

### INTRODUCTION

The palliative care (PC) approach is generally considered only in selected stages of severe diseases and is still neglected in general medical competence. In modern hyper-specialized medicine, the privileged approach addresses the disease, while symptoms, psychological needs, and related social problems are rarely addressed other than with axillary drugs.

In the last four years, 18 medical students at our university attended a clerkship in oncology PC outpatient. They were randomly assigned and accepted to participate in a survey investigating interest, knowledge acquired, and usefulness of PC clerkship on their education.

### METHODS

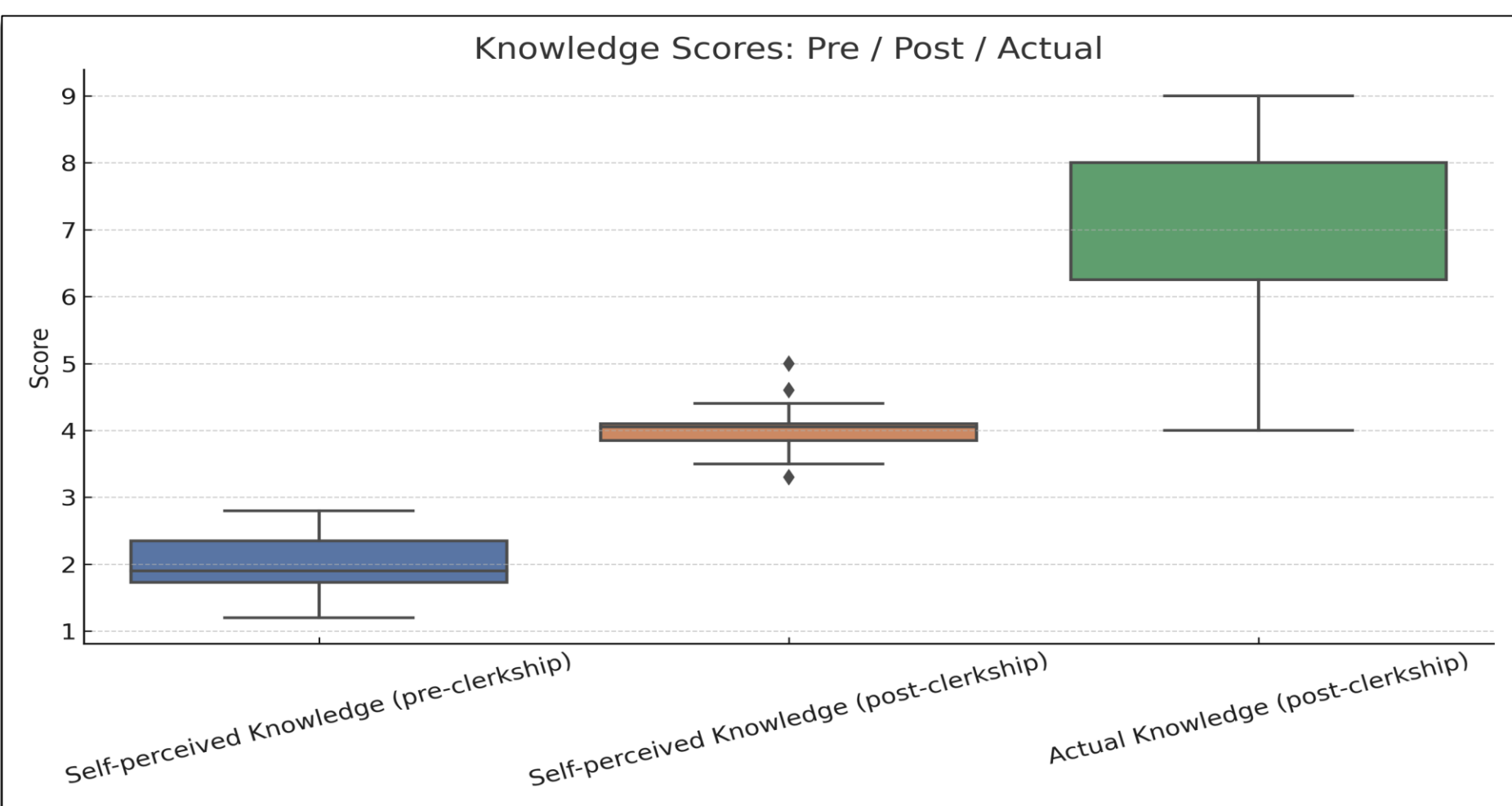
We administered a quantitative/qualitative survey to the students on the first day and after the end of the clerkship, investigating previous experience in oncology and/or PC, interest in oncology and/or PC, self-perceived and actual knowledge in oncology and PC, and usefulness of the training, evaluated with a Likert scale 1-5. The survey ended with open questions assessed using qualitative methods.

### RESULTS

Most students showed increased interest in PC, self-perceived, and actual knowledge of oncology and PC after their clerkship. All the students evaluated the training as useful in their education with a Likert scale score of 4 and 5. In the qualitative section of the survey, students expressed appreciation for PC's holistic approach, got excited for the ability to listen actively and communicate clearly and with empathy, and for the importance of the quality of life each patient defines. Students affirmed they would use this approach in their future careers.

DEMOGRAPHIC	Count
Gender: Female	13
Gender: Male	5
3rd Year Students	3
4th Year Students	4
5th Year Students	11

EXPERIENCE AND INTEREST	Count
Attended Oncology Course	10
Attended PC Course	0
High Interest in Oncology (4-5)	10
High Interest in PC (4-5)	7



### CONCLUSIONS

The holistic approach of PC, based on active listening and clear communication and enhancing the patient's experience, could represent a changing paradigm in the medical approach at every stage of severe disease and in each medical need. Every medical behavior's golden goal should put the person at the center. Training medical students in this approach could be helpful regardless of their future field of specialization.

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**“I was surprised at how wrong my conception - and that of the general public - of palliative care was. I promise myself to never see patients as numbers or purely as the disease they carry, but to see them holistically as a human being.”**

***“There is a lot of life in end of life.”***

**“I was pleasantly surprised by the profound influence the physicians-patient relationship wielded.”**

**“The sense of "every patient matters” ”**

**“Palliative care teaches us how to be better doctors – and better humans.”**