

Background:

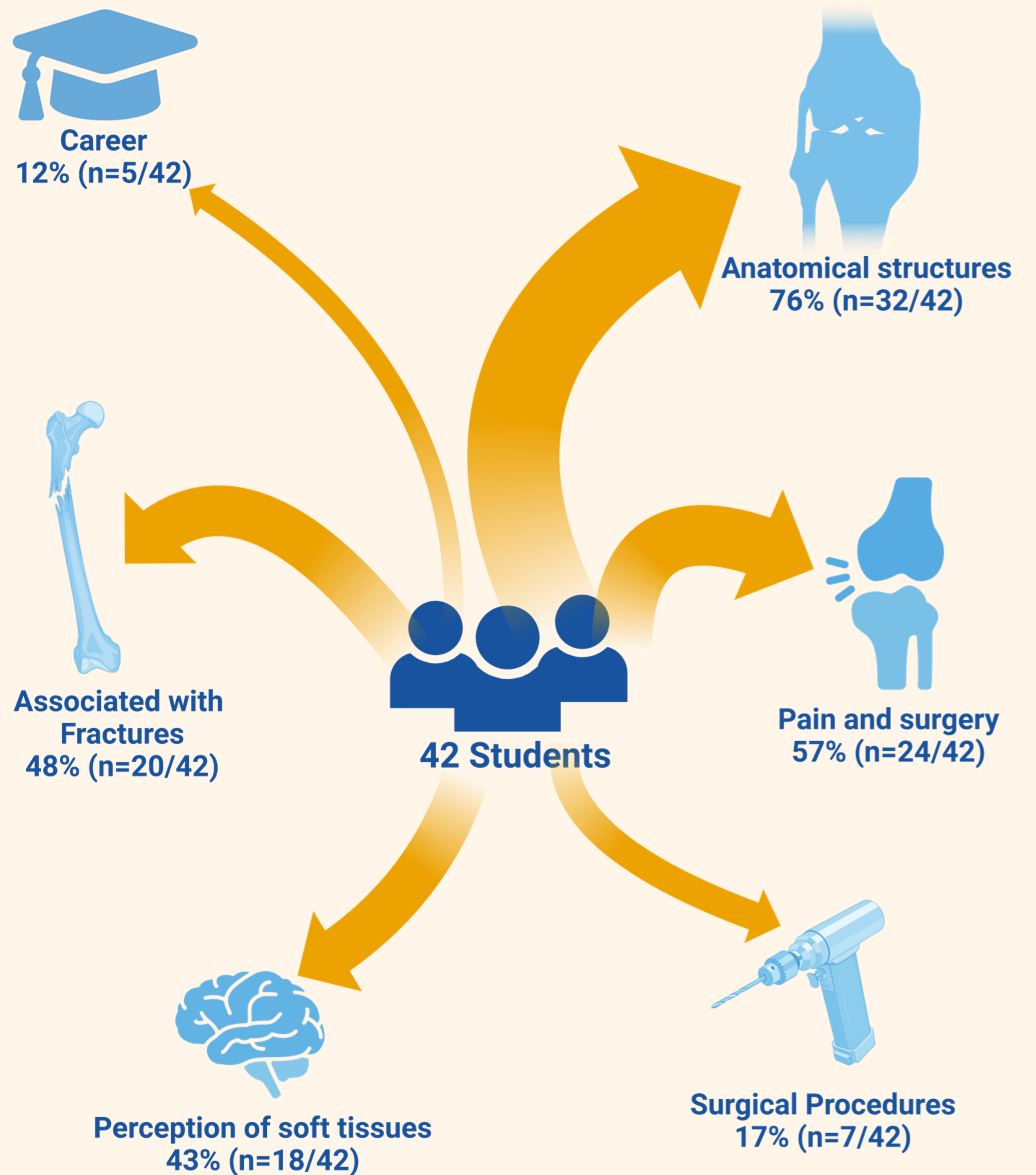
- 30% of primary care consultations focus on musculoskeletal injuries and 24% of presentations to ED in 2020 were related to trauma and orthopaedics (T&O)¹. Soft tissue inflammation and ligament injury were among the top 10 A&E diagnoses, with more than 1.4 million cases in 2020².
- T&O is underrepresented in the undergraduate curriculum, with only 21% of medical schools teaching T&O as a standalone unit over 15 days (median).

Methods:

- A survey was sent to students who registered to an online undergraduate orthopaedics conference. This contained questions collecting demographics, interest and understanding of soft tissue orthopaedics (STO).
- Questions included asking students about their initial thoughts of STO, and rating their understanding of STO before and after the conference.

Results:

- 42 students completed the questionnaire. Six main themes were identified amongst the answers. Eighteen answers focused on the perception of STO, with many students (7) describing it as “overlooked”. Seven answers focused on various procedures, such as joint replacement and wound debridement. Five answers regarded career perception.



Conclusions:

- There is wide variability in the meaning of STO amongst students. A significant proportion feels that STO is an overlooked subject in their curriculum.
- Due to the high prevalence of STO injuries,, it is important that medical students understand STO and basic management concepts.
- We recommend a review of the undergraduate orthopaedics curriculum to stress the importance and frequency of soft tissue injuries.

References:

- England, N . NHS England » Musculoskeletal. England.nhs.uk. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/elective-care-transformation/best-practice-solutions/musculoskeletal/>.
- <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06964/SN06964.pdf>