

Pediatric hematooncology in Poland

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In Poland, the care of children with cancer and hematological diseases is provided within a single, very broad specialization in pediatric oncology and hematology. For almost all specialists, this is a second or subsequent specialization, while the specialization in pediatrics is a primary specialization. At present, 210 physicians have specialized in this niche field. There are 18 pediatric oncology and hematology centers in Poland. According to data from the National Consultant in Pediatric Oncology and Hematology, the total number of hospitalizations in pediatric oncohematology wards is about 31,000 annually. On an average working day in 18 pediatric oncology and hematology departments in Poland there are about 450 patients with malignant diseases (including patients after hematopoietic cell transplantation or cancer recurrence).

Pediatric oncology is a discipline of rare diseases, as the incidence of pediatric malignancies is lower than 5 cases per 10,000 inhabitants annually [1]. The population of Poland in 2021 was 38.08 million, of whom 7.64 million (20.1%) were aged <18 years [2] (for comparison, in 1990 children accounted for 29% of the population of Poland). According to data from 2020, the number of new cases of cancers of the lymphatic, hematopoietic and related systems in Poland is c.8,100 per year, including c.450 in children (5.5%). In adults, leukemias and lymphomas each account for c.2% of all malignancies. 28% of all malignancies in children are leukemias (being the most common type of cancer) while lymphomas are c.13% [with a ratio of Hodgkin/non-Hodgkin lymphoma (HL/NHL) = 50%/50%] [3]. Myelodysplastic malignancies, chronic myeloproliferative neoplasms, and chronic myeloid leukemia in children are casuistic: for each of these, new diagnoses are fewer than 10 per year. The number of new

histiocytoses in children is about 30 per year. Chronic lymphocytic leukemia and plasmocytic myeloma practically never occur in children.

This issue of “Acta Haematologica Polonica” is focused on pediatric hematology and oncological hematology. Papers indicating current problems and trends in diagnostics and treatment in this field of medicine are presented, reflecting common problems for all hematologists [4–6].

Authors' contributions

KC – design of study. Both authors – provision of data, literature search, writing manuscript, critical revision and final approval.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Financial support

None.

Ethics

The work described in this article has been carried out in accordance with The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association (Declaration of Helsinki) for experiments involving humans; EU Directive 2010/63/EU for animal experiments and uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals.

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Received: 31.07.2023 Accepted: 03.08.2023 Early publication date: 17.08.2023

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