

Assessing Weak Opioids Misuse: Insights from Pharmacists' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices

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Background: Pharmacists play a pivotal role in ensuring the safe use of medications, including weak opioids.

Objective: To assess the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of community pharmacists in Morocco regarding the misuse of weak opioids.

Methods :

- Cross-sectional study of dispensing pharmacists in Morocco.
- Google Forms questionnaire validated and pilot tested.
- Questionnaire items:- Pharmacists' socio-demographic data.- Pharmacists' knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding misuse of weak opioids; Likert scale from 1 to 5.

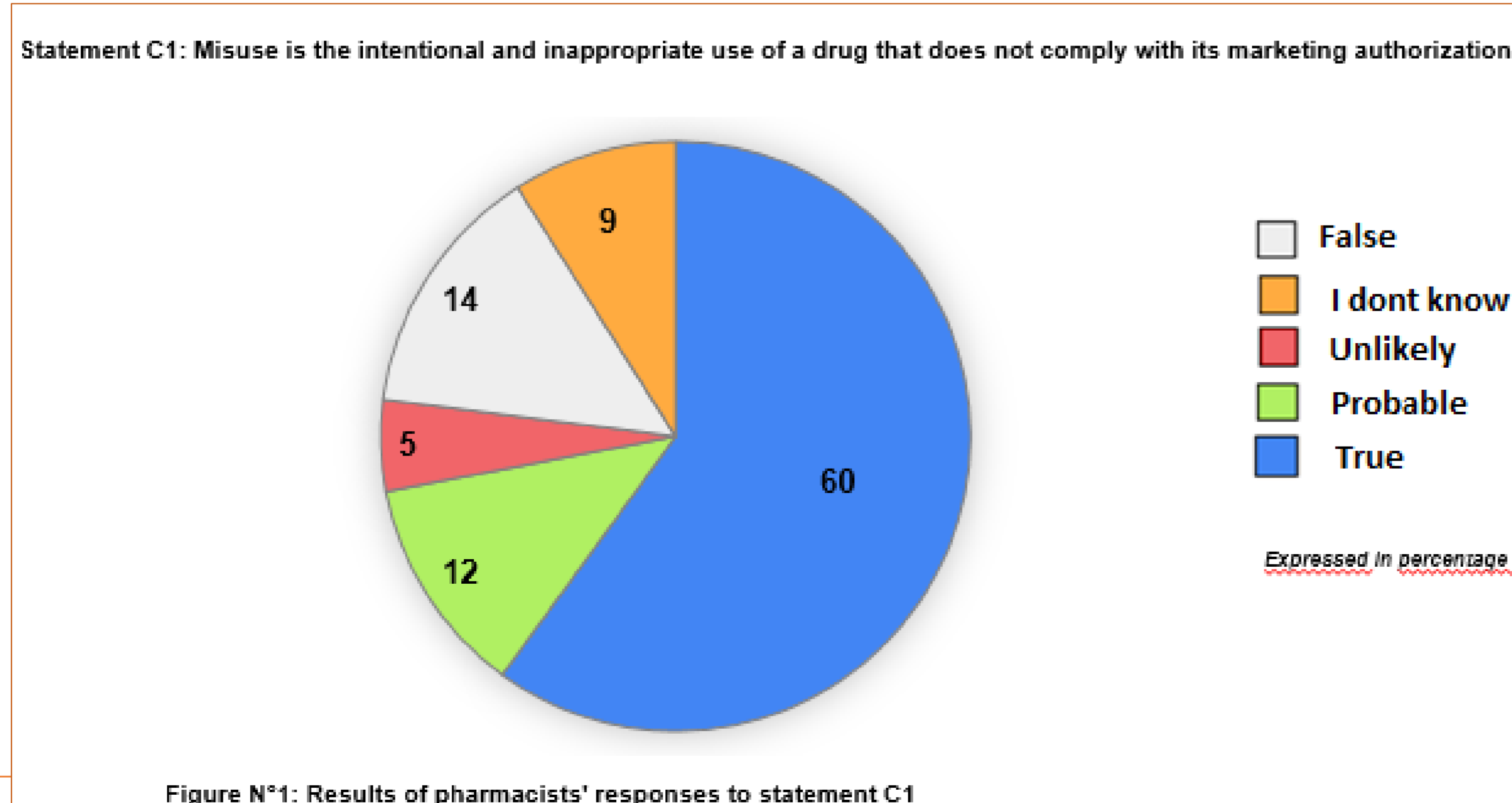
Results

Table 1: Socio-demographic data for dispensing pharmacists

Socio-demographic data :	N=100
Average age (years)	43,8±12
Female gender(%)	54
Length of practice (years)	17±11
Place of practice	
Urban area	83
Suburban area	9
Rural area	8

Knowledge :

- 60% of pharmacists correctly identified misuse
- 84% were aware that overconsumption of weak opioids can lead to dependence
- 71% knew that abruptly stopping the use of weak opioids may result in withdrawal syndrome.



Attitudes:

- 29% of pharmacists believed that persistent or intense pain, lack of awareness about overdose complications, and recreational purposes are contributory factors to weak opioids misuse, with 29%, 28%, and 8% of pharmacists, respectively.

Practices:

- 2% and 4% respectively, reported dispensing Tramadol and Codeine without a prescription.
- 69% and 67% informed patients about the recommended dose limits for Tramadol and Codeine respectively
- 38% actively engaged in sensitizing patients about the risks associated with the misuse of these opioids.

Conclusion: Pharmacists demonstrate cautious dispensation practices, with a small percentage providing Tramadol and Codeine without a prescription. Nevertheless, a significant portion actively raises awareness about opioid misuse risks, underscoring their crucial role in responsible medication use and patient education.