

# CHALLENGES OF IMMUNOTHERAPY (IO) IN A NURSE LED UNIT

## Introduction

The indications for immunotherapy use across multiple malignancies in multiple settings (neoadjuvant, adjuvant & metastatic). This has and is resulting in a new challenge for Oncology services in terms of safe delivery, capacity and toxicity management. The Acute Oncology service (AOS) seeks to ensure effective management of Immune related toxicity. NCCP have developed protocols for the management of IO toxicity, though toxicities require management by specific specialities which have limited availability in satellite hospitals causing delayed intervention or transfer to other hospitals.

## Objective

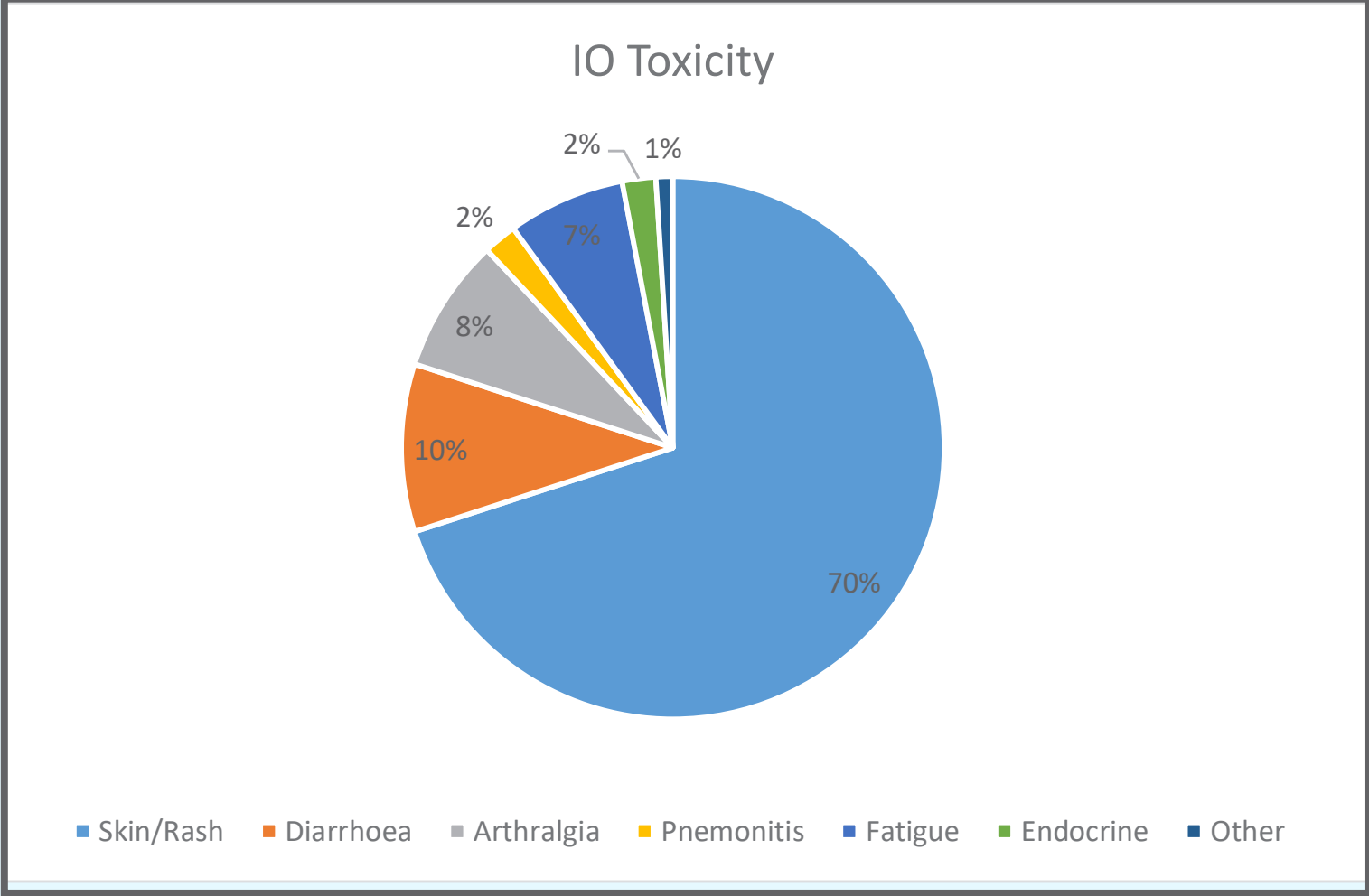
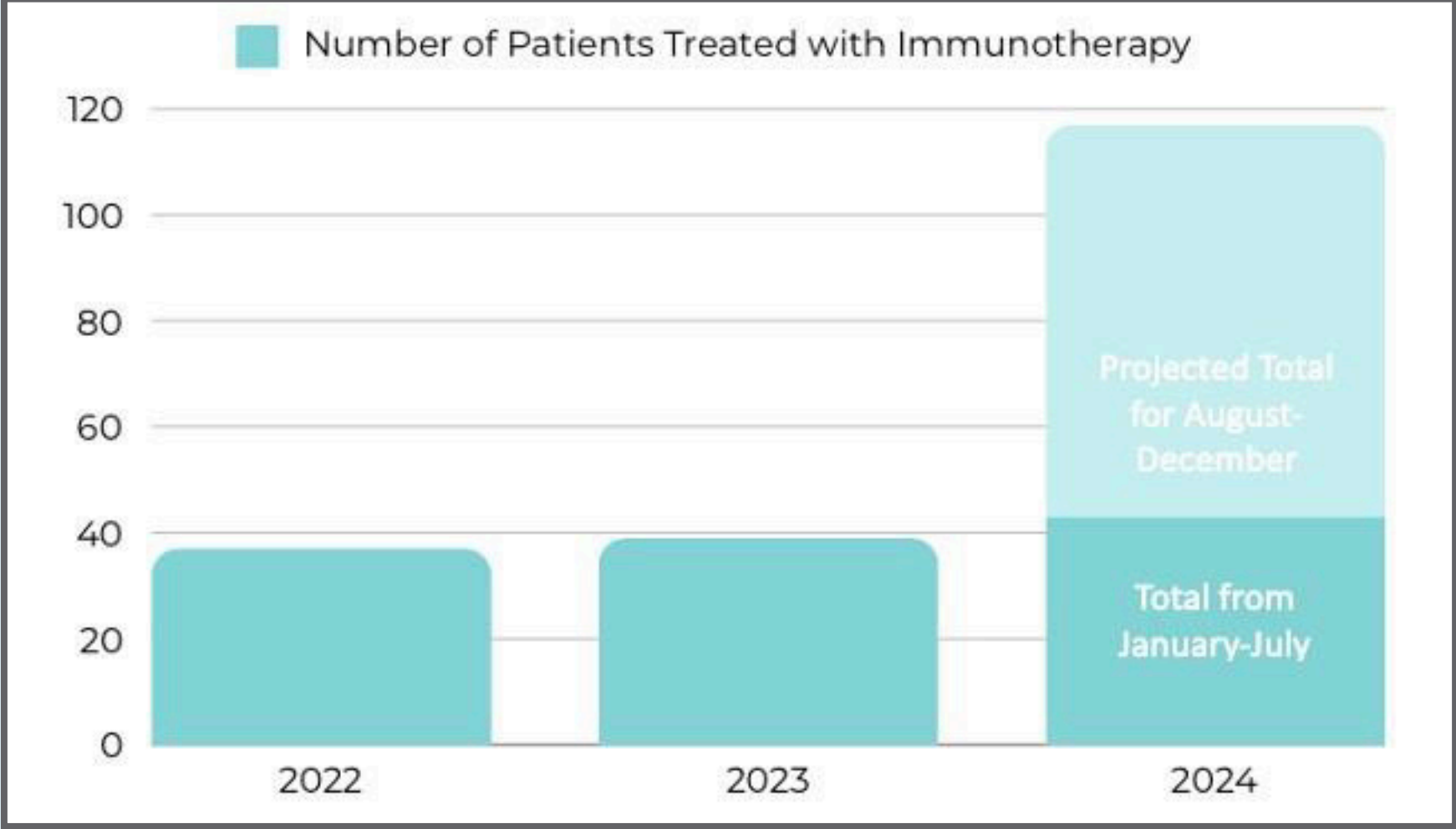
Analyse retrospective data from the Oncology day unit to examine impact on capacity, complexity and duration of treatments over a 2 year period. Increase our knowledge in order to provide complex management of Immune related adverse events.

## Methods

We conducted a retrospective review of the number of patients receiving IO, both single agent and in combination in a two year period over all tumour groups attending our service. We reviewed the data from the Acute Oncology service looking at calls received and admission rates.   
**Database:** PubMed, Medline, Cochrane Library, Cinahl   
**Criteria:** English Language, full text 2014 – 2024   
**Keywords:** Immunotherapy, Immunotherapy toxicity

## Findings

Year	Number patients treated	Number AOS calls	Admissions
2022	37		
2023	39	35	2
2024 (Jan - July)	43	25	5



## Conclusion

Immunotherapy will continue to change cancer care. We identify progressive increase in treatment numbers over a 2 year period thus increasing the demand on the day ward capacity with an increase in toxicity management as well. We identify an increasing complexity of the treatment toxicity profile which is challenging and requires specific knowledge to adequately recognise and manage side effects.

## Recommendations

The need for national awareness & strategic planning is fundamental to support this rapidly evolving trajectory in cancer care. An area of consideration is improved access to multidisciplinary specialists where toxicity management requires specific intervention. Education for Oncology nurses to ensure expert level care necessary for patients with complex treatment regimens.

## References

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### IMMUNOTHERAPY TIMELINE

