



Danish CF Adults: Education, Job, Early Retirement Pension

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Introduction

As a result of improved research and centralized treatment since the 1960's most Danish CF patients now reach adulthood.

Vocational and job guidance therefore becomes a dominant issue to identify/avoid potential barriers to education and job allowing CF-patients to combine a working life and optimal management of CF for as long as possible.

From our perspective:

CF patients connection to labour market is important because of the implication it has on their social life (interactions with colleagues,..) and personal life (satisfaction of being an active part of the society).

Aim

Cross-sectional social status analysis of adult CF patients in Denmark and the obstacles encountered – education, job situation, pension.

Methods

CF population in Denmark

405 patients – 199 female (49%) – 206 male (51%)

Two Danish CF Centres

- Copenhagen: 273 patients (157 patients > 18 years old)
- Aarhus: 132 patients (44 patients > 18 years old)

Questionnaire were sent to 196 patients > 18 years old

– members of the Danish CF Association.

131 CF adults replied – 69 female (53%) – 62 male (47%)

- Youngest patients born 1984
- Oldest patient born 1948

Analysing data

Education, Job and Early Retirement

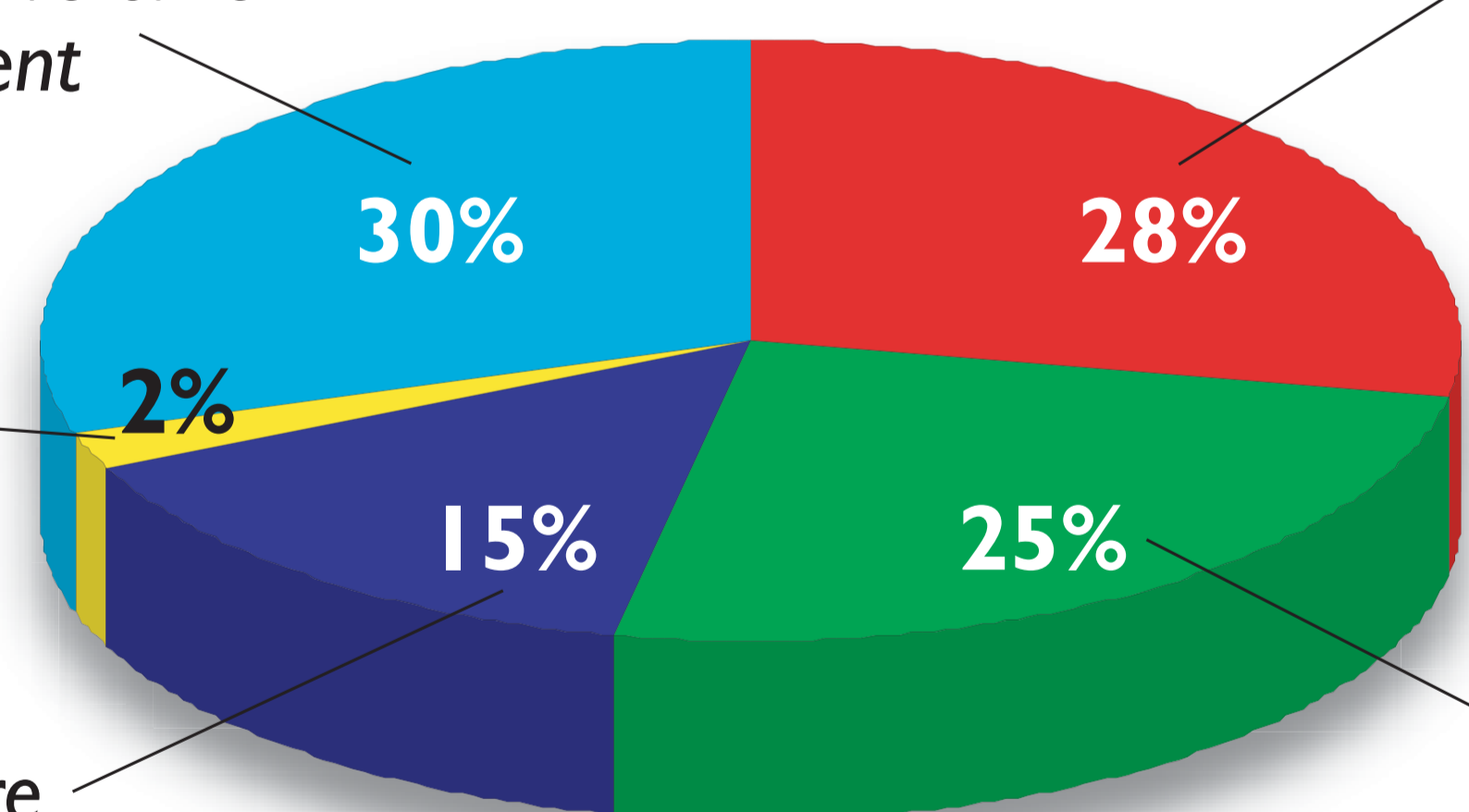
39 patients have taken Early Retirement Pension-ERP

37 patients are under education

3 patients are unemployed

19 patients are on FlexJob – special working conditions

33 patients work on normal working conditions



FlexJob:

- Part time employment/reduction in duty due to limitations in working capacity for full time payment.
- FlexJob both in private and public sector.
- Employer pays the full salary to the employee.
- State reimburses the difference to the employer.

