

1 OUR GOAL

To understand the **ethical challenges healthcare professionals experienced** during the FORTEe exercise trial for children and adolescents who received cancer treatment.

2 WHAT WE WANTED TO KNOW



What does the child want?



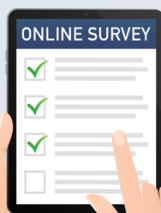
Are the benefits and burdens of exercise research balanced?



How do difficult situations affect healthcare staff?

EXERCISE INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN DURING CANCER TREATMENT MAY HELP, BUT TAKING PART IN RESEARCH ALSO COMES WITH DIFFICULT DECISIONS AND EMOTIONS.

3 HOW WE DID IT



Online survey about

- Autonomy and choices of the child
- Parental influence
- Perceived burden
- Fairness of control-group allocation
- Sustainability & Access to exercise
- Moral distress in difficult situations

79 healthcare staff (physicians, nurses, exercise professionals, psychologists, social workers, ethicists, and others)

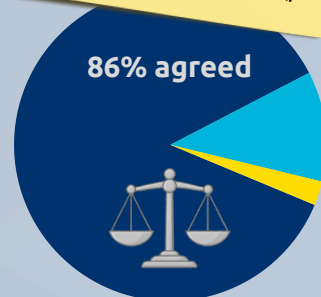


SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS FROM 10 CENTRES IN 7 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
 (DENMARK, FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, UNITED KINGDOM)

4 WHAT WE FOUND

- **86% agreed** that the **benefits and burdens** of the FORTEe trial were **appropriately balanced**, 11% were unsure, 2.5% disagreed.
- Reported challenges included research burden and logistical demands as well as **emotional discomfort when allocating children to the control group**.
- The informed consent process was generally considered appropriate. However, staff reported **challenges when parents' and children's preferences differed** and when assessing a child's decision-making capacity.
- Among staff involved in prognosis-related tasks, **69% reported experiencing moral distress**, particularly when communicating decisions about continuing or discontinuing trial participation.



5 WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OUR FINDINGS

- Put the children's needs and well-being first. **Listen to the children and involve them** in decisions according to their age and ability to understand.
- **Support staff** in dealing with ethical challenges and moral distress.
- **Make research flexible:** Adapt procedures to reduce practical & emotional burdens.
- **Think beyond the trial:** Plan for fair and sustainable access to exercise interventions after the research ends.

The focus should remain on the child: Good research is more than following ethical procedures – it listens, adapts, and supports.

