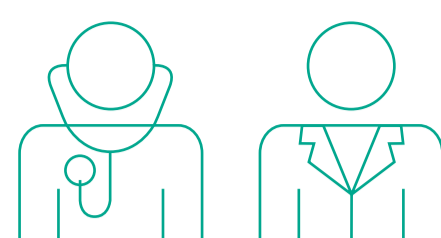


# MEDICATION ERRORS IN CHEMOTHERAPY



## WHAT ARE MEDICATION ERRORS

A medication error is defined as error in the

- ordering
- dispensing
- applying
- or monitoring

of a drug.<sup>1</sup>

## HOW OFTEN DO MEDICATION ERRORS OCCUR



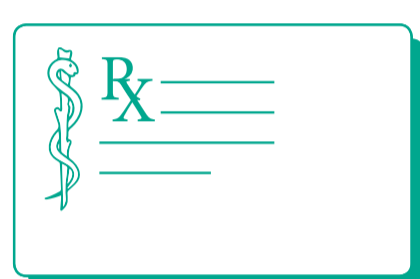
**7%**  
of adults



**19%**  
of children

taking chemotherapy drugs in outpatient clinics or at home were given the wrong dose or experienced other medication mistakes.<sup>2</sup>

## OCCURENCE OF MEDICATION ERRORS<sup>3, 4</sup>



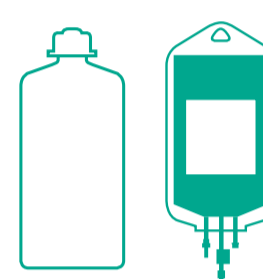
**42–91%**

Prescription



**4–8%**

Preparation



**1%**

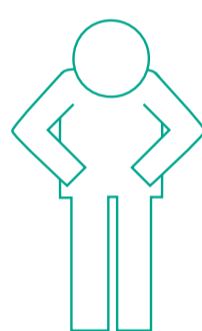
Application errors

## CONSEQUENCES FOR THE PATIENT<sup>2, 3</sup>



**Temporary injury**

(e.g. abdominal pain, neuropathy, hypertension)



**Permanent damage**

(diseases of the heart, lungs or nerves; infertility)



**Death**

(e.g. due to excessive bone marrow suppression)

According to one study, the vast majority of errors (436 out of 449) were intercepted before medication reached the patients. But:

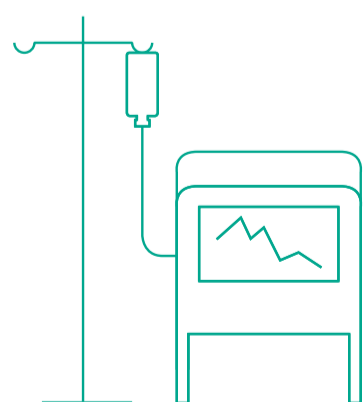
**13.4%** of avoided errors would have resulted in temporary injury.

**2.6%** would have resulted in permanent damage.

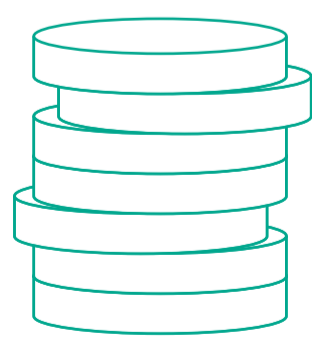
**2.6%** would have compromised the vital prognosis of the patient.

Overall, 13 medication errors reached the patient without causing damage, although two patients required enhanced monitoring.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR THE HOSPITAL<sup>3</sup>



**216**  
additional days



**€92,907**  
estimated total

Another study showed that medication errors lead to 216 additional days of hospitalisation and cost an estimated total of €92,907 per year.

## IN GENERAL

Of all the drugs implicated in medication errors, antineoplastic drugs are the most commonly involved (52%).<sup>5</sup>