

A Comparison of the Social & Medical Support Systems with Health Outcomes for Families Affected by Sickle Cell Disease in Cameroon & South Africa



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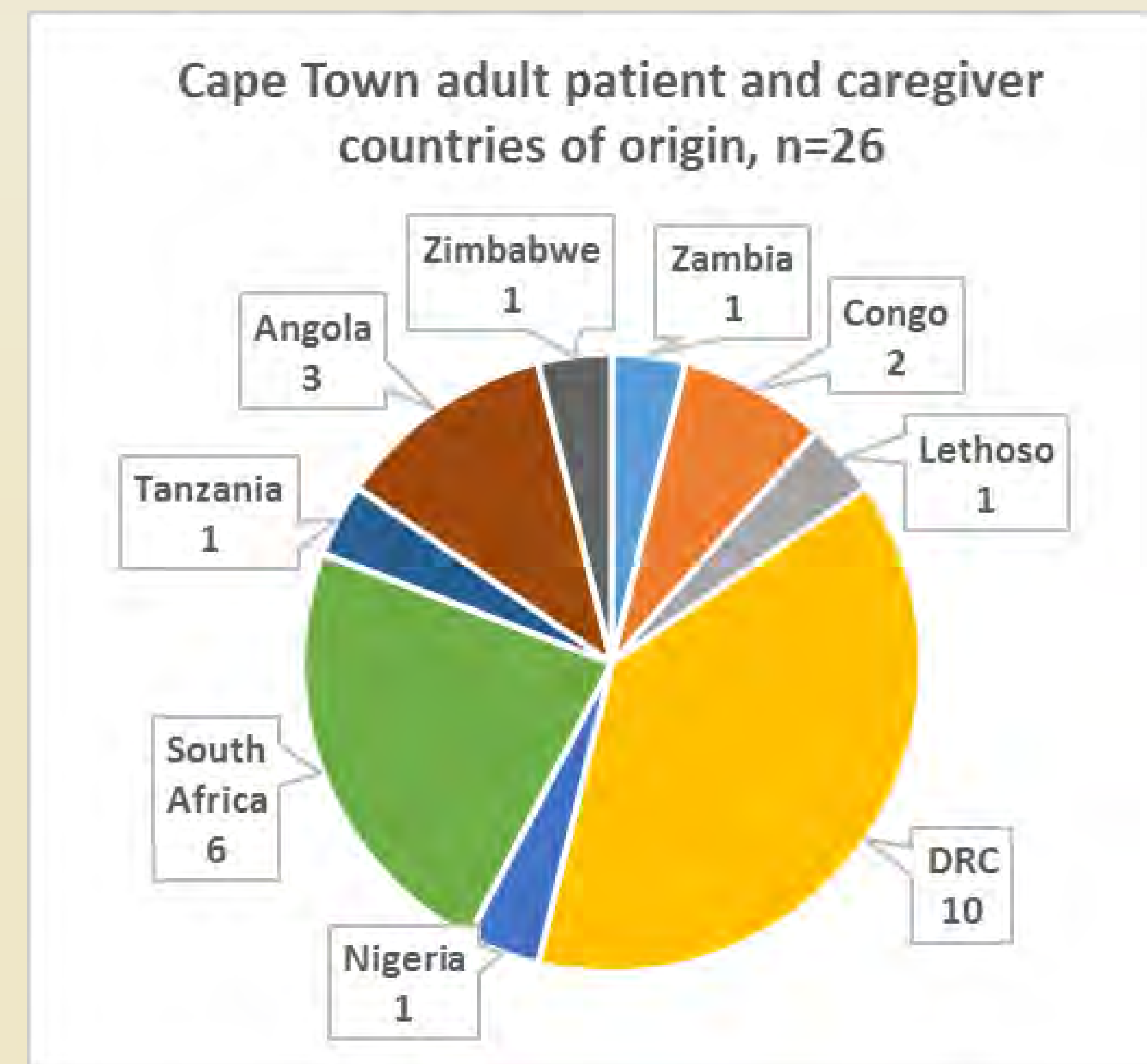
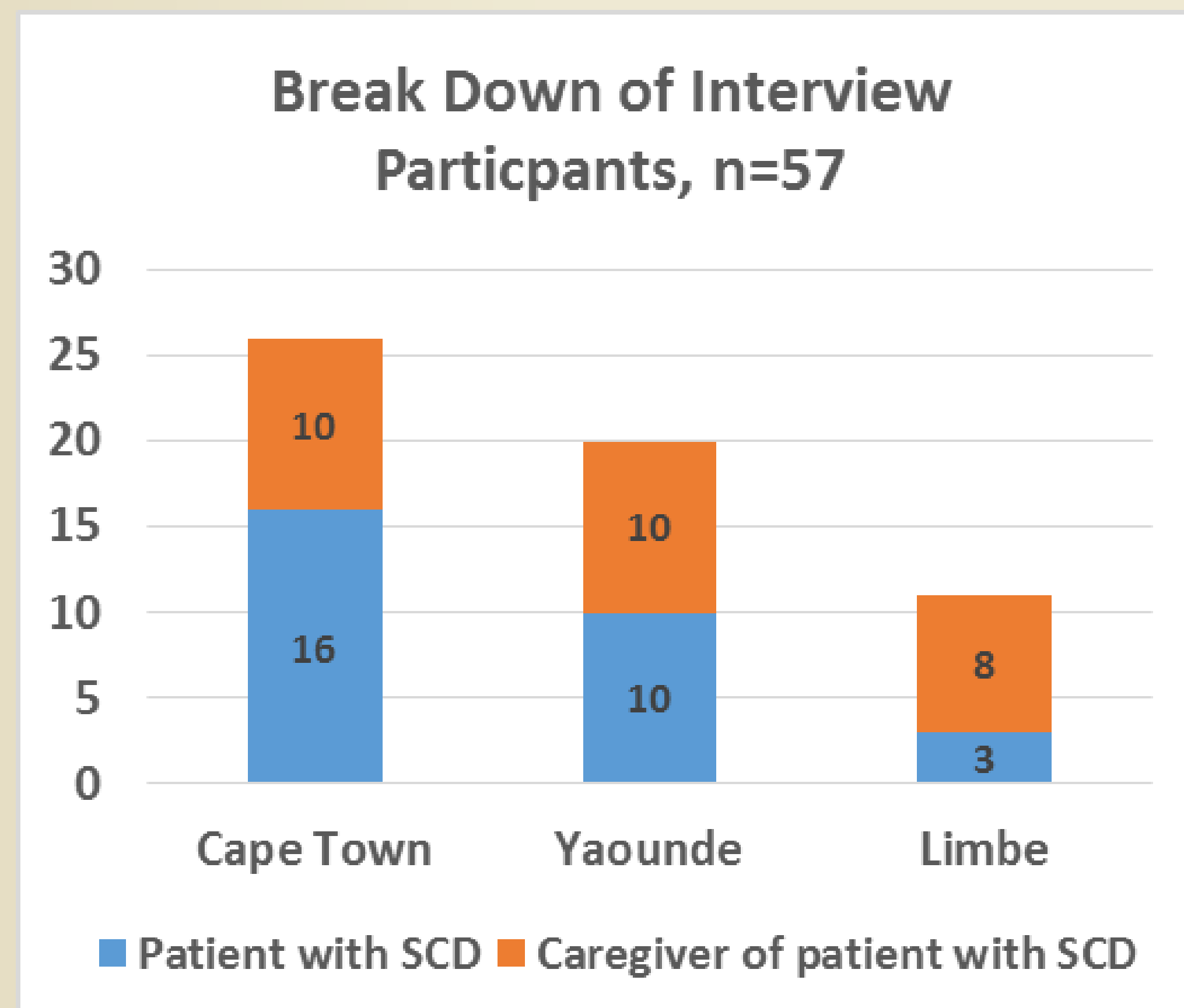


