

# Patient Experience Improvement Project

## Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre - Chemotherapy Day Unit

Grampians Health

Project Lead - Inbal Ross [Inbal.ross@gh.org.au](mailto:Inbal.ross@gh.org.au)  
Consumer Representative: Ian Kemp.  
Grampians Integrated Cancer Service (GICS) Project Support: Hannah Ryan-West

### Background

Grampians Health, Ballarat Chemotherapy Day Unit (CDU), provides anticancer treatment and care for patients across the Grampians region. The CDU recognised that variations in a patient's treatment journey can change daily and that these changes often led to treatment cancellations and delays. The impact of this was felt by the patient, their families and the staff providing care.

### Aim

Improve the patient experience within our unit by streamlining their care and eliminating their time loss.

### Methods

The project was led by a Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nurse Unit Manager and a consumer liaison and funded by Grampians Integrated Cancer Service (GICS). Qualitative & Quantitative data analysis was used to inform opportunities for service efficiency improvements in 3 phases:

- Phase 1:** The same day cancellation rate from the past six months was assessed to identify the cancellations which could have been predicted & to identify the common reasons for cancellation.
- Phase 2:** Patient admission data collection (n=300) was used to determine if there were delays in the commencement of treatment. If yes, what led to treatment delay once they arrived in the unit? The data was discussed with the nursing and oncology team to identify areas of improvement.
- Phase 3:** Patient interviews (n=80) to determine what patients considered to be a delay and how any identified delays impacted their lives. Mapping patient movement through our service. This phase is currently in progress.

### Key Findings

- On average, there were approximately 1.6 patient cancellations on the same day of planned treatment (varied between 0-6 patients a day).
- 77% of same day cancellations were deemed preventable.
- 37% of total cancellations occurred after patients had seen the treating doctor.
- The main reasons for delay in the commencement of treatment were clinic review, drug delivery to CDU, pathology and medical review.
- Admission time averaged to 40 minutes (from patient arrival to CDU to commencement of treatment).
- Patient delays had a negative cascading effect on other patients and the department.



### Case Study

**74 year old female.**

Diagnosis : Relapsed myeloma, slowly progressing.

**Past Medical History :** IgA lambda myeloma, HTN, gout, loss of balance, axonal sensory neuropathy, acquired hypogammaglobulinaemia on replacement, chronic kidney disease, cataracts.

**Social:** Retired, living at home with supportive husband.

**Treatment:** Elotuzumab Lenalidomide and dexamethasone.

**Each cycle estimated cost \$21,320 (3 days expiry).\***

Recent surgical hospital admission. Doctor review at clinic same day of treatment. Treatment delayed 1/52.

This same day cancellation would have preventable by a clinical review one day prior to treatment or if nursing staff notified of recent surgery and were able to liaise with treating team ahead of time.

This example illustrates the cost of a delay: the patient had to travel to the hospital unnecessarily, the chair was not used, there was drug waste, and nursing resources were not utilized.

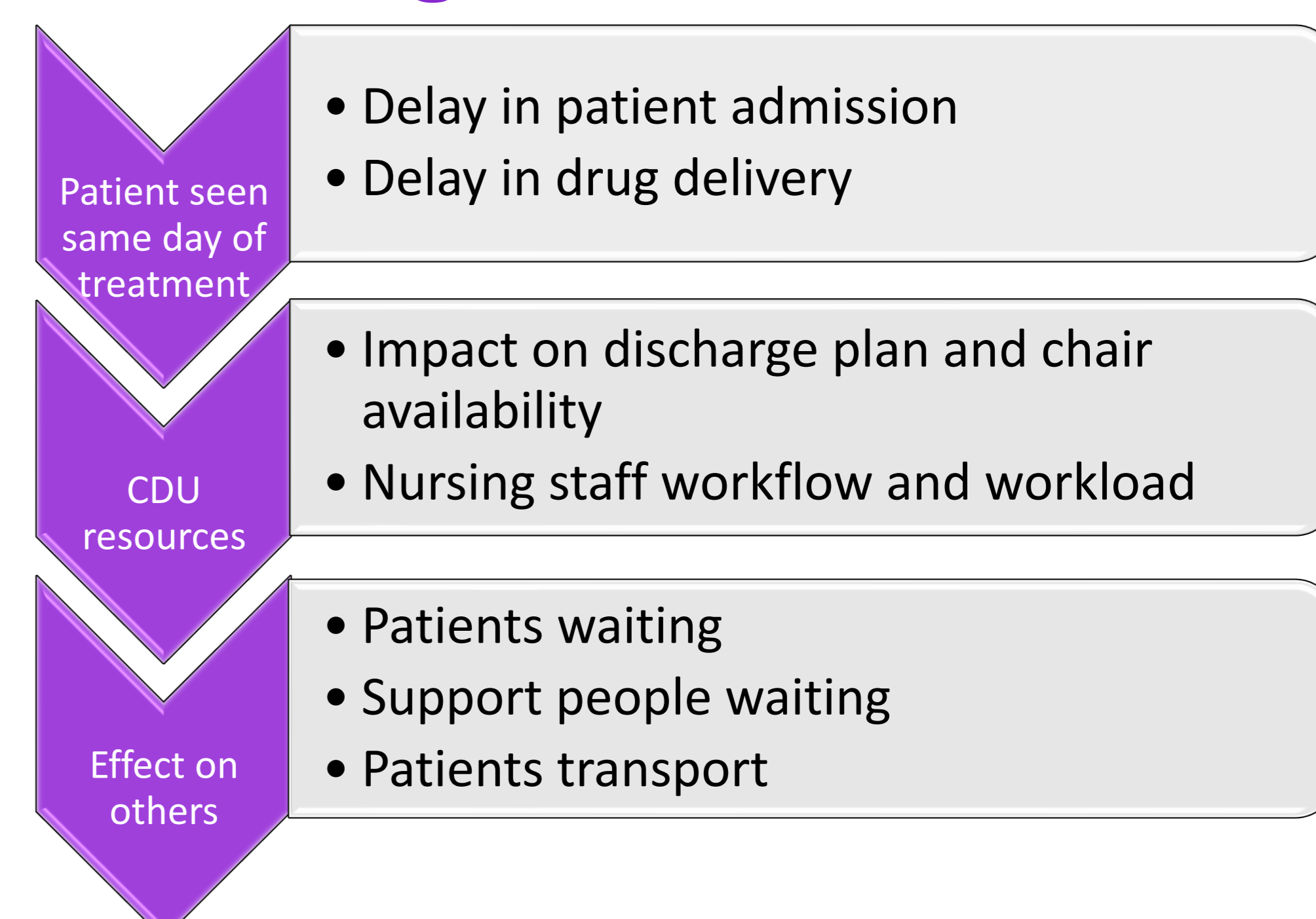
*\*The cost is claimed by PBS- it is a cost to the community*

