

BACKGROUND

This 44-chair day therapy unit treats 70 to 100 oncology/haematology patients a day and currently has a staffing ratio of approximately 20-25 patients to 1 EFT pharmacist from an analysis between 2013 to 2023.

The day therapy pharmacists' roles include:

1. The clinical verification of anti-cancer systemic treatment charts
2. Coordination of treatment supply
3. Counselling of take home medications

Electronic prescribing using Meditech was introduced in 2018.

AIM

To evaluate the oncology day therapy pharmacists' perception on current workload including the impact of electronic prescribing.

METHOD

A questionnaire was given to all day therapy pharmacists in January 2023. The survey evaluated their perception on current workload, impact of electronic prescribing and time it takes to review treatment plans and counsel patients with different complexities.

The pharmacists were also classified as either having less than 5 years of oncology experience or 5 or more years of experience.

RESULTS

8 pharmacists responded to the questionnaire and were divided into 2 groups:

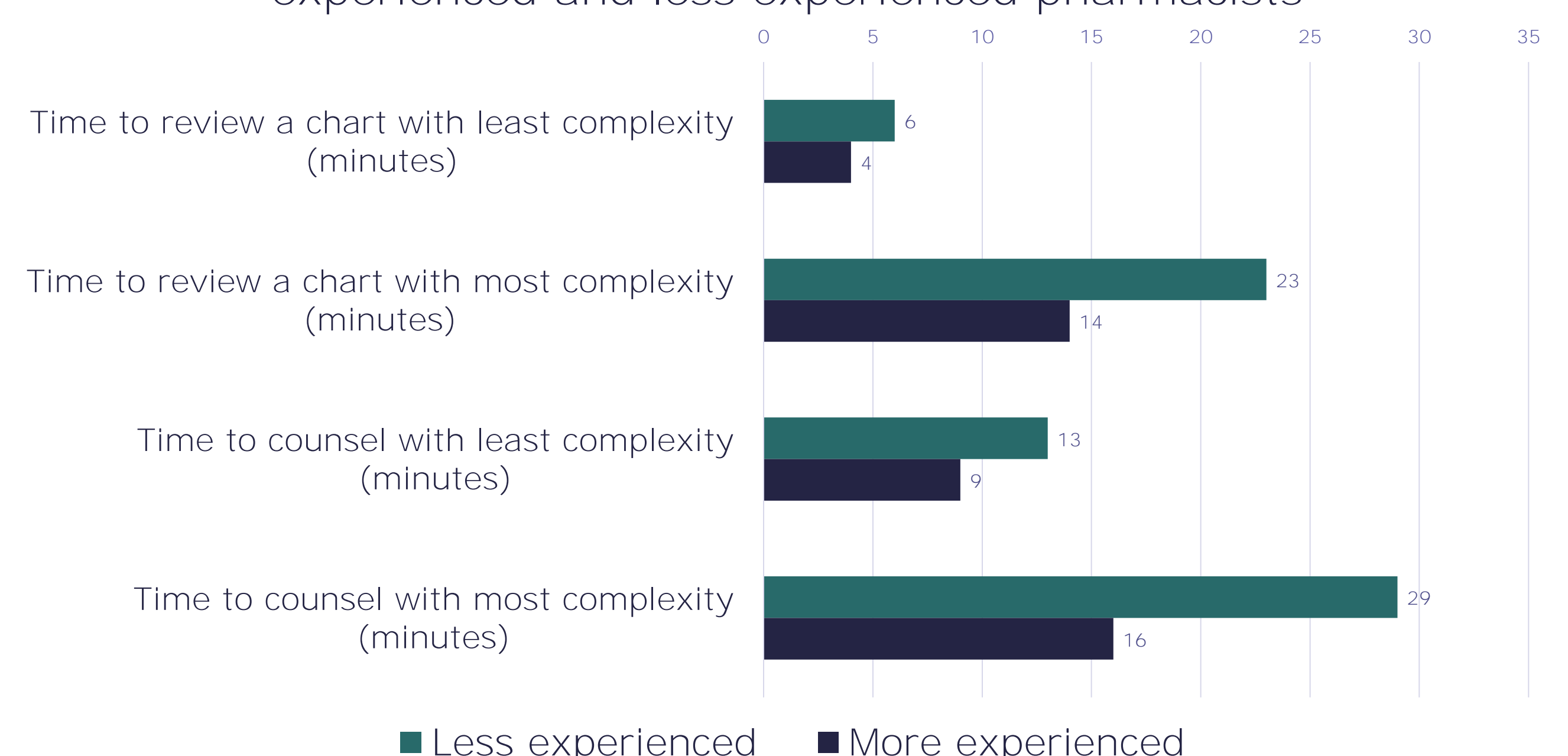
	Years of oncology experience
Less experienced (n=5)	< 5 years
More experienced (n=3)	≥ 5 years

75% pharmacists considered the ratio of patient to pharmacist as appropriate and 1 pharmacist from each group considered it was too high.

All the pharmacists with experience working with both paper and electronic prescribing thought the workload increased after the switch to electronic prescribing. Reasons for this perception included having extra information to navigate between and time for pages to load.

The self-perceived time to review a chart and counselling time are depicted in Figure 1:

Figure 1. The self perceived minimum and maximum time to review a chart and counsel by the more experienced and less experienced pharmacists



DISCUSSION

Overall, the day therapy pharmacists considered the current workload appropriate but it was interesting to note the perceived increase in workload from electronic prescribing. The time needed to review and counsel were higher for treatments with more complexity and higher for pharmacists with less experience. Further research as a time-motion study is already underway to further analyse and optimise the work of a day therapy pharmacist.