**Cape Town, South Africa
Yaoundé & Limbe, Cameroon**

Project summary: This study looks at sickle cell disease (SCD) in Cape Town where there is a low prevalence and high availability of treatment as compared to Cameroon where there is high SCD prevalence but less treatment resources. Understanding the health disparities faced by patients affected with SCD and how a solid social & medical support network could lessen disease severity & improve health outcomes.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- AIM 1:** Determine the perceived burden of SCD experienced by sickle cell patients and their families
- AIM 2:** Determine social and medical support received by sickle cell patients and their families
- AIM 3:** Determine the SCD health outcomes of patients in each location
- AIM 4:** Assess relationships among social support, medical support, and health outcomes



CONCLUSIONS

- Data is still being analyzed but preliminary observations include:
- Many SCD patients in South Africa are immigrants or refugees from other African countries
 - Cost of treatment in Cameroon is a major source of struggle for SCD families
 - Nearly all the patients receive Hydroxyurea in SA whereas almost none do in Cameroon

METHODOLOGY

- Collected 57 total surveys and interviews
- Interviewed parents of pediatric SCD patients and adult SCD patients at local hospitals
- Interviews & surveys were conducted in English in Cape Town & Limbe and in French in Yaoundé

WHAT IS SICKLE CELL DISEASE?

- Mendelian genetic disorder causing red blood cells (rbc) to form crescent-like shapes
- Sickled rbc's can stick together inhibiting blood flow and causing severe pain crises



Normal rbc vs sickled rbc



Research team in Limbe, Cameroon



Research team in Yaoundé, Cameroon

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