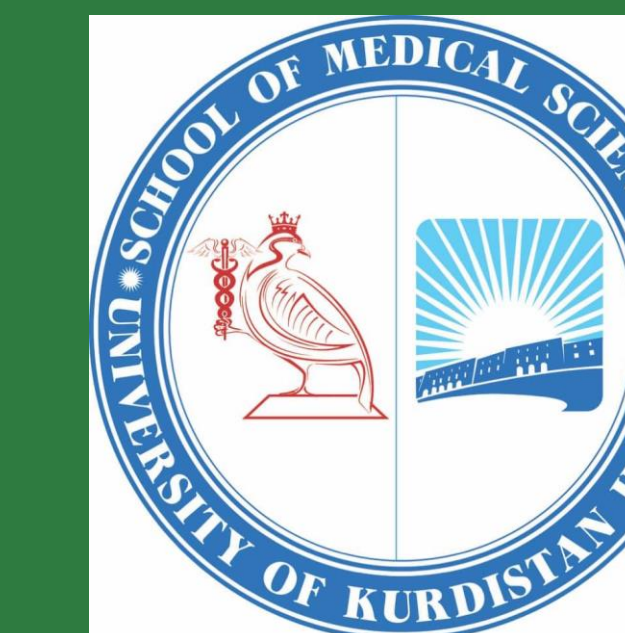




Cancer Disclosure & Perception in Developing Countries

Srwa Khalid, Fatimah Asaad

University of Kurdistan Hewler, School of Medicine, Iraq



Background

Cancer is one of the world's most challenging diseases in terms of its development, course of progression, diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis. The fact that cancer is a frightening and long-term illness makes delivering such a diagnosis to any cancer-patient a very difficult task, especially when considering the cultural-ethical dilemmas. In most developing countries the diagnosis of cancer is disclosed to the relatives only and the patient might even pass away without knowing his/her disease.

Objectives

The main goal of this study is to understand the people perception for the term of cancer and to assess their attitude toward the diagnosis and whether clinicians should insist on disclosing the diagnosis of cancer directly to the patient himself/herself, considering the right of the patient to know what is going on in their body, or that this decision is governed by a third party (relatives).

