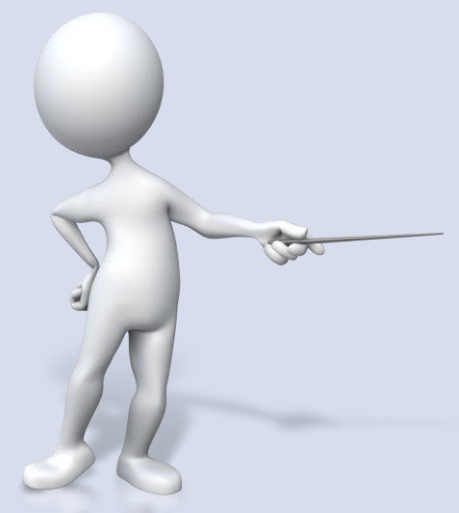


THE VALUE OF THERAPEUTIC ADHERENCE IN THE TREATMENT OF DRUG-RESISTANT EPILEPSY

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Background and Importance



Cenobamate is a drug approved by EMA (European Medicines Agency) on 26th March 2021 as adjunctive therapy of seizures in adult patients with drug-resistant epilepsy who have not been adequately controlled with at least two antiepileptic drugs.

Its mechanism of action is not fully understood. Cenobamate is prescribed in a titrated dosage, starting at 12.5mg/day and increasing up to 400mg/day, according to the specialist prescriptions.

Materials and Methods

The disbursements of cenobamate from September 2022 to May 2024 were extracted from the **Apulian pharmacy database**.

- An anonymous questionnaire, based on the **Morisky scale**, was used to assess the therapeutic adherence and quality of life (QoL) of patients treated with cenobamate.
- Data collected included patient demographics (age, gender, epilepsy type, polytherapy with other antiseizure drugs), compliance and therapeutic adherence.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to evaluate the drug utilization, therapeutic adherence and improvement of the quality of life (QoL) of patients referred to an Apulian pharmacy, where the drug was dispensed, after conducting an assessment of prescription appropriateness.

Results

- The study included **34 patients** with **focal (or partial) structural, drug-resistant epilepsy** treated with cenobamate, including **1 off-label** prescription patient diagnosed with early childhood epileptic encephalopathy.
- The cohort consisted of 56% female and 44% male, with an average age of 38.5 years.

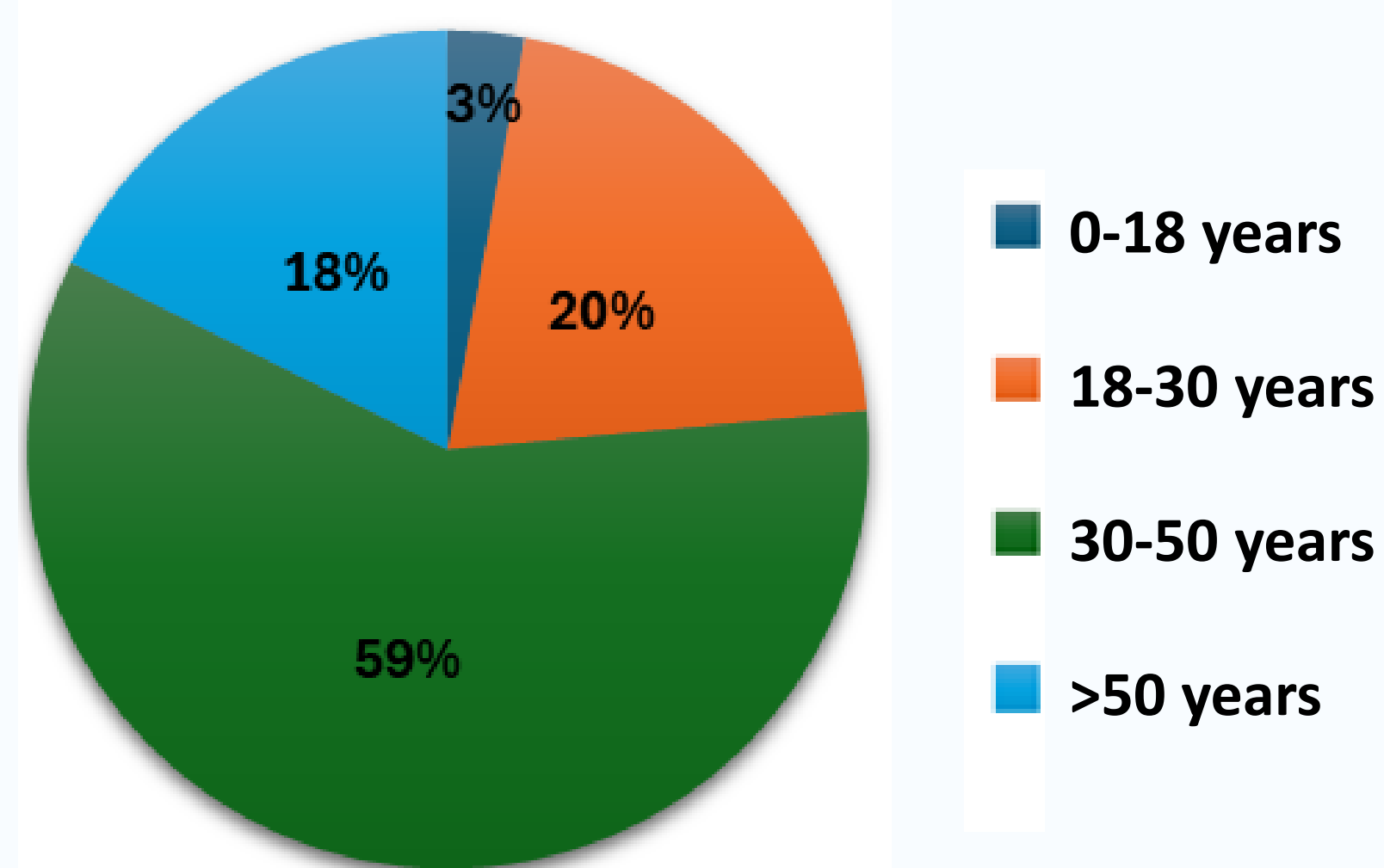


Figure 1. Age distribution: 59% were aged 30–50 years, 20% were 18–30 years, 18% were >50 years, and 3% were 0–18 years, all with childhood-onset conditions.



- **Polypharmacy data revealed that :**
 - 9 patients combined another antiseizure medication (ASM)
 - 12 patients combined 2 ASMs
 - 4 patients combined 3 ASMs
 - 2 patients combined 4 ASMs

- To date, **28 out of 34 patients were adherent to therapy, 2 discontinued therapy due to comorbidities** (chemotherapy, kidney problems), **3 suspended therapy due to ineffectiveness and/or serious adverse reactions** (confusional state), **1 had never taken it**.
- Questionnaire analysis showed that 20 patients had high adherence, 6 intermediate, and 1 low.

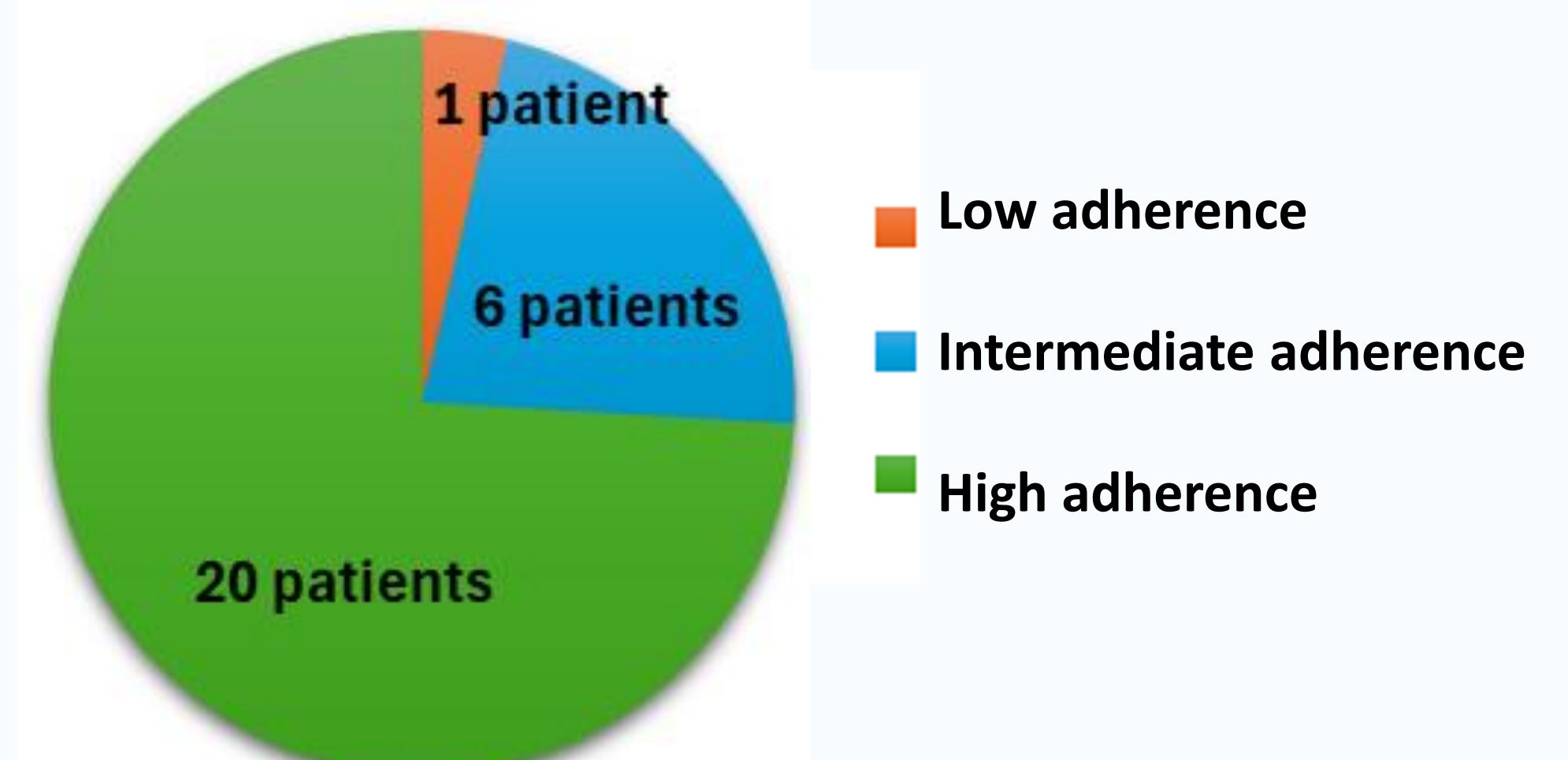


Figure 2. Pie histogram showing the distribution of patients' therapeutic adherence.

- Most patients **were not autonomous in daily activities** and did not lead a normal life.



71.4% of patients reported an **improvement** in QoL, with a reduction in epileptic episodes.



25% despite being adherent to treatment, **did not report** any improvement in QoL.

Conclusion and Relevance

This study underlines adherence to therapy, improvement of QoL in patients taking cenobamate and prescription appropriateness, supporting the excellent impact of this new therapeutic alternative. This study also underscores the critical role of pharmacists in monitoring emerging therapies.

