

Evaluating the Impact of THC: CBD Spray in the Management of Spasticity for Patients with Multiple Sclerosis: A clinical audit



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Context:

In 2019 NICE (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) (NG144) recommended THC:CBD spray for treating moderate to severe spasticity in adults with multiple sclerosis, when other pharmaceutical treatments had not been effective.

In 2021 a project was created to develop a service to prescribe THC:CBD spray to eligible patients, who were under the care of the Neurology Team at York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Following a Shared Care Guideline being implemented, a Neurologist, an Advanced Multiple Sclerosis Specialist Nurse and Specialist Physiotherapist in Spasticity Management set up a designated clinic at York Hospital.

Objective of audit:

To establish the effectiveness of the Sativex® clinic in meeting patients expectations to support them to manage their spasticity

Method:

A questionnaire was devised to investigate patients' experiences of attending the clinic, the effect Sativex® had on their spasticity and on their quality of life. The questionnaire was sent to all patients who had been assessed, met the criteria and prescribed Sativex between October 2021 and April 2024 (12).

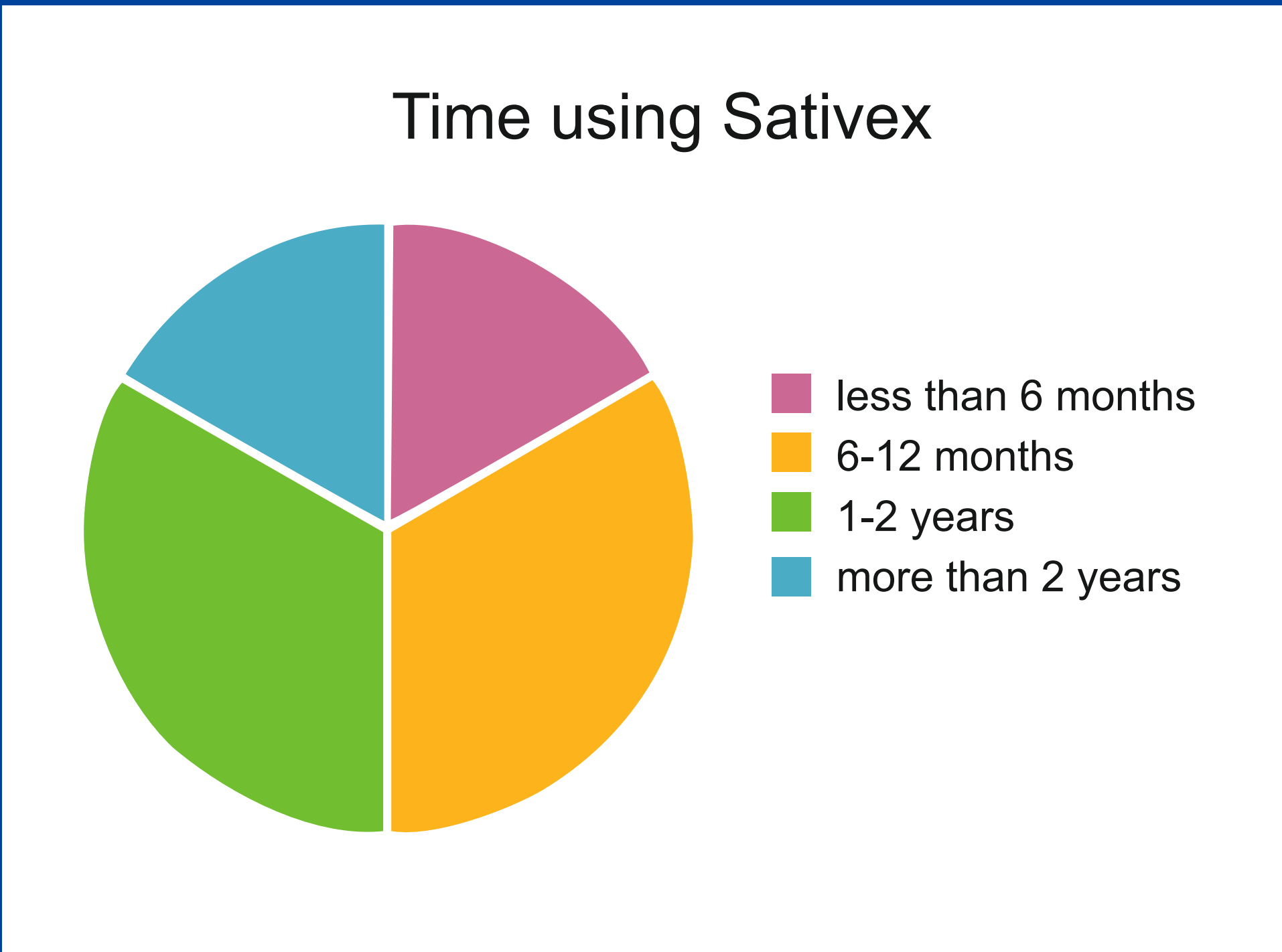
There was a 50% questionnaire return rate. These were evaluated by the Advanced Specialist Multiple Sclerosis Nurse and Spasticity Specialist Physiotherapist.

