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Objective

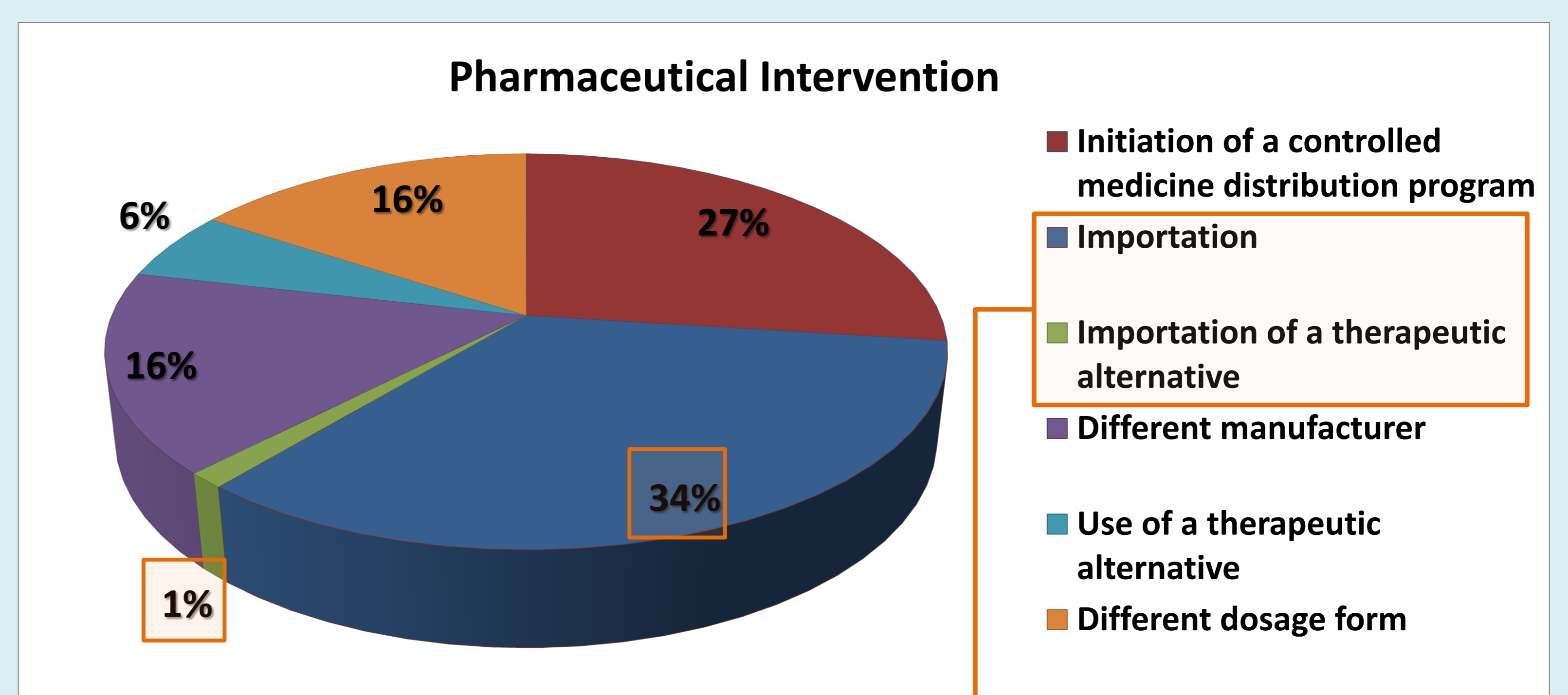
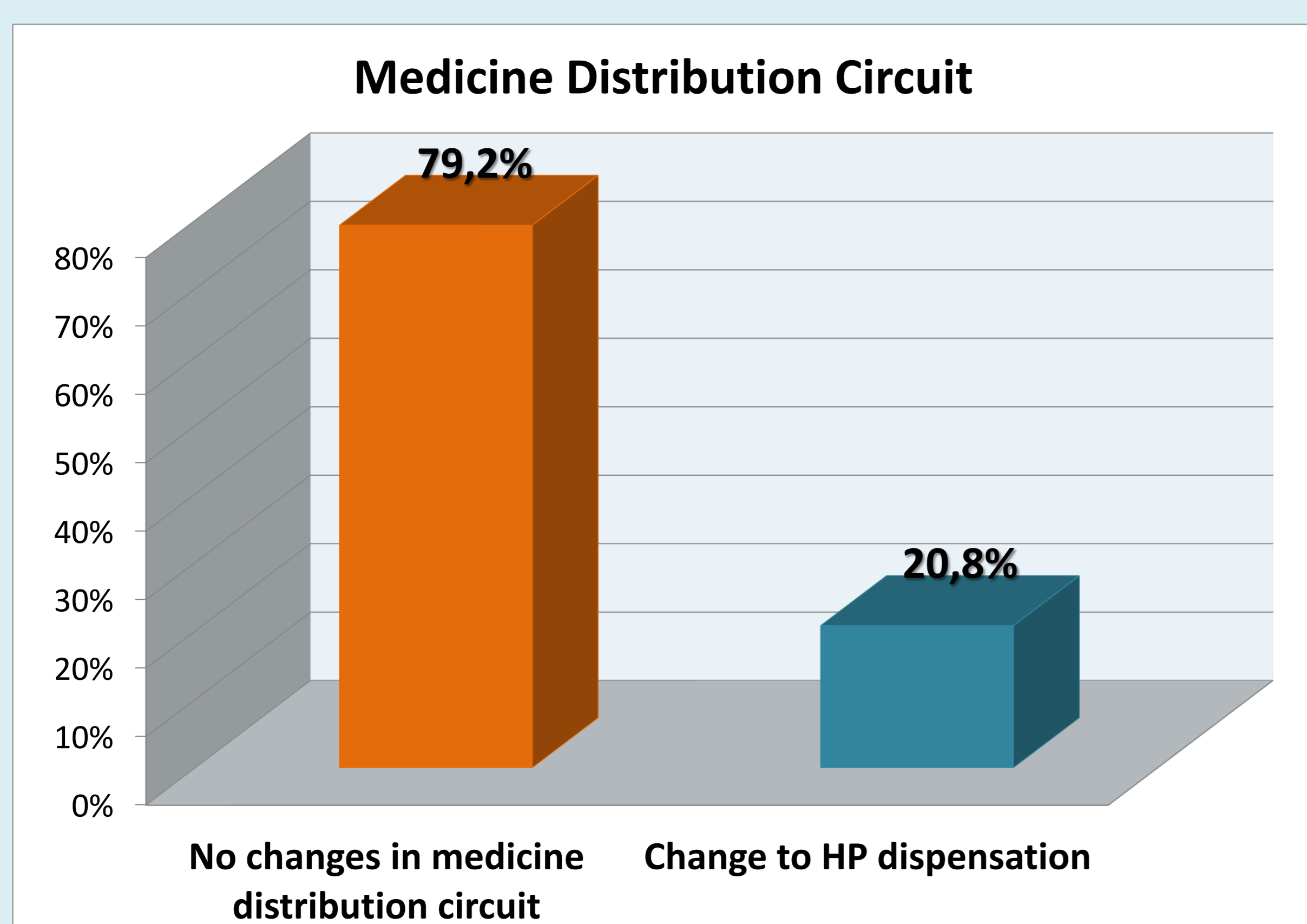
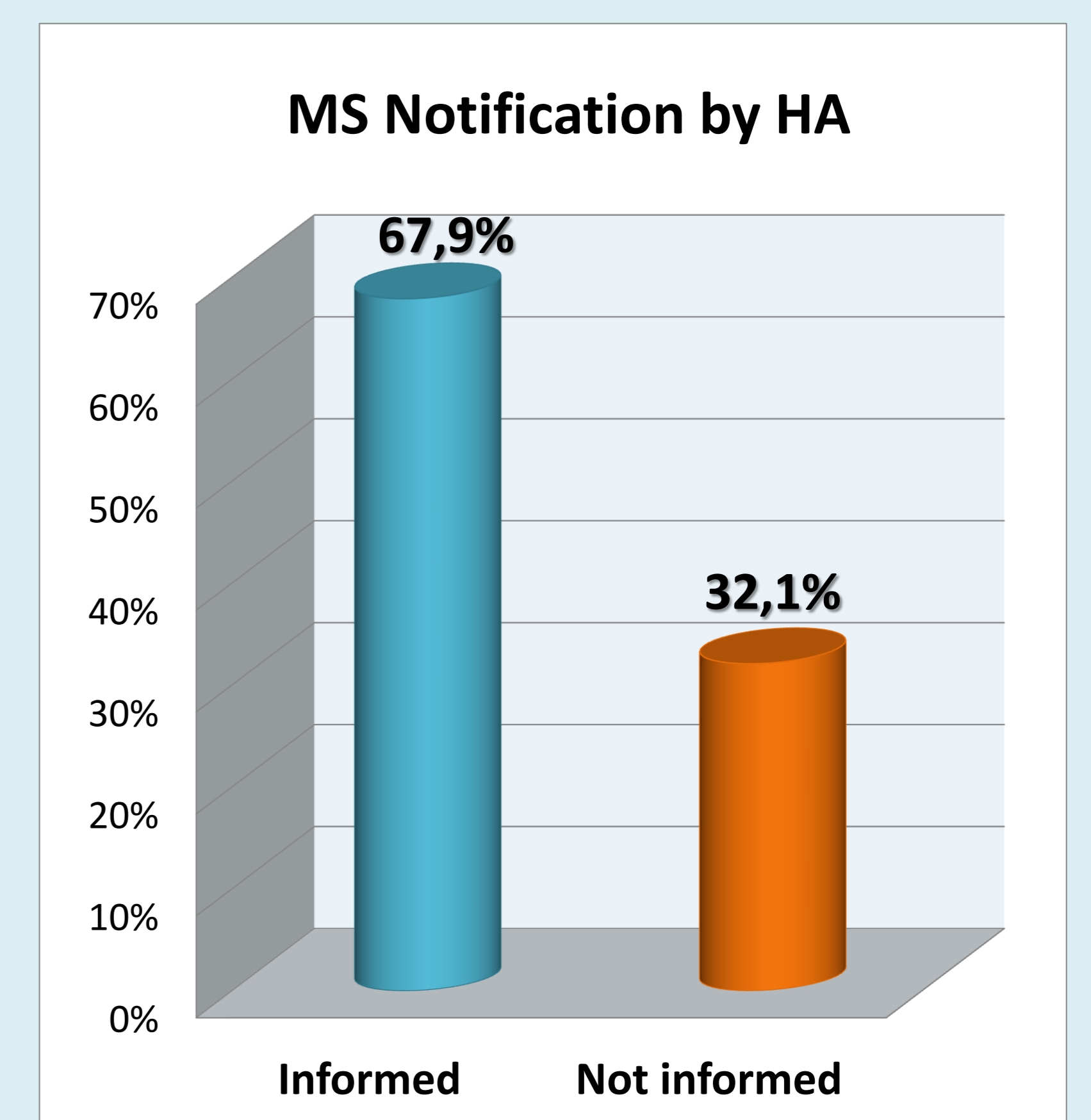
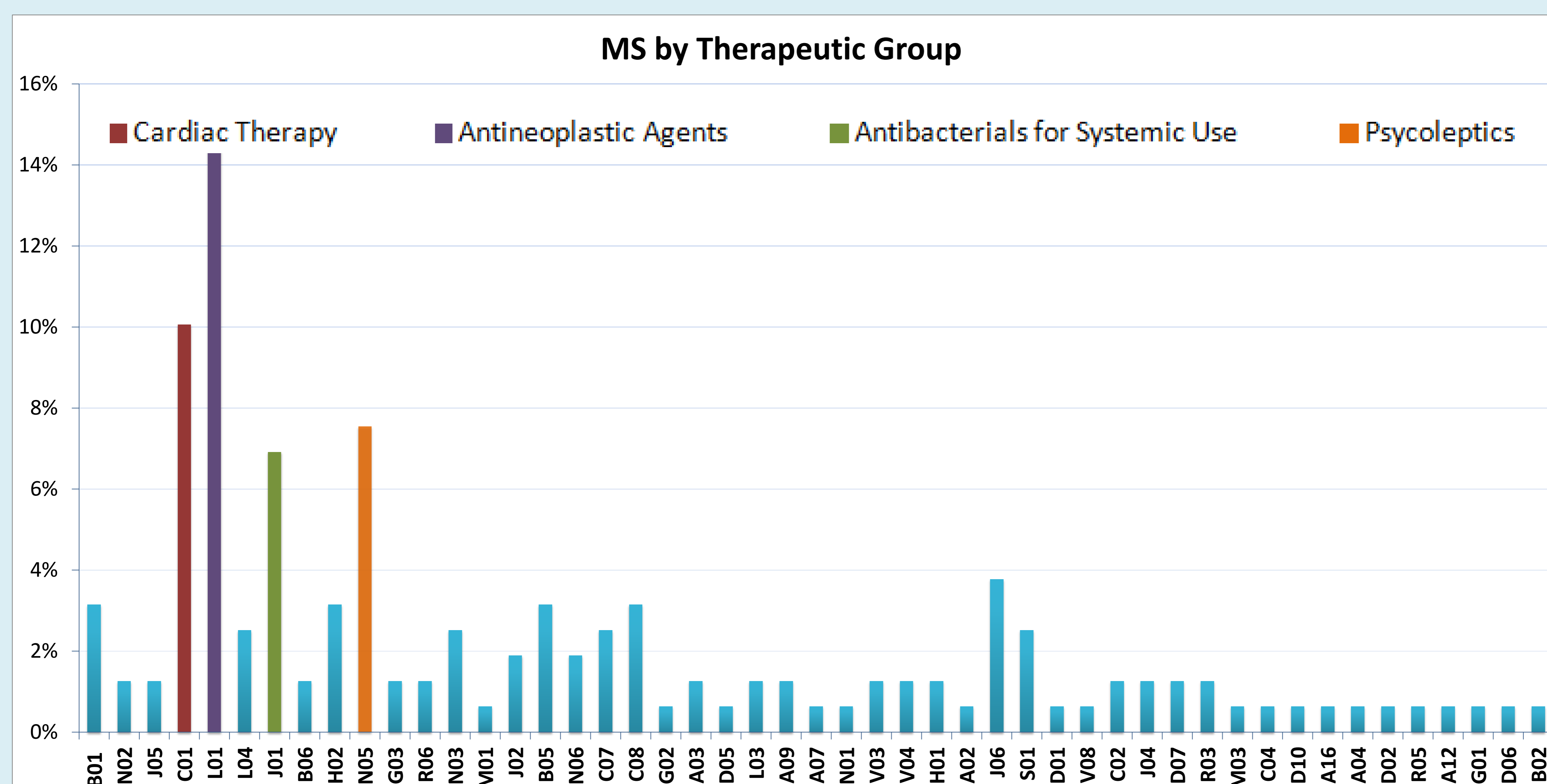
- Medicine shortages (MS) have become a global concern. It is a real challenge for hospital pharmacists who have to search for possible solutions in order to minimise their impact on patient's health.
- The aim of this study was to assess the MS and to evaluate their effect on a third-level Hospital Pharmacy (HP) Department day-to-day activity.

Study Design

- A retrospective descriptive study was carried out between July 2017 and June 2018.
- Data were obtained from internal MS data logs and MS notification registers from Health Authorities (HA).
- Data collected included: active substance, dosage form, manufacturer, pharmaceutical intervention, if the medicine shortage was informed by HA and if it changed the medicine distribution circuit (from Community Pharmacy (CP) to HP dispensation).

Results

- 159 MS involving 144 different medicines were recorded during the period of study.



They represent the 26% of the yearly foreign medicine request applications (148 out of 569 applications).

Conclusions

- MS represent a significant increase of the hospital pharmacist activity, mainly focused on executing administrative tasks and planning for strategies to maintain the medication supply. Furthermore, this problem implies attending new outpatients who usually collect their medication at the CP.
- The lack of communication of MS supposes a cause of distress for patients, as they are unaware of the current medicine distribution circuit, and a real risk for treatment discontinuation.

