

# Hidradenitis Suppurativa: Greek patients’ perspective on disease burden

Aikaterini I. Liakou<sup>1</sup>, Alexander Katoulis<sup>2</sup>, Eleni Sotiriou<sup>3</sup>, Elissavet Miggiani<sup>4</sup>, Katerina Kapsogeorgiou<sup>5</sup>, Dimitra Ignatiadi<sup>5</sup>, Xenia Madia <sup>5</sup>, Eirini Karachaliou<sup>5</sup>, Maria Kalogeropoulou<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1st Department of Dermatology and Venereology, “Andreas Sygros” Hospital for Venereal and Cutaneous diseases, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Medical School, Athens, Greece, <sup>2</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Department of Dermatology and Venereology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Medical School, “Attikon” General University Hospital, Athens, Greece, <sup>3</sup> Department of Dermatology I, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece, <sup>4</sup> B' Department of Dermatology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Papageorgiou General Hospital, Thessaloniki, Greece, <sup>5</sup> Novartis Hellas, Athens, Greece, <sup>6</sup> IQVIA Hellas, Athens, Greece

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## INTRODUCTION

- Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) is a chronic, progressive, debilitating, recurrent, inflammatory skin disease characterized by the occurrence of very severe, persistent, painful nodules, abscesses, and fistulas, most commonly found in the skin folds of the axilla, groin, gluteal, and perianal areas. HS is associated with a significant decrease in the patients' quality of life, which makes the selection of the appropriate therapy extremely important<sup>1</sup>.
- Despite the impairment in QoL of patients with HS, there is a lack of evidence and clear understanding of disease burden, treatment challenges and unmet need in the Greek population with HS. Therefore, patients’ insights are important to get a holistic perspective of the disease in Greece.

## OBJECTIVE

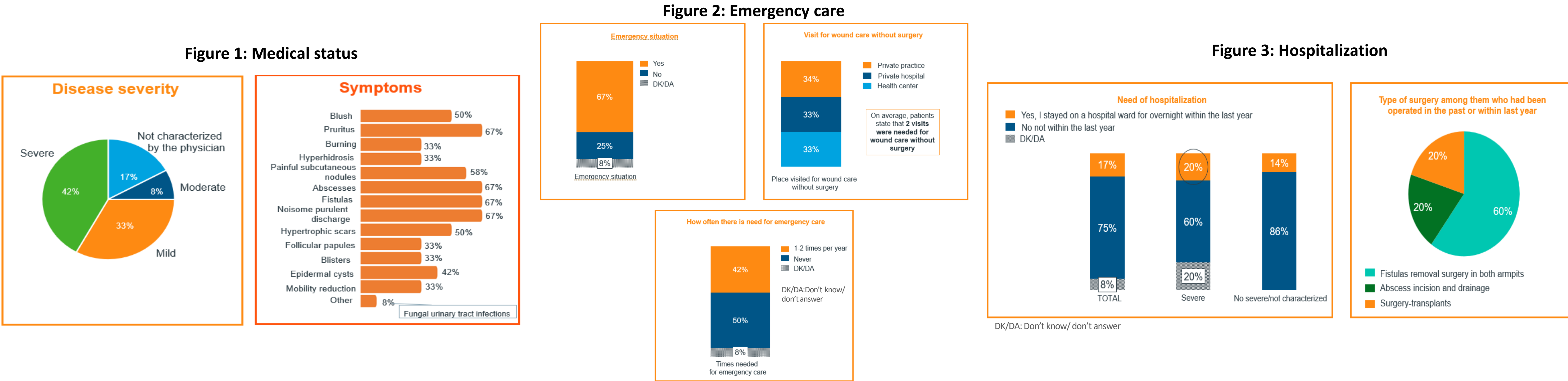
- The present study was conducted to understand burden of disease, challenges faced by patients and unmet needs in HS in Greece.