*\*Note to mention we do not manufacture chemotherapy on site.*

### Patient's experience

A patient explained that having clinic review separated from her treatment by a day allows her to prepare for treatment, such as hydrating and ensuring warmth for easier venous access. This approach also reduces chair time, alleviates pain associated with prolonged sitting, and helps to lower her anxiety levels.

### Cascading effect



### Sample Data

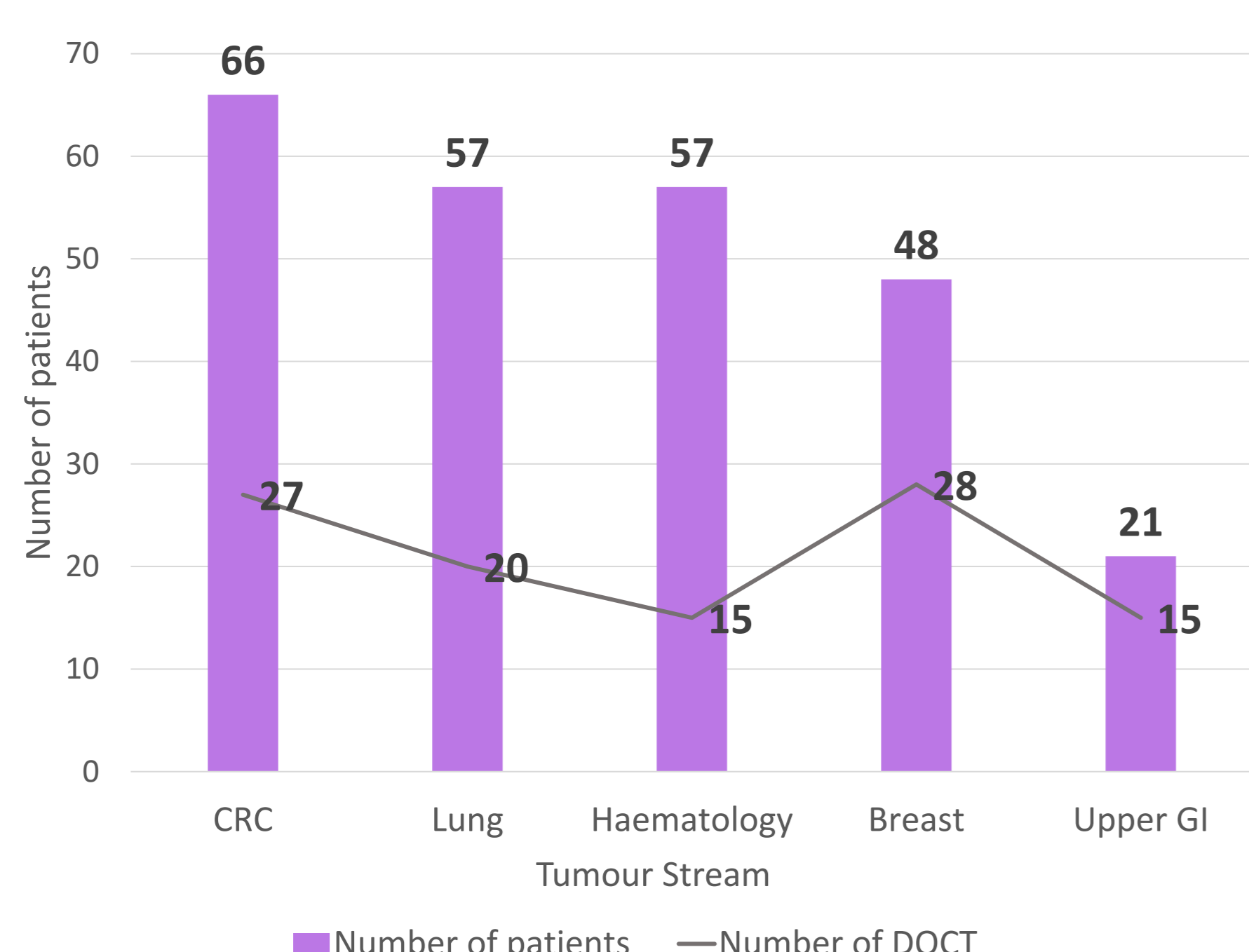


Figure 1. Delay in commencement of treatment (DOCT) by tumor stream (Phase 2) September 2023- December 2023

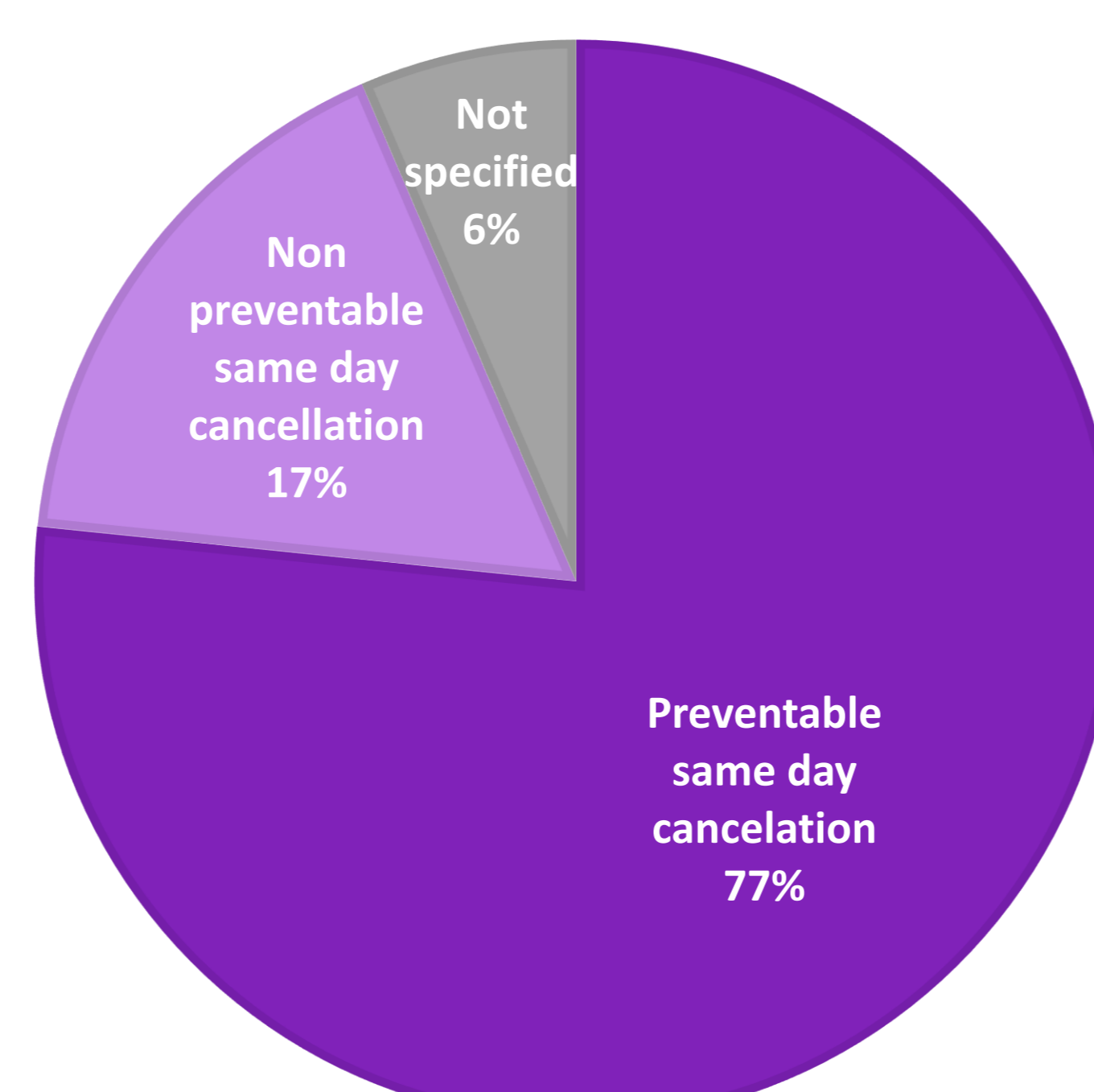


Figure 2. Preventable same day cancellation vs non preventable cancellations (Phase 1) January 2023- June 2023

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