Early Retirement Pension (ERP) in Denmark by the State:

- 76% after tax of average monthly salary for Trade & Industry Union members in Denmark (1.725 Euro)

Analysing data (continued)

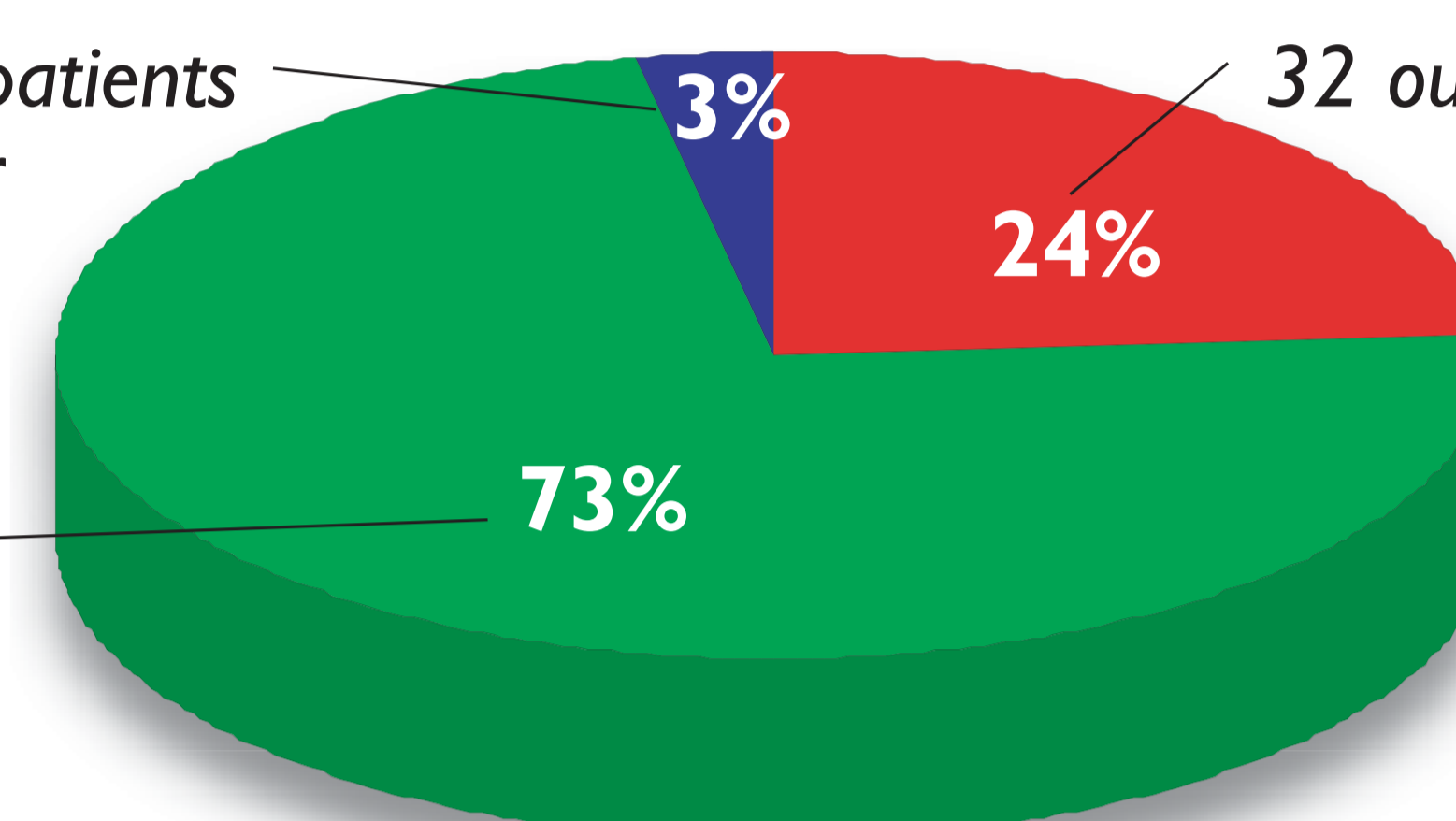
Education – CF influence

Q: Did you have to prolong or drop education because of CF?

4 out of 131 patients did not answer

32 out of 131 patients answered 'YES'

95 out of 131 patients answered 'NO'



Among the 32 patients who answered YES:

- 6 patients had to prolong education (19%)
- 26 patients had to drop education (81%)

Reasons: Disease developments, hospitalization, bad lung function.

