What patient assessment skills are required by pharmacists prescribing systemic anti-cancer therapy? A consensus study.

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BACKGROUND AND AIM

The Scottish Government's strategy 'Prescription for Excellence' states that by 2023, every pharmacist will be a Pharmacist Independent Prescriber (PIP).[1]

The addition of PIPs to systemic anti-cancer therapy (SACT) prescribing clinics reduces clinic waiting times, improves medicines compliance and management of adverse reactions.[2]

Prescribing frameworks for PIPs developed by Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the British Oncology Pharmacy Association provide little detail on the patient assessment skills (PAS) which may be required.[3]

Previous local work attempted to define the PAS which may be required but consensus was not obtained across all cancer types.[4]

To gain consensus across NHS Scotland on the PAS required by PIPs prescribing SACT for renal, prostate and lung cancer to support safe prescribing of SACT.

METHODS

A list of patient assessment skills generated from previous work were used to gain consensus within the MDTs for each of the two tumour groups firstly locally (SCAN) then nationally across the three cancer networks within NHS Scotland (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Phases in methodology

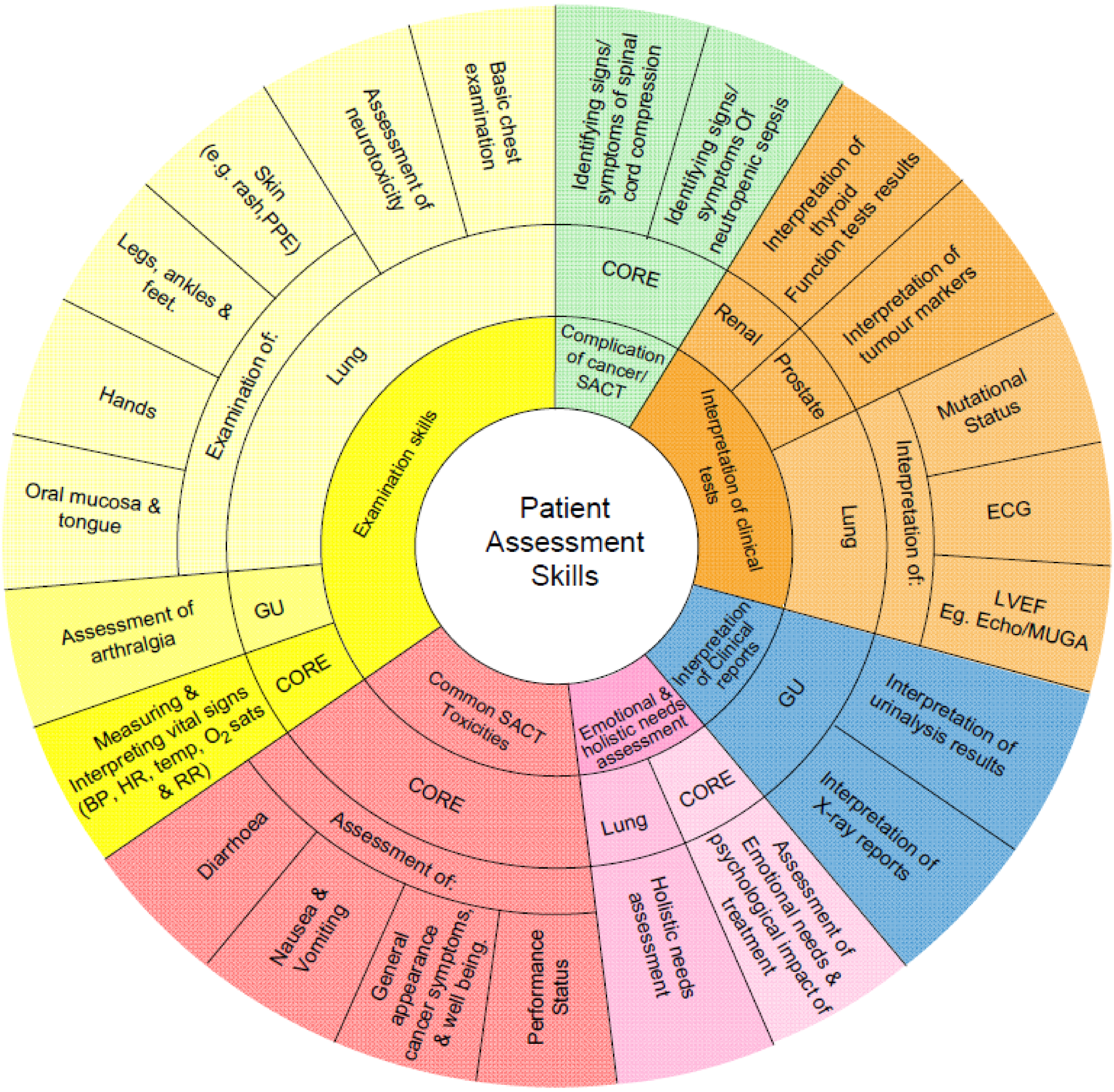

Figure 2: Summary of patient assessment skills which were determined as required for a PIP to prescribe SACT

RESULTS

Consensus was gained nationally for 13/21 skills in the GU group and 18/23 skills in the lung group. These skills, deemed as required for PIPs to prescribe SACT, were divided up in to core skills and tumour specific skills (Figure 2).

CONCLUSION

This study defined the core and specific PAS a PIP requires to prescribe SACT for GU and lung cancer.

Further work is required to establish the training tools required to support this development in knowledge and skills and to explore how competence will be assessed.

PAS will be required to be defined for other tumour groups where PIPs prescribe SACT.

ABBREVIATIONS

SCAN – South East Scotland Cancer Network
WoSCAN – West of Scotland Cancer Network
NoSCAN – North of Scotland Cancer Network

References: 1. The Scottish Government, 2013. Prescription for Excellence: A vision and action plan for the right pharmaceutical care through integrated partnerships and innovation.2. Connor MO. The hospital pharmacist and oral anti-cancer treatment – what is the role within a multi-disciplinary team? *European Journal of Hospital Pharmacy: Science and Practice*. 2014;21:44. 3. British Oncology Pharmacist Association and Faculty of Cancer Pharmacy. Oncology Pharmacy Non-Medical Prescribing Guidelines. 2016. Version 2.2. 4. Elliott B, Fisher J, Kinnear M., Souter C. Exploring the assessment skills required by pharmacist independent prescribers for the safe prescribing of systemic anti-cancer therapy. Abstract from BOPA. *Journal of Oncology Pharmacy Practice.* 2017. 23(8): 45-46.