

# Access to Bedside Hydration and Hydration status among Oncology in-patients: A Quality improvement Project

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## Introduction

Access to water at the bedside is an important aspect of patient care. This is especially important for the bed-bound patients. Non-availability of water by the bedside can sometimes leads to dehydration which in-turn leads to a number of complications prolonging the hospital stays of the patients. The Eatwell Guide formulated by the NHS recommends that an average adult in the UK should drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluids each day—around 1.2-1.5 litres.

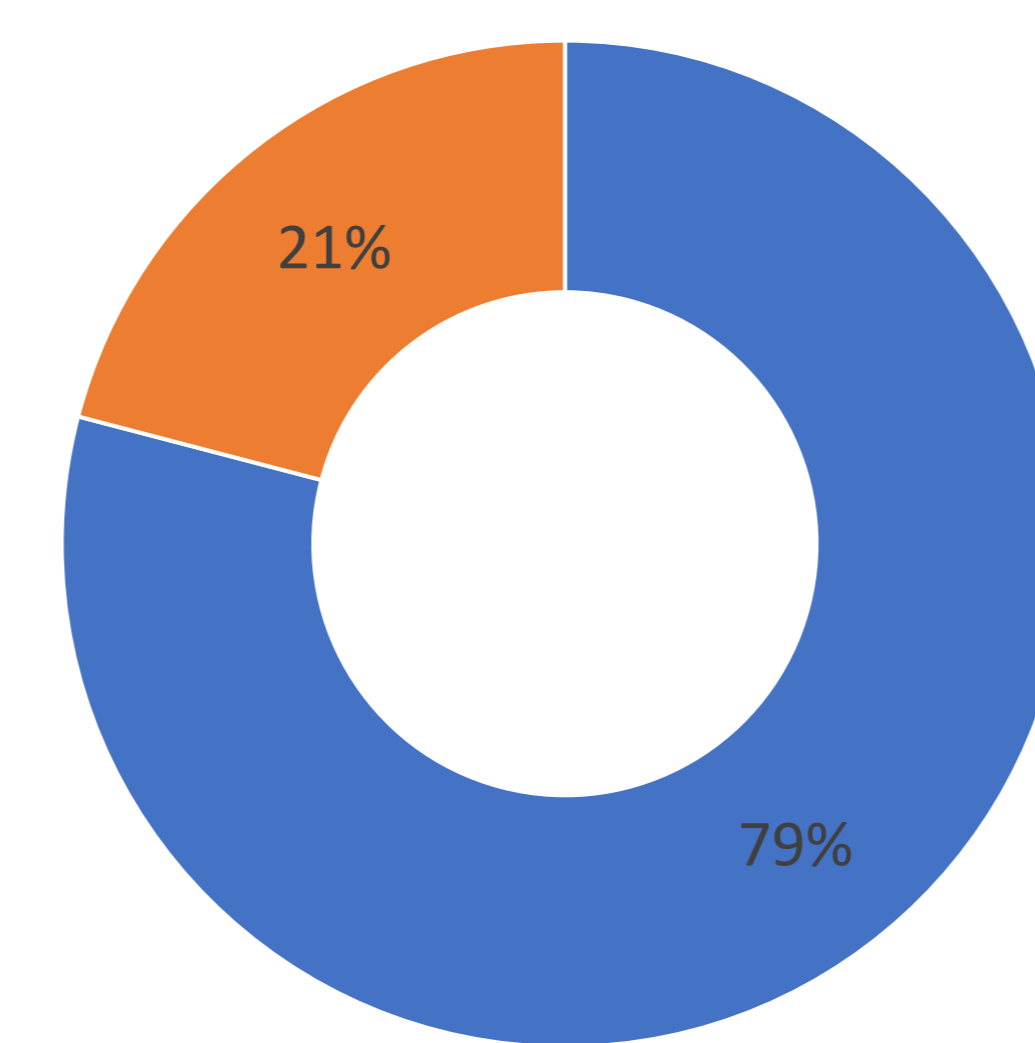
## Plan

- To find out extent to which bedside hydration is available to the patients admitted in the four oncology wards of the Nottingham City Hospital.
- To find out if the fluid intakes of these patients are at par with the recommended Eatwell guidelines.