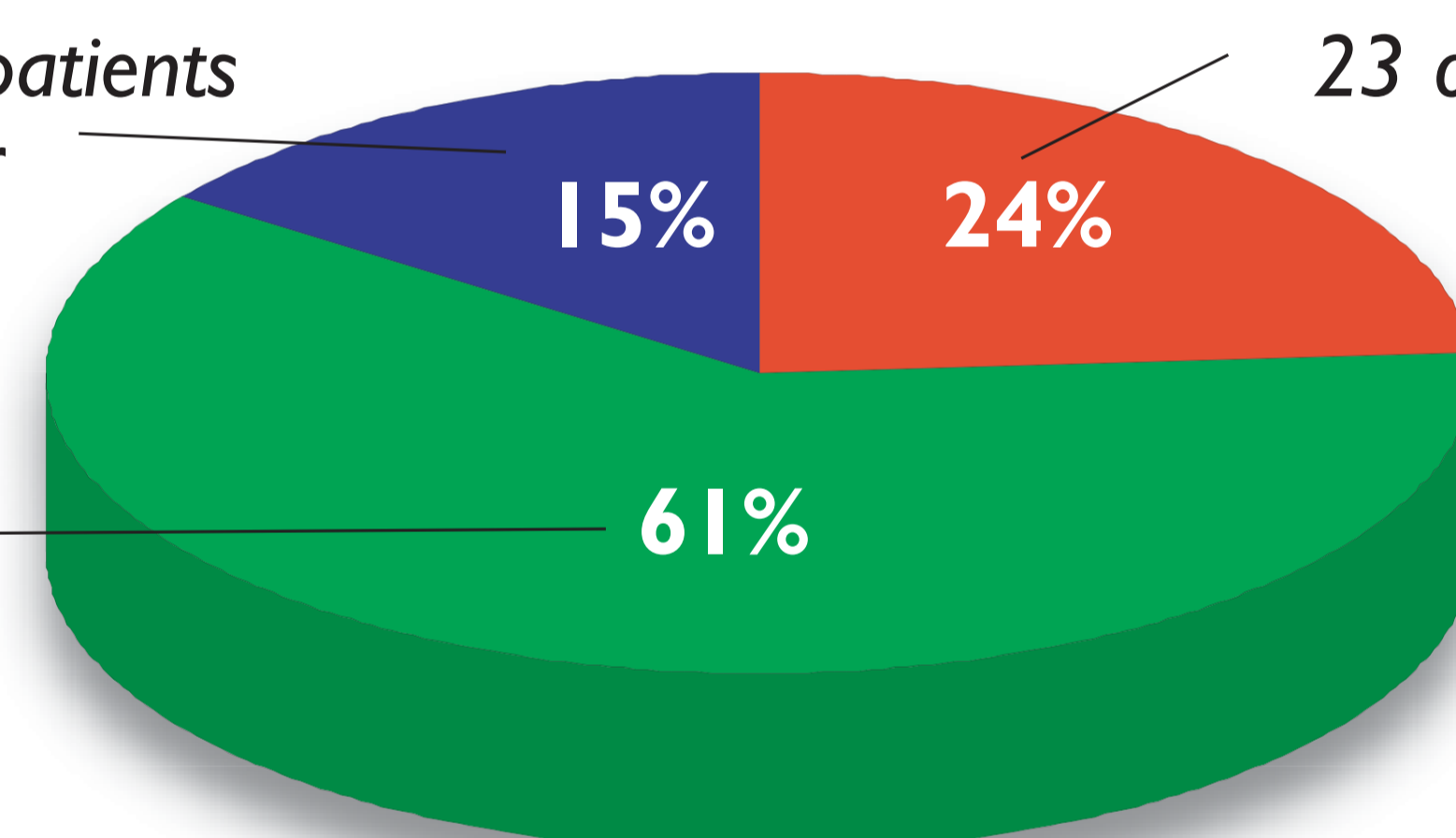
Job situation – CF influence

Q: Were you forced to stop working/change working conditions due to CF?

14 out of 94 patients did not answer

23 out of 94 patients answered 'YES'

57 out of 94 patients answered 'NO'



Reasons for Males stopping/changing job

Physical working conditions and hours, dust, smell – mainly within trade and industry jobs.

Reasons for Females stopping/changing job

Physical working conditions and hours, lack of acceptance of absence due to illness – mainly within service sector jobs.

Early Retirement Pension vs. FlexJob

30% of adult patients on ERP:

Most patients granted ERP before introduction of Flexjob in 1998.

After introduction of FlexJob:

- Decrease in number of new patients on ERP
- Increase in number of patients on FlexJob

In conclusion

A large proportion of Danish adult CF patients are doing very well during education / work on normal working conditions.

However, a considerable proportion of the patients have been forced to prolong or drop education / stop working or change working conditions due to CF.

CF has an impact on education and job. In consequence, there is a need for a targeted study and vocational guidance of the individual patient to identify/avoid potential barriers to education and jobs because of CF – in order to reduce dropout rate from education and to keep patients on the labour market for as long as possible.

Further, the Danish FlexJob regulation seems to be a useful method enabling CF patients to stay on the labour market for as long as possible on flexible conditions allowing them to combine a working life and optimal management of CF.