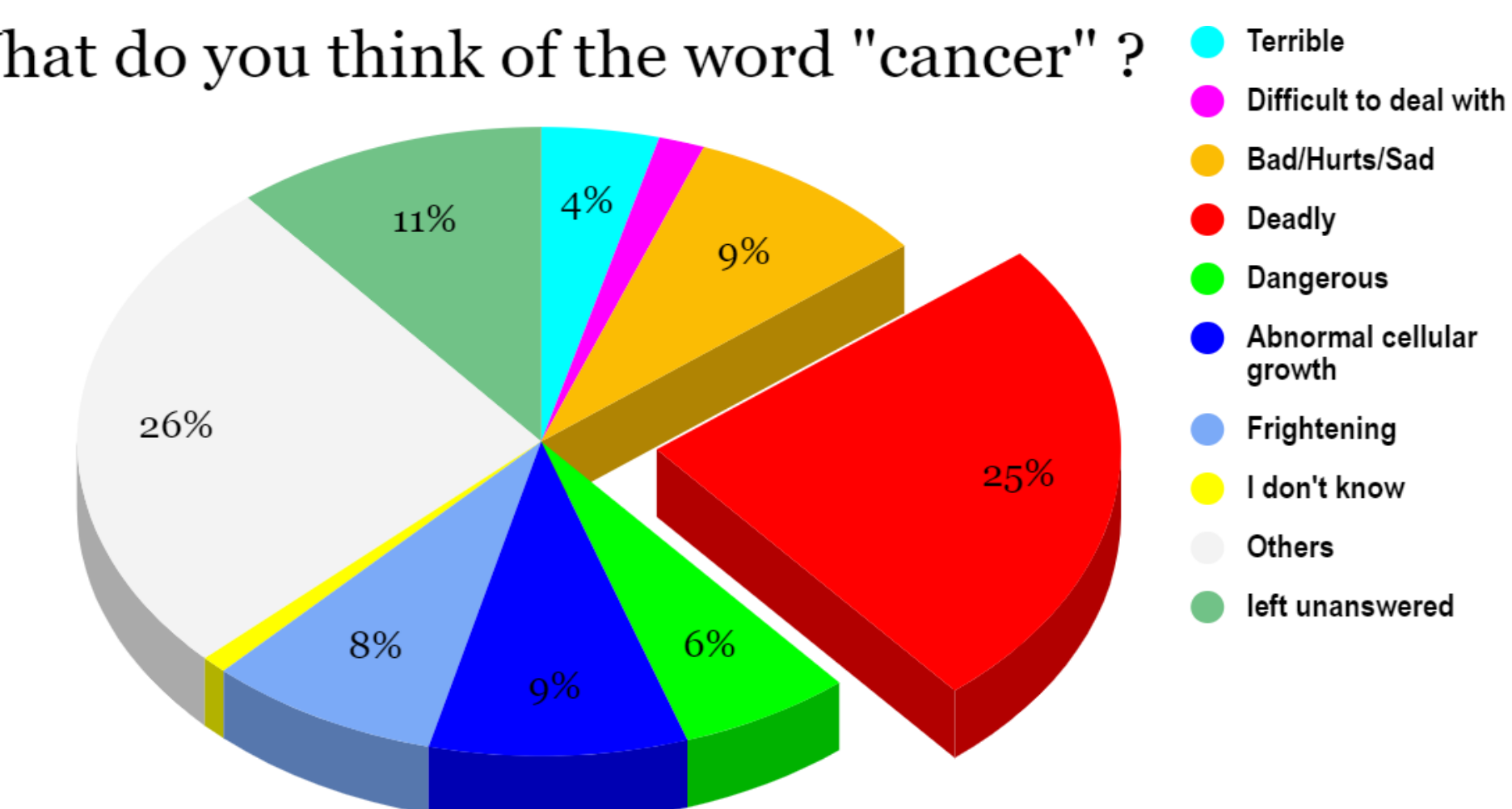
Designs and Methods

This cross sectional, analytical study conducted in Kurdistan region of Iraq. It involved more than 1,000 participants whose responses were collected directly via self-administered questionnaires and by electronic means. To approve the strategy potentials of this study, a pilot study was also conducted prior to the original work. No specific educational level was targeted to collect data from. Instead, a large scale of the population was included to increase the reliability of this research. Means of analysis were far from sophisticated and included the commonly used statistical tests.