## Study

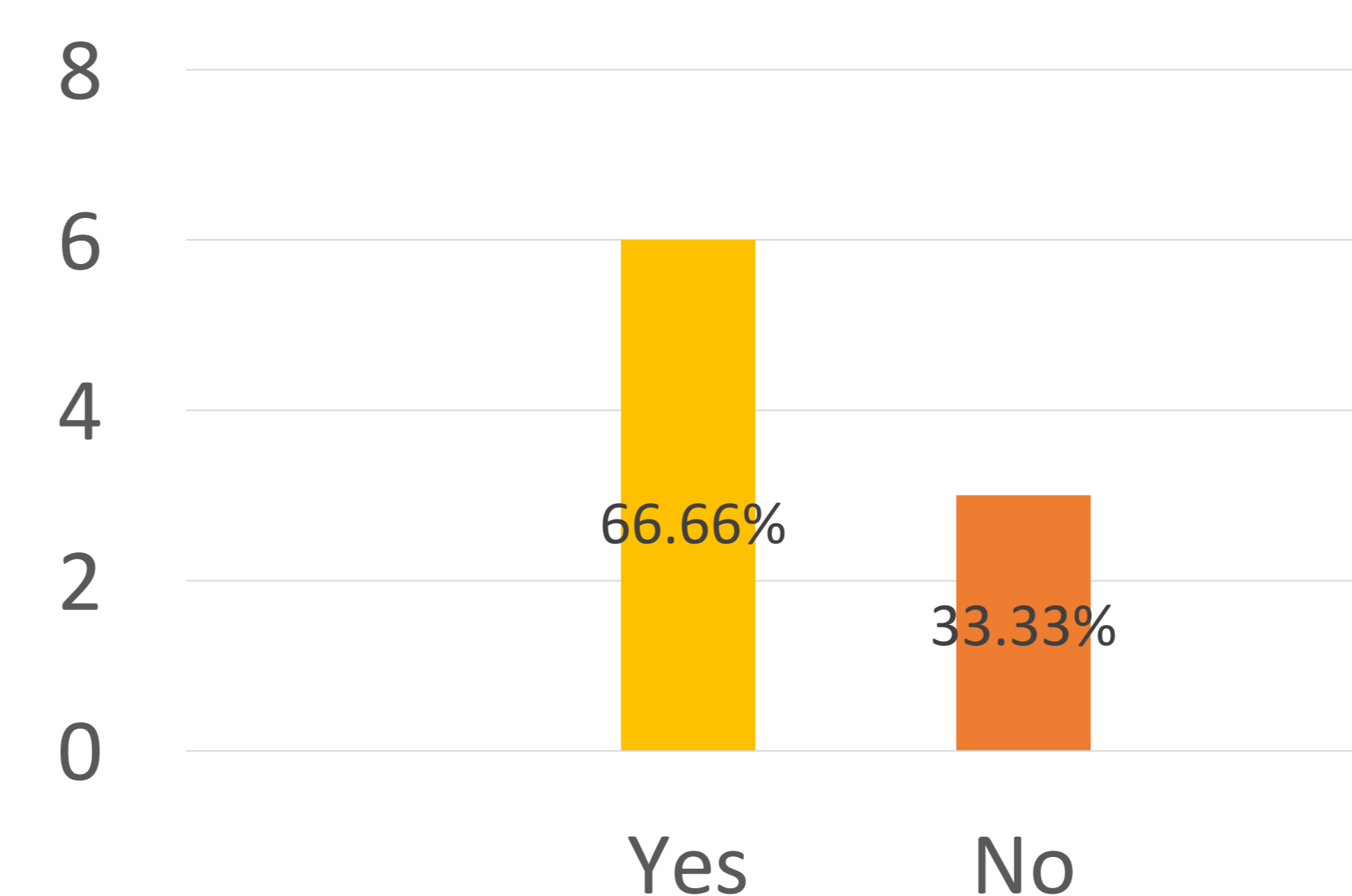
Out of the 43 patients, 9 of them did not have water by their bedside. 3 out of this 9 patients did not have any contra-indications for oral fluid. 2 of these 3 patients were bed bound. 23 (53.4%)

Does this patient have water by their bedside?