## METHODS

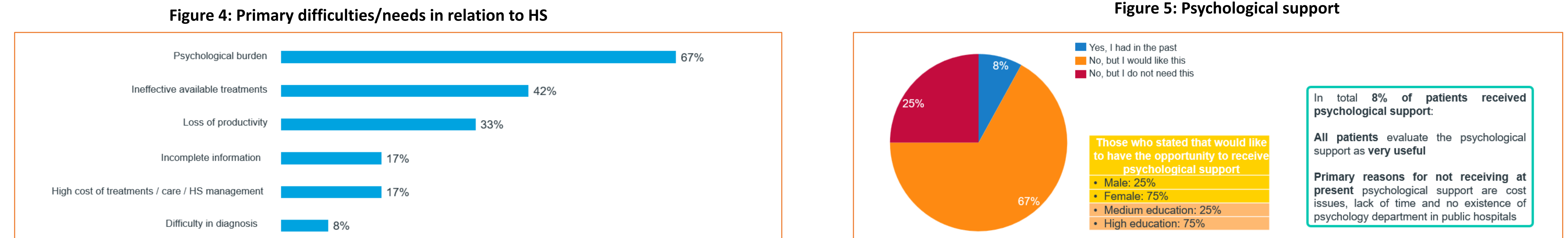
- The survey was conducted via a structured questionnaire and patients’ recruitment was implemented via physicians. All patients signed a Consent Form in order to participate in the survey.

## RESULTS

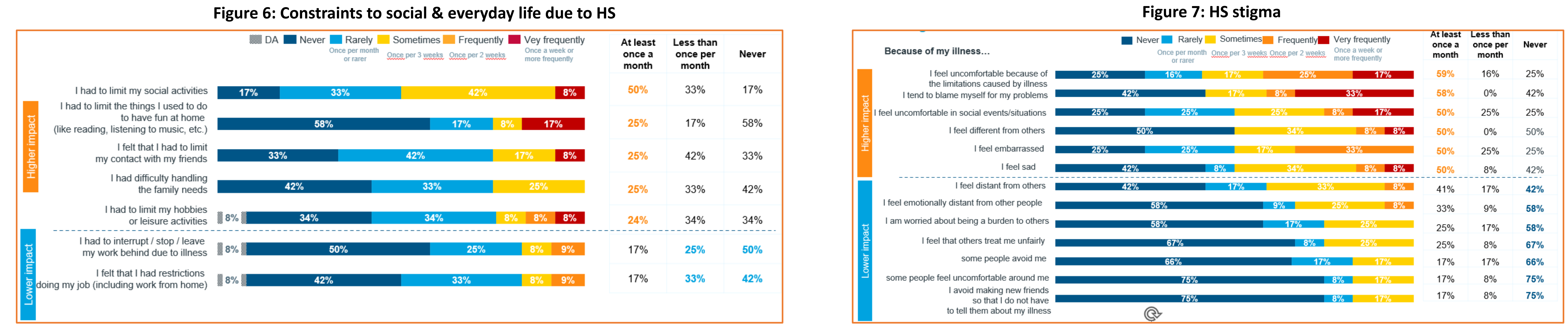
- Twelve patients with HS participated in the survey. According to the results, the demographic characteristics of the total HS patients’ sample were: females (83%), <40 years old (75%), high level of education (75%), currently working (75%), singles (50%). Biologic (67%) and other pharmaceutical therapies (67%) are the most commonly-cited therapies, while half (50%) of patients reported that they have received in total 2-3 different treatments since diagnosis.
- Disease severity at the time of sampling was categorized by the treating physician according to IHS4: severe in 42%, moderate in 50% and mild in 8% of patients (Figure 1). The most frequent symptoms reported by the patients were pruritus, abscesses, fistulas and noisome purulent discharge (Figure 1). All patients reported that they are visiting private or public physicians for wound care. Additionally, the majority (67%) of patients reported that they have been in emergency situation (acute onset of new or worsened inflammatory nodules, abscesses, or swollen draining tunnels)<sup>2</sup> and 42% of patients needed emergency care 1-2 times/year since diagnosis (Figure 2). The highest rate of patients who stayed on a hospital ward within the last year was among patients with severe HS (20%). The most common type of surgery was fistulas removal (60%) (Figure 3).



- The most important challenge HS patients face is psychological burden<sup>3</sup> (Figure 4). Only 8% of patients received psychological support in the past, while 67% would like to have the opportunity to get psychological support (Figure 5).



- Patients state that HS primarily impacts their social activities (Figure 6), leading them to blame themselves, experience feelings of discomfort, embarrassment, and sadness more often than once a month (Figure 7).



## CONCLUSIONS

- HS impacts patients’ everyday activities, work and socialization. Patients tend to blame themselves, feel uncomfortable, different from others, embarrassed and sad.
- Patients with moderate to severe HS experience a high disease burden, due to required wound care, that impacts daily activities, work and socialization. This study demonstrates the impact of HS on a patient’s psychosocial well-being and emphasizes the importance of treating patients from a holistic standpoint.

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## DISCLOSURES

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