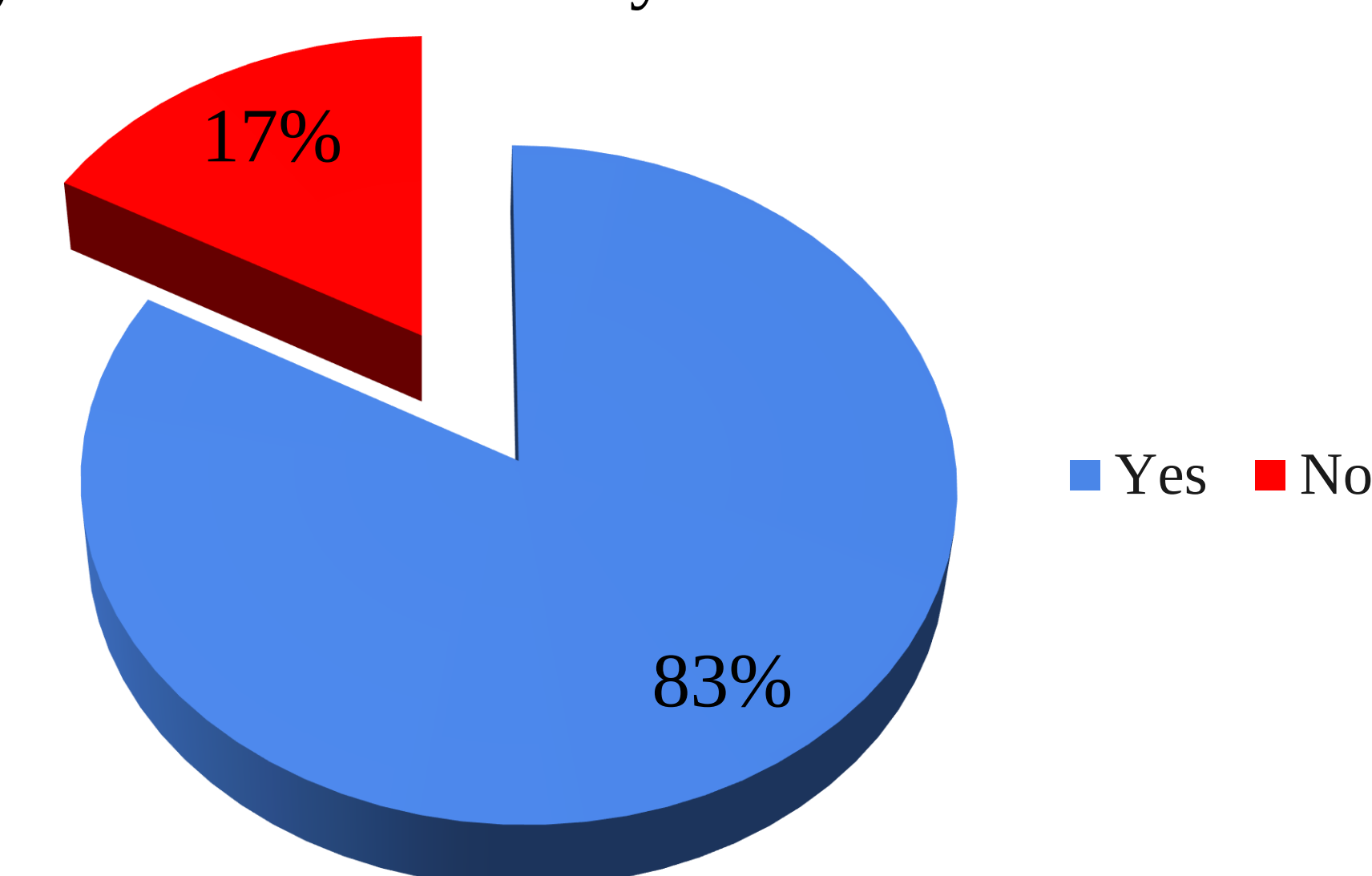
Results

Data analysis was achieved after data collection from 1000 participants. The second majority of the participants, who were 246 persons (25%) perceived cancer as a deadly condition. About 828 (83%) wanted to be told if they ever had cancer while the remaining percentages were on the opposite side of the shore. Almost 55% of the respondents from different educational level were willing to hide the diagnosis of cancer from their loved one to avoid them being hurt with such bad news. Interestingly, 80% did not believe in a relative's right to hide cancer diagnosis from them although they do give that right to themselves. 752 participants (75%) have stated that cancer can be treated.

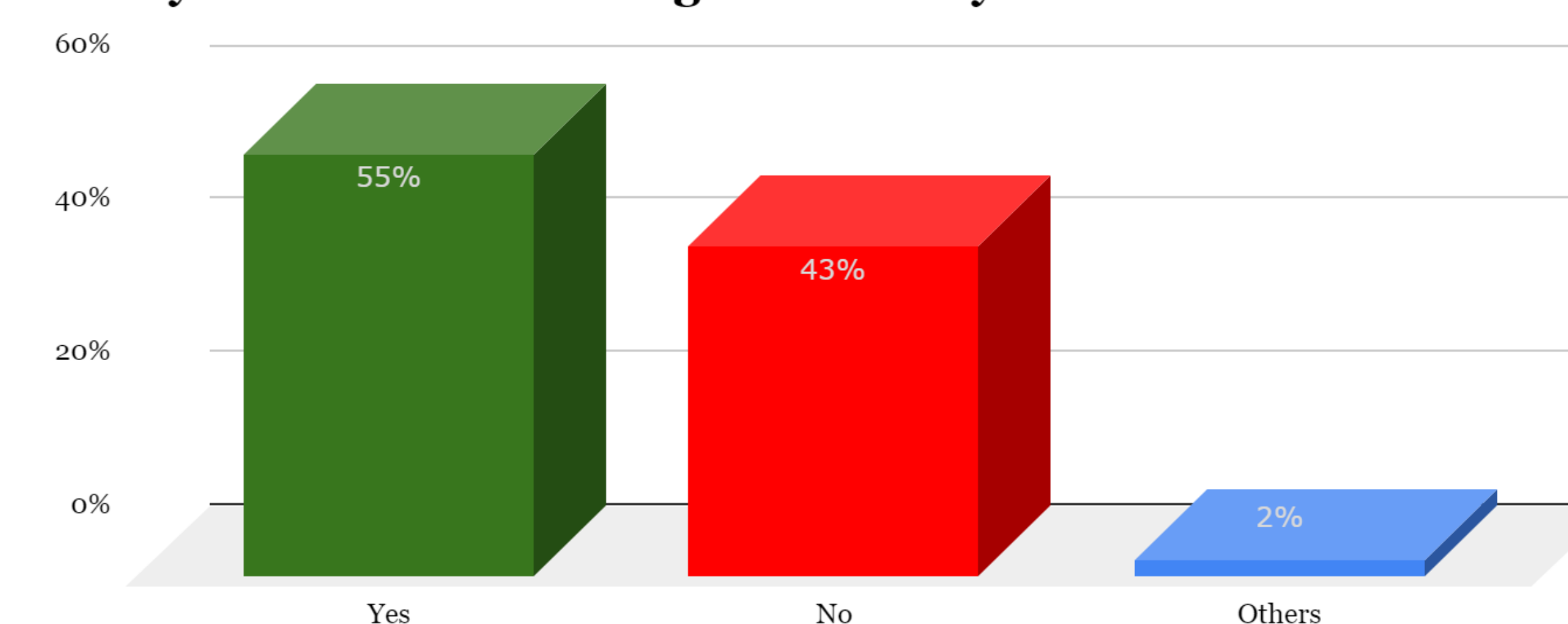
What do you think of the word "cancer" ?