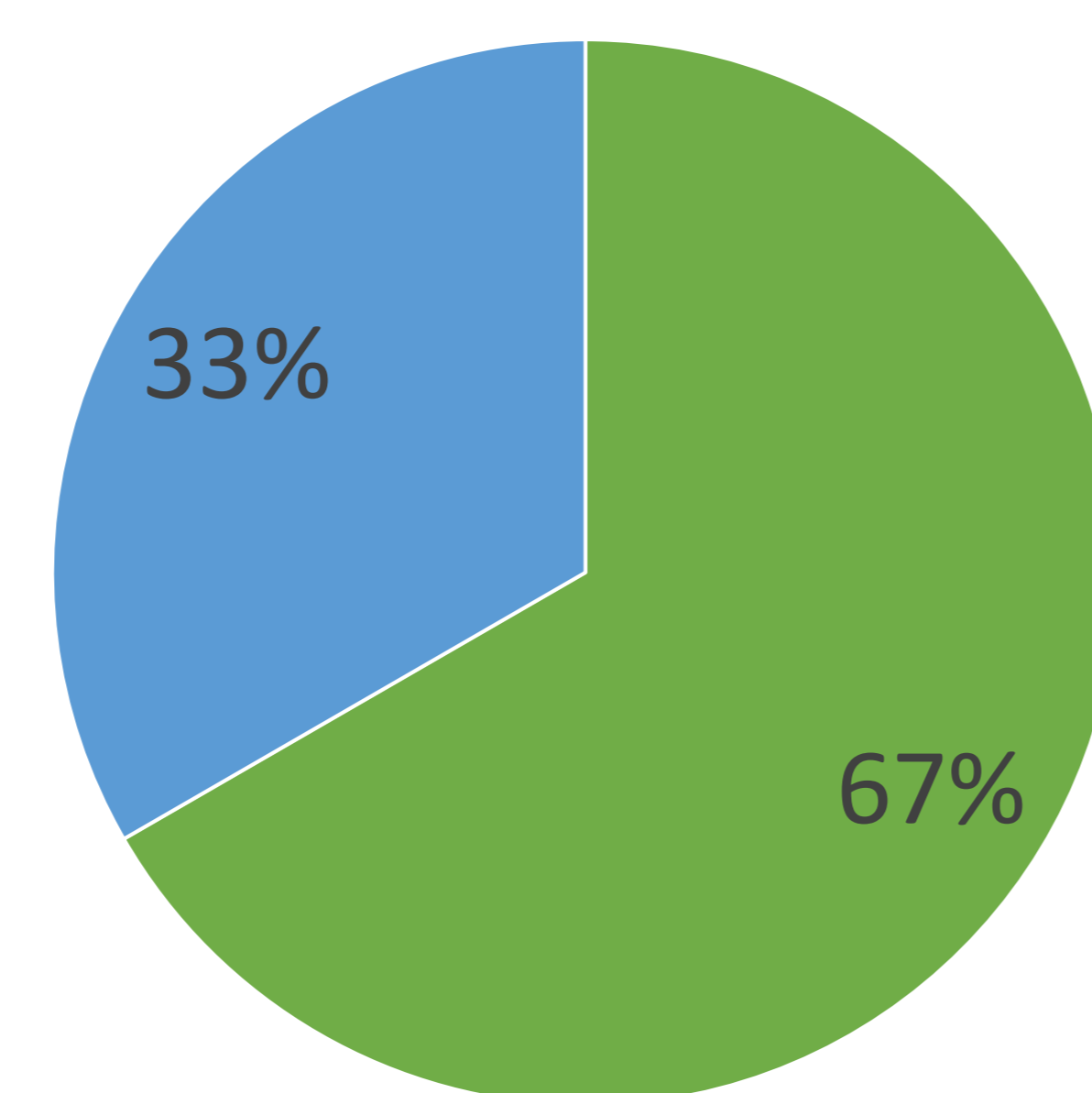
■ Yes ■ No

Does this patient have any contra-indication for drinking fluids?



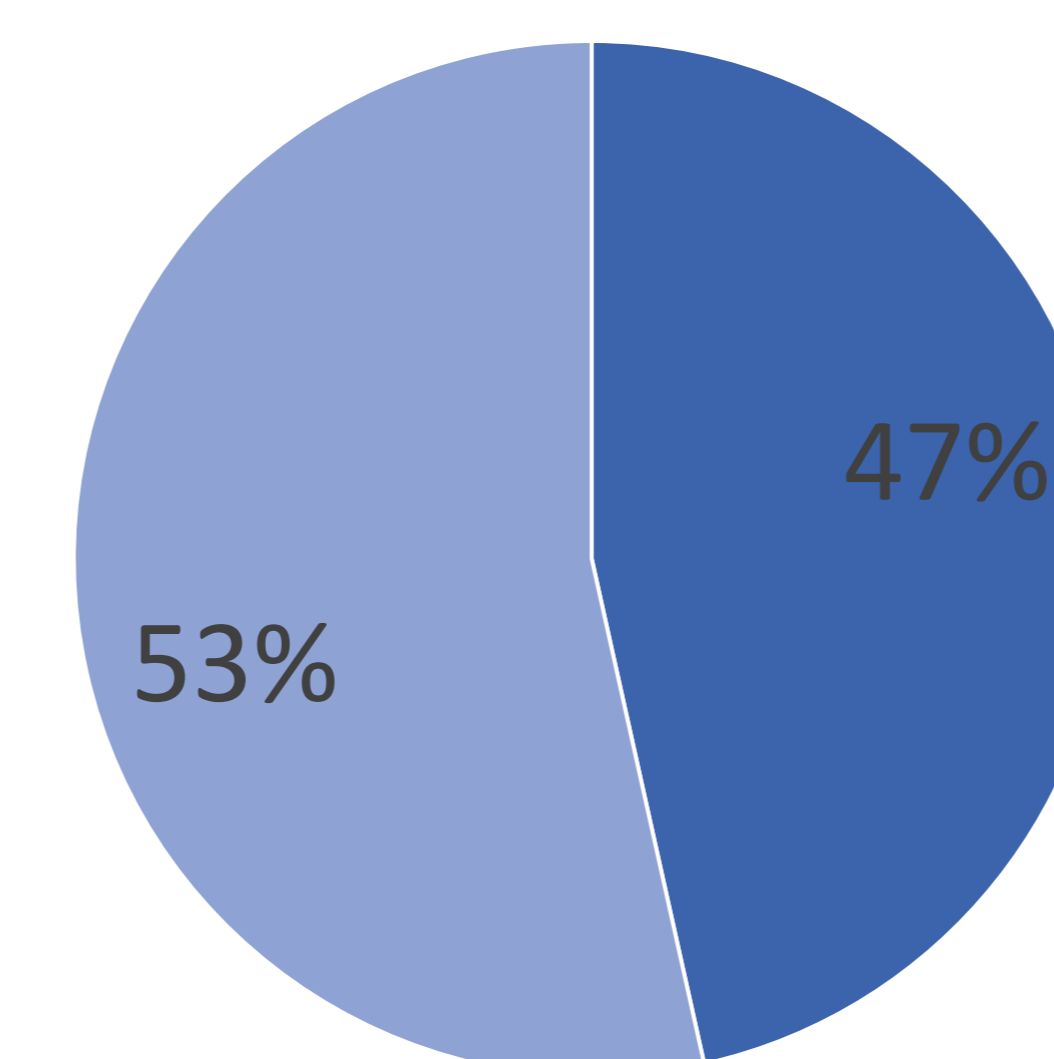
Yes No

Is this patient bedbound?



■ Yes ■ No

Is this patient drinking water more than 1.2 l per day?



■ Yes ■ No

## Act

The following actions were taken in an attempt to improve the situation:

- A “Fluid Chart” was designed and patients, who did not have any contra-indication for drinking water, were asked to put a tick mark after they have drunk a glass of fluid. they were told to aim for at least 6 ticks a day.

**DAILY FLUID INTAKE CHART**  
(Strive for at least 6 glasses of fluid every day. Place a check mark in each column for every glass you drink.)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

- The bay nurses were asked to frequently check if each patient had water accessible to them. The doctors and phlebotomists were informed the importance of repositioning the bed table within the patients’ reach in case it was moved to do any procedure.

Following this, another survey was done which, on analysis showed:

87.5% of patients are drinking above 1.2l of water every day, in comparison to 53.4% of the patients in the previous survey and 100% of the patients, without any contra-indications have water access within their reach, which is an increase from the previous 66.67%.

## Do

A cross-sectional study was done between the meal times to find out if the patients have hydration access by their bedside, within their reach. The mobility status of a patient was also noted- whether a patient is mobile enough to fetch himself a glass of water or is bed-bound. If a patient did not have water by their bedside, an attempt was made to find out if there is any contra-indication of drinking water for that patient- swallowing difficulty, Nil by mouth, on IV fluids etc. The per day fluid intake of every patients was also been measured and compared with the Eatwell guideline of 1.2-1.5 liters.

## Conclusion

Although the study suggested that more than half of the Oncology in-patients drank fluid less than what is recommended per day and one out of every 7 bed-bound patients did not have water by their bedside, there is significant room for improvement if certain actions are undertaken.