60% of responders rated the impact on their quality of life as excellent



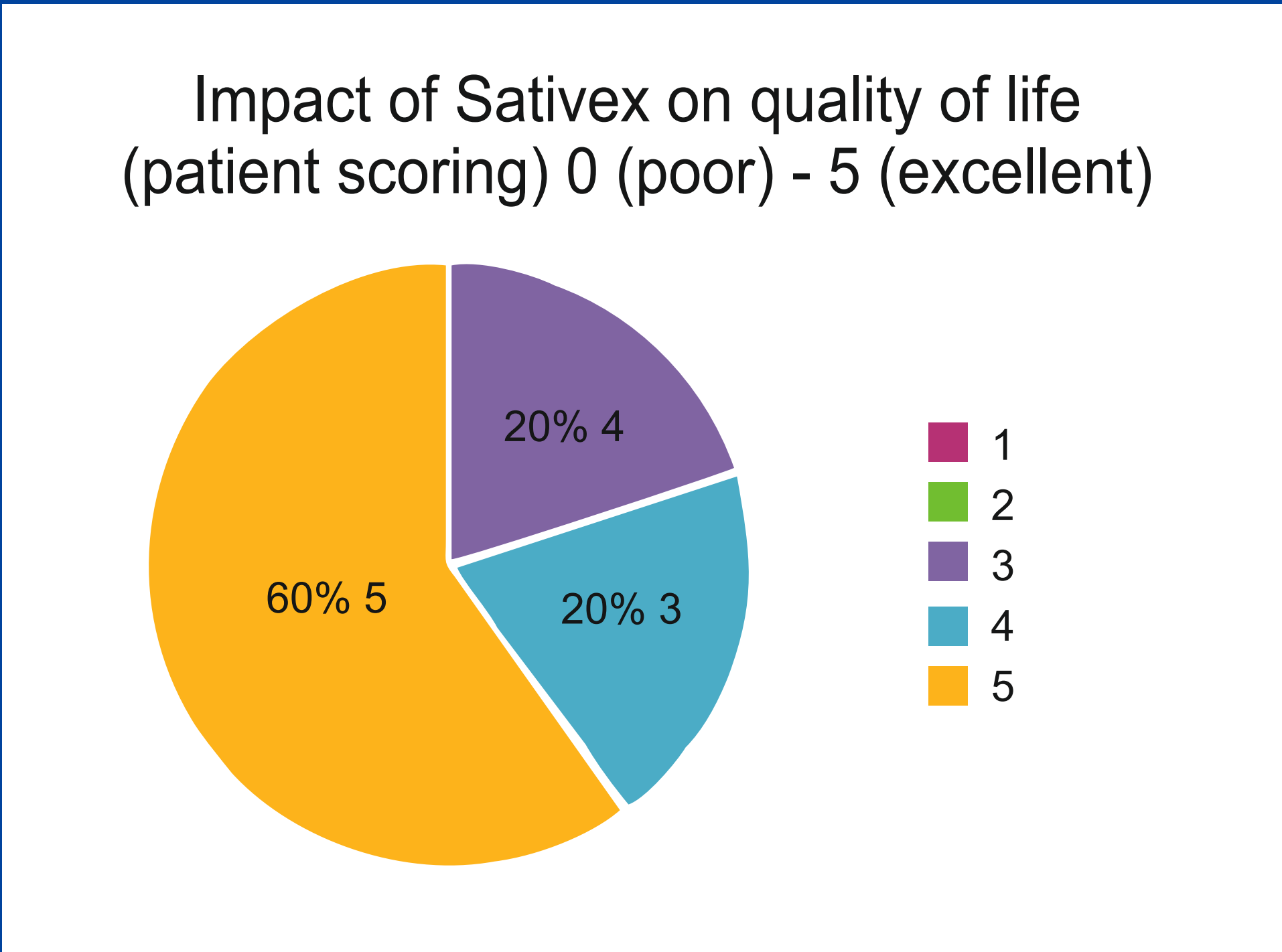
Key Results

All responders continued Sativex® after their initial 4 week trial

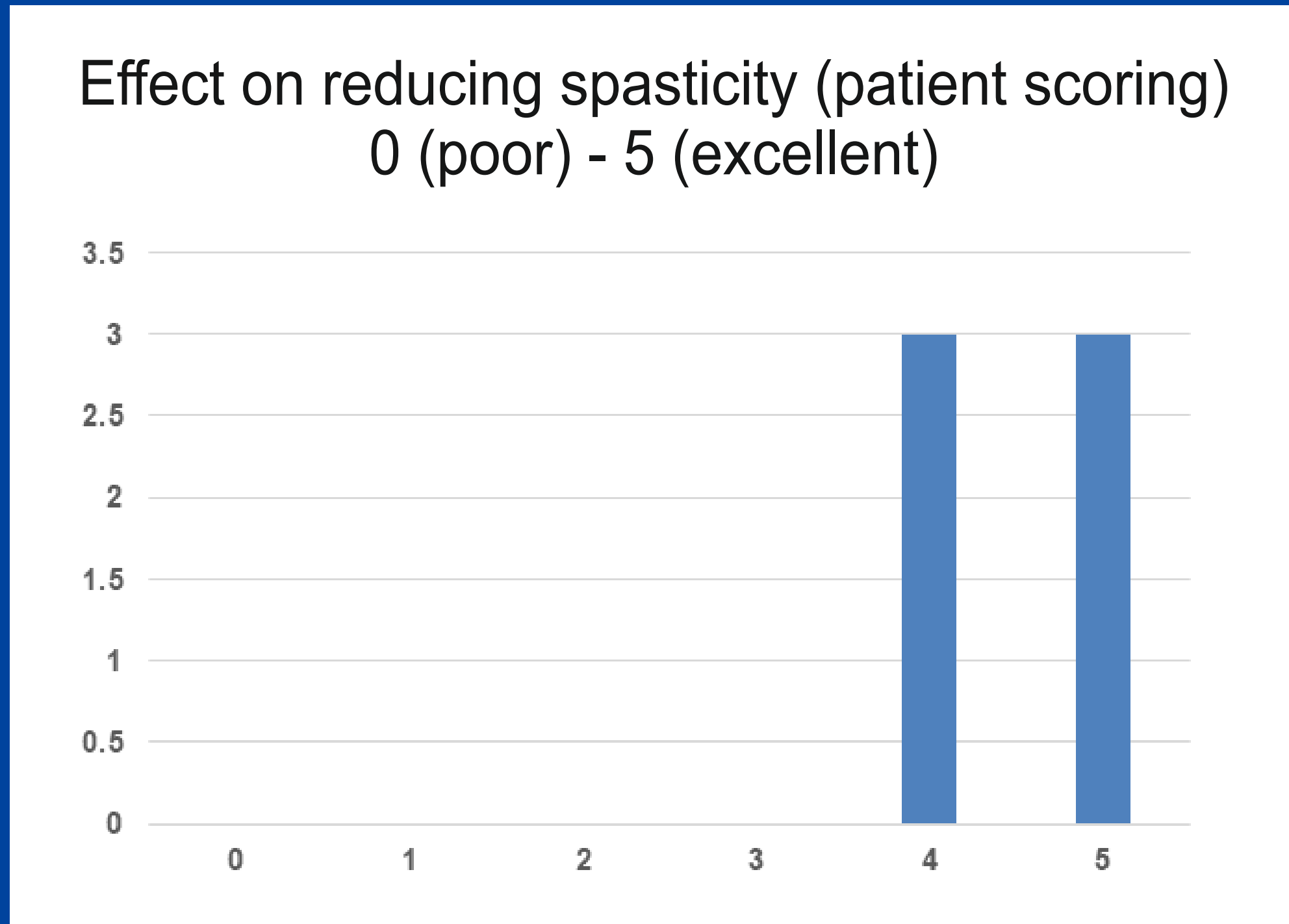


100% rated 'How much were you listened to and your expectations/ concerns addressed?' as excellent (5/5)

100% rated 'How would you rate your Sativex® assessment/ review appointments in the Neurosciences Unit?' as excellent (5/5)



Adverse effects: 1 was reported (affected memory) which resolved when the dose of Sativex® was reduced (<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>)



really helped with my spasms and made it easier to do things and sleep

stiffness and spasm improved, mobility improved, sleep improved, mood improved

everything became easier and improved. Spasms reduced dramatically

Discussion:

This audit demonstrated the effectiveness of the Sativex® clinic in meeting patients' expectations to support them to manage their spasticity. On reflection this was partly due to the thorough joint Specialist Nurse and Specialist Physiotherapist assessment, documented on a proforma, to correctly identify suitable patients. This clinic structure also allowed for other efficiencies; for example to jointly identify appropriate onward referrals eg orthotic clinic. Patients who did not meet the criteria for a Sativex® trial could be jointly advised on an alternative treatment plan.

There were some initial concerns if GPs would continue Sativex® prescriptions following the funded trial. This was managed by ensuring good stake holder communication, including attaching the Shared Care Guideline to all clinic letters and monitoring patients regularly in the clinic throughout their first year of treatment.

For some of the patients there were some additional health benefits once they were established on an effective dose of Sativex® including discontinuing opioid analgesics and discontinuing smoking cannabis.

Conclusion:

This audit demonstrated the positive impact THC/CBD spray can have on reducing spasticity and improving the quality of life for patients. We plan to continue to offer eligible patients the opportunity to trial THC/CBD spray within the specialist joint clinic at York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.