

Getting To Specialty Treatment In Dermatologic Inflammatory Conditions: Treatment Requirements And Patient Journey

Mackenzie R. Ellis¹, Matthew G. Bowles², Josh DeClercq³, Leena Choi⁴, Autumn D. Zuckerman², Chelsea P. Renfro²

¹Lipscomb College of Pharmacy; ²Vanderbilt Specialty Pharmacy, Vanderbilt Health; ³Department of Biostatistics, Vanderbilt University Medical Center



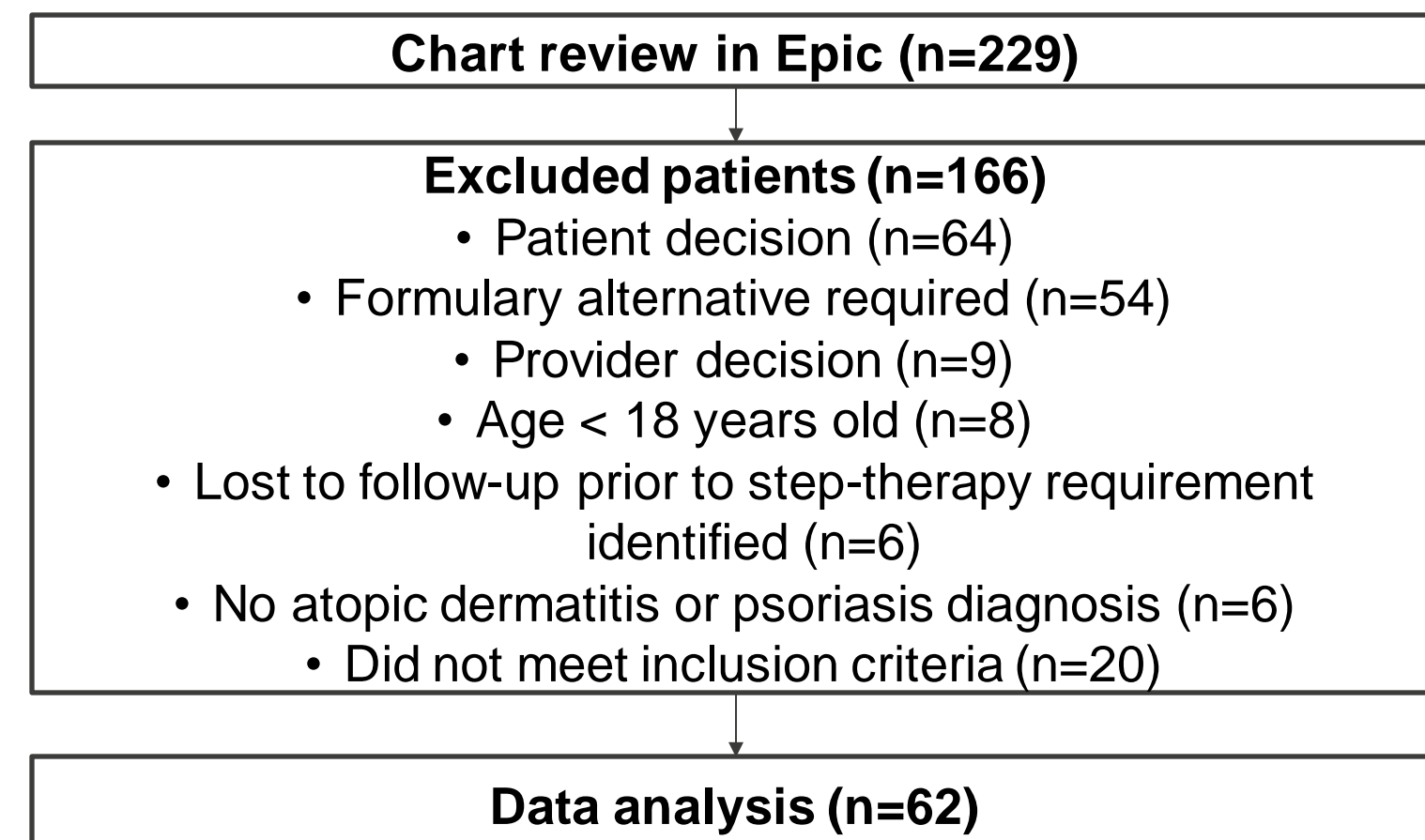
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Insurers often require patients to try less costly non-specialty medications before approving a specialty medication - "step-therapy." These medications are routinely less efficacious, can require monitoring and may have serious toxicities. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the patient journey and outcomes for patients prescribed a specialty medication for atopic dermatitis or psoriasis.

METHODS

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Setting | A single-center, retrospective cohort analysis across Vanderbilt Health System Dermatology clinics |
| Sample | Inclusion: Patients prescribed a specialty medication for atopic dermatitis or psoriasis 01/01/2021 - 06/30/2022 required by insurance to utilize step-therapy prior to a specialty medication Exclusion: Patients < 18 years old; lost to follow-up prior to step-therapy requirement identified; change to non-VUMC provider or insurance required formulary alternative specialty medication; patient or provider decision to not pursue specialty medication |
| Primary outcome | Number of patients for whom insurance denies a specialty medication then fail a step-therapy medication |
| Secondary outcomes | Number of patients that are not started on specialty medication within 12 months and reason Time from first referral documented to time of second referral documented |

Figure 1. Study Sample Size Attrition



RESULTS

Table 1. Baseline Characteristics (n=62)

| Characteristics | n (%) |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Age, years [median (IQR)] | 50 (37 – 60) |
| Female gender | 36 (58) |
| Race | |
| White | 42 (73) |
| Black | 6 (10) |
| Indication | |
| Atopic dermatitis | 42 (68) |
| Psoriasis | 20 (32) |
| Pharmacy insurance type | |
| Commercial | 53 (86) |
| Medicare | 7 (11) |
| Previous medications | |
| Topical corticosteroids | 62 (100) |
| Tacrolimus | 9 (15) |
| Methotrexate | 8 (13) |
| Pimecrolimus | 4 (7) |
| Phototherapy | 4 (7) |
| Cyclosporine | 1 (2) |
| Acitretin | 2 (3) |
| Medication on initial BI | |
| Dupixent | 42 (68) |
| Otezla | 7 (11) |
| Skyrizi | 7 (11) |
| Taltz | 3 (5) |
| Humira | 2 (3) |
| Stelara | 1 (2) |

BI = benefits investigation

CONCLUSION

- 37 patients (60%) failed step-therapy and were referred back to the specialty pharmacy with a median of 75 days from the initial referral to the second referral
- Step-therapy requirements often delay clinically appropriate treatment for atopic dermatitis and psoriasis

RESULTS

Figure 2. Patient Journey from Decision to Treat to Receiving Treatment