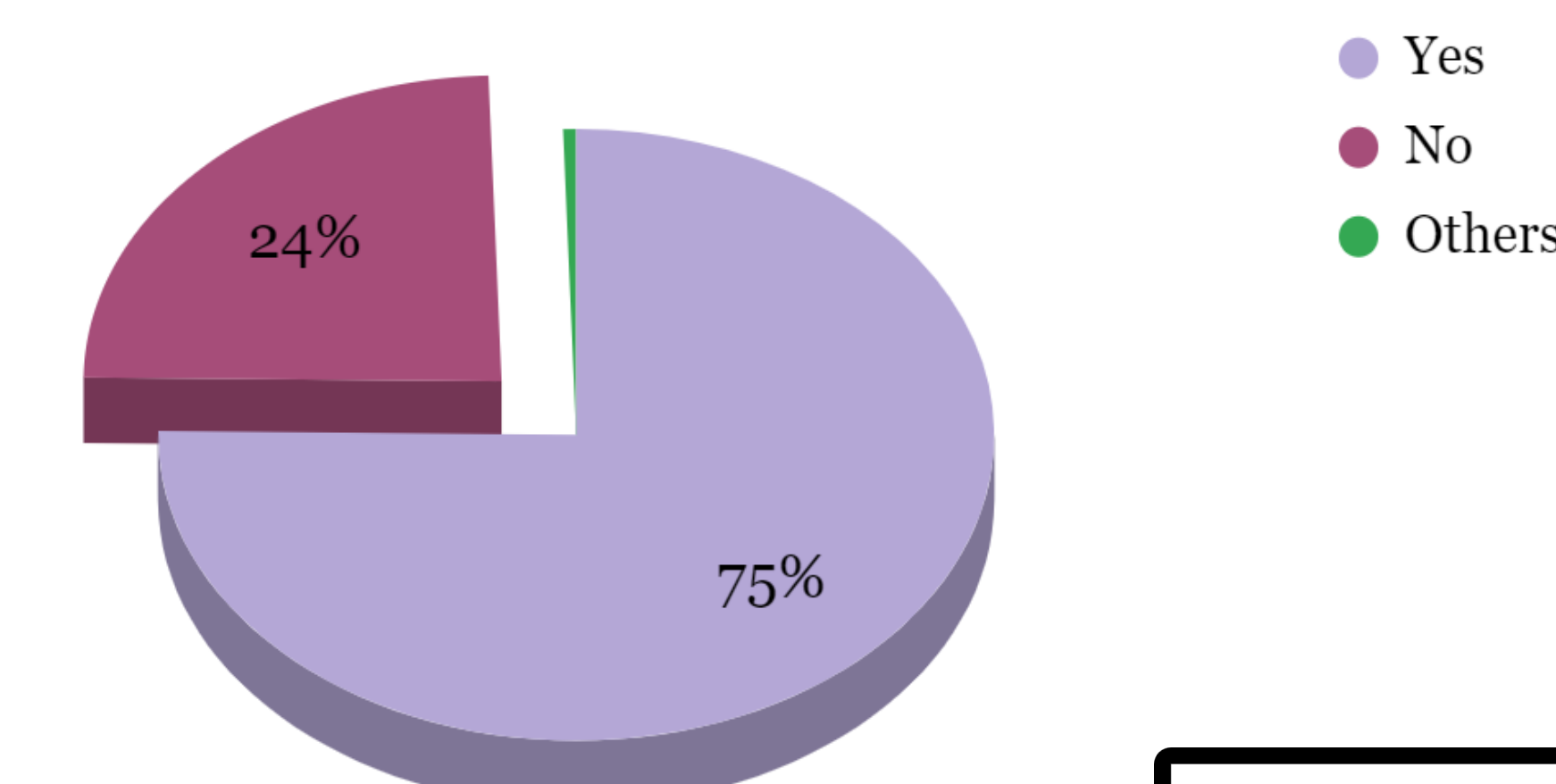
Would you like to be told if you had a cancer?



Will you hide a cancer diagnosis from your loved one?



Do you think cancer has treatment?



Conclusion

Cancer disclosure is a very complex and sensitive topic; however, patient right should never be overlooked. More intensive training skills on breaking bad news should be recommended and offered to all clinicians at different level & specialties as it requires a very sensitive and empathic approach.