ↗

Community pharmacists : accessible + locally embedded care providers □ ideal position to detect unmet needs

## Aims

1. Examine the feasibility and added value of a new role for the pharmacist in the detection and referral of (unmet) psychosocial needs
2. Gain insight in the psychosocial vulnerabilities that pharmacists are most often confronted with

## Project design and methods



September '21  
**Training** of 70 Flemish pharmacists in the detection and referral of psychosocial needs

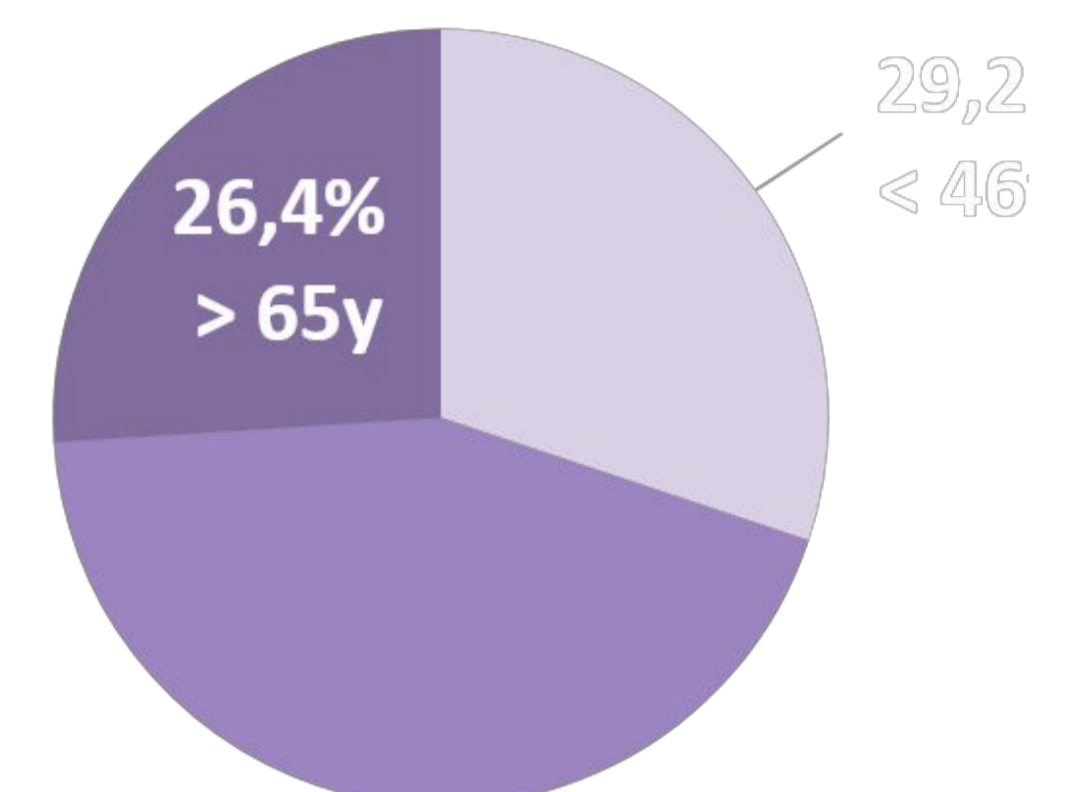


October '21 – January '22  
**Detection** of patients with possible psychosocial needs - **starting** the conversation - **informing** patients about possible help - if needed and explicit consent, direct **referral** to a Center for General Wellbeing  
**Registering** all contacts related to psychosocial wellbeing on online study platform – participation in focus group to share experiences with other pharmacists

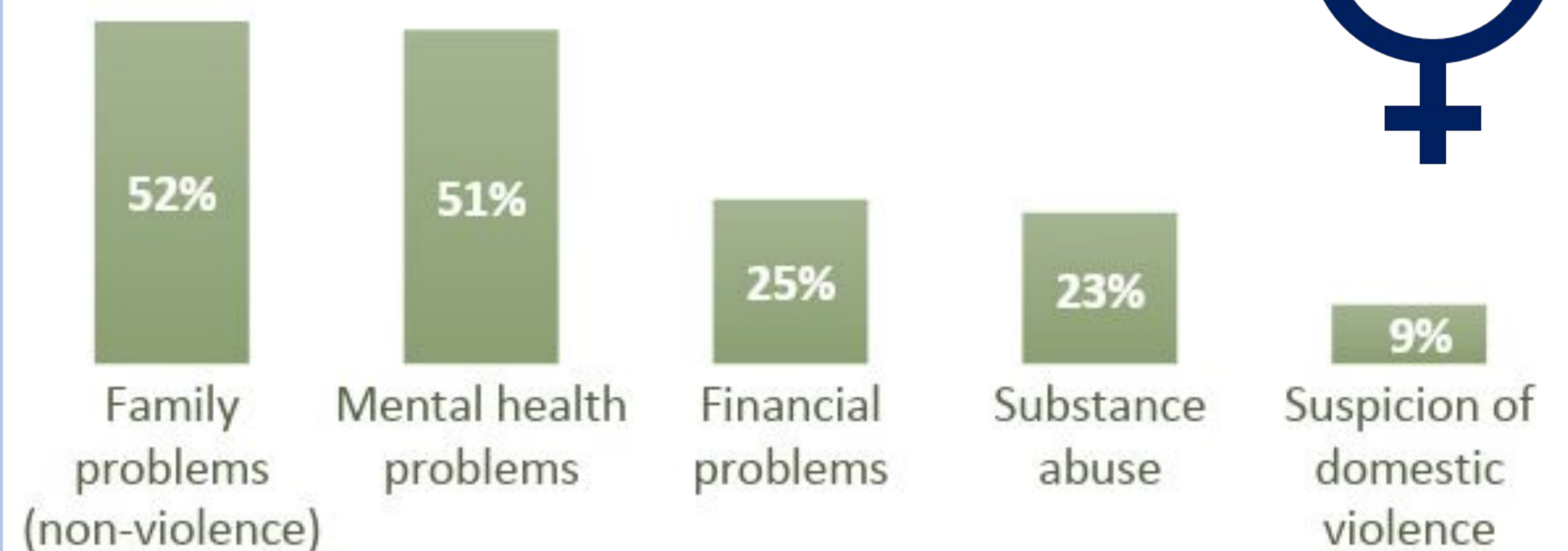
## Quantitative findings

79 registered patient contacts

- 82% information leaflet
- 67% advise about possible help
- 23% direct referral



## Types of psychosocial needs registered



## Qualitative findings

- Great willingness from pharmacists to take an active referrer role in psychosocial care
- Advice generally appreciated by patients
- Good cooperation with and knowledge about local psychosocial care services is crucial
- High workload as main barrier : COVID-19 + flu season □ time constraints and possible under-reporting of psychosocial needs

## Future

Project expansion - Gain insight in patient perspective  
Create sustainable co-operation between pharmacists and local social workers  
Implementation of the training in student courses

## Key message

Pharmacists can be valuable partners in psychosocial care by identifying vulnerable patients with unmet psychosocial needs and directing them to appropriate care



## Acknowledgements

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