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Haematological cancer patients are positive towards gene testing

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BACKGROUND

- Precision Medicine has gained increased medical and political attention in recent years.
- In Denmark, this has resulted in The National Strategy for Precision Medicine 2017-2020 and development of a national genome centre.
- In 2016, the Danish Ministry of Health and Danish Regions performed a population-based survey of the public's perception of Precision Medicine.
- In order to implement Precision Medicine successfully in a clinical setting, it is important to gain knowledge on the perception of Precision Medicine from a patient perspective.
- To our knowledge no study has to date investigated patients' perception of this subject in a Danish setting.

AIM

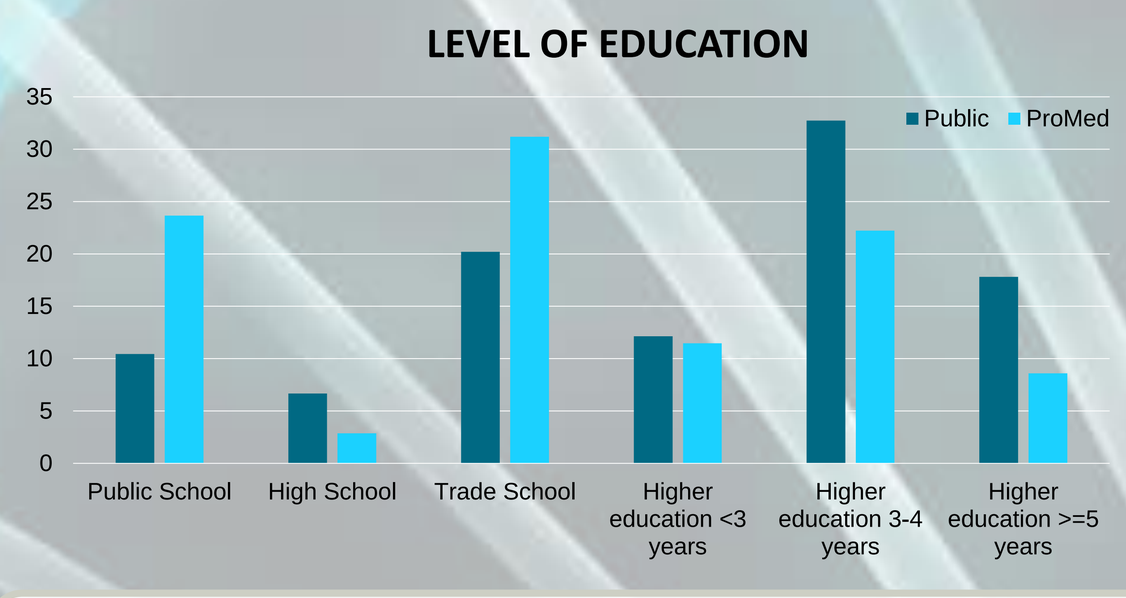
- The aim of this study (Pro-Med) was to investigate haematological cancer patients' perception of Precision Medicine and to compare their perception of Precision Medicine to the healthy population.

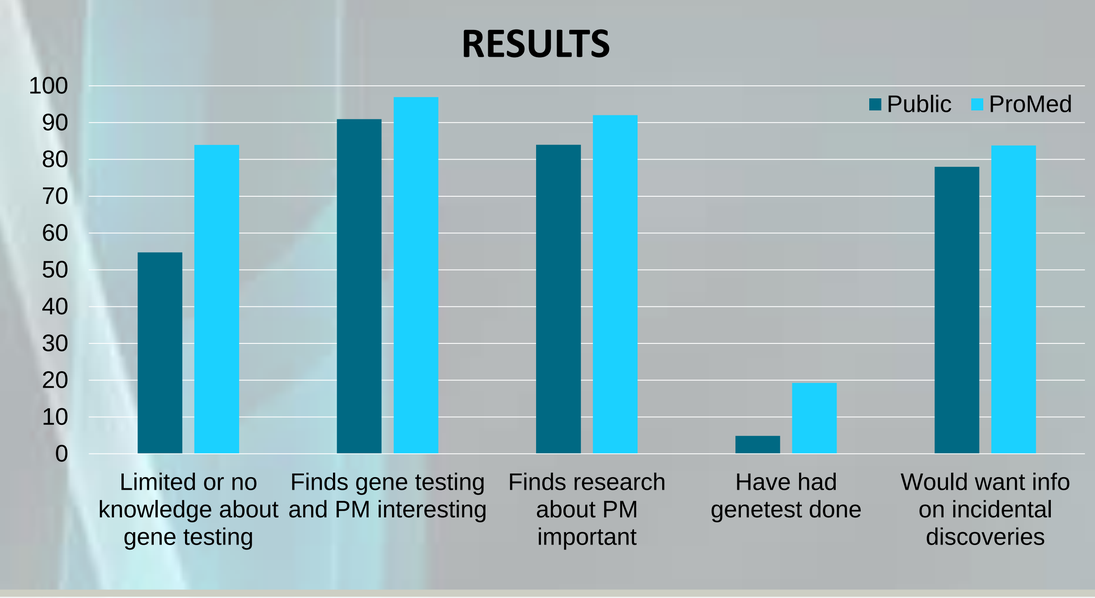
METHOD

- Data was collected using a questionnaire developed by ADVICE Communication Agency, Copenhagen for the population-based survey on behalf of the Danish Ministry of Health and Danish Regions.
- The questionnaire contained 12 questions, all focusing on the perception of Precision Medicine.
- Inclusion criteria:
  - Patients included in ProGen/ProSeq - an ongoing prospective Precision Medicine validation study at the Department of Haematology, Aalborg University Hospital (Ethics Committee reg. number: N-20150042 / N-20160089)
  - Outpatients visiting in connection with treatment.
- The questionnaire was administered electronically through REDCap and on paper.
- Data was collected anonymously.

RESULTS

- 295 patients were enrolled between October 2017 and January 2018 (median age; men 66 yrs., women 67 yrs.).
- The study population had a higher median age compared to the public (n=1005) (median age; men 60.5 yrs., women 53 yrs.) and a lower education level.
- 92% of the patients were positive towards genetic research compared to 84% of the public (difference in proportion, $p<0.001$)
- 84% of the patients had none or limited knowledge about gene testing compared to 55% of the public (difference in proportion, $p<0.0001$).
- 97% of the patients found gene testing and Precision Medicine interesting compared to 91% of the public (difference in proportion, $p<0.002$).





CONCLUSIONS

- ✓ **We have identified a higher degree of acceptance towards gene testing and Precision Medicine amongst haematological cancer patients compared to the healthy public.**
- ✓ **We have also identified a low self-assessed level of knowledge in this area amongst the same group of patients.**
- ✓ **This low level of knowledge should be addressed in order to optimise and support patient dialogue in a Precision Medicine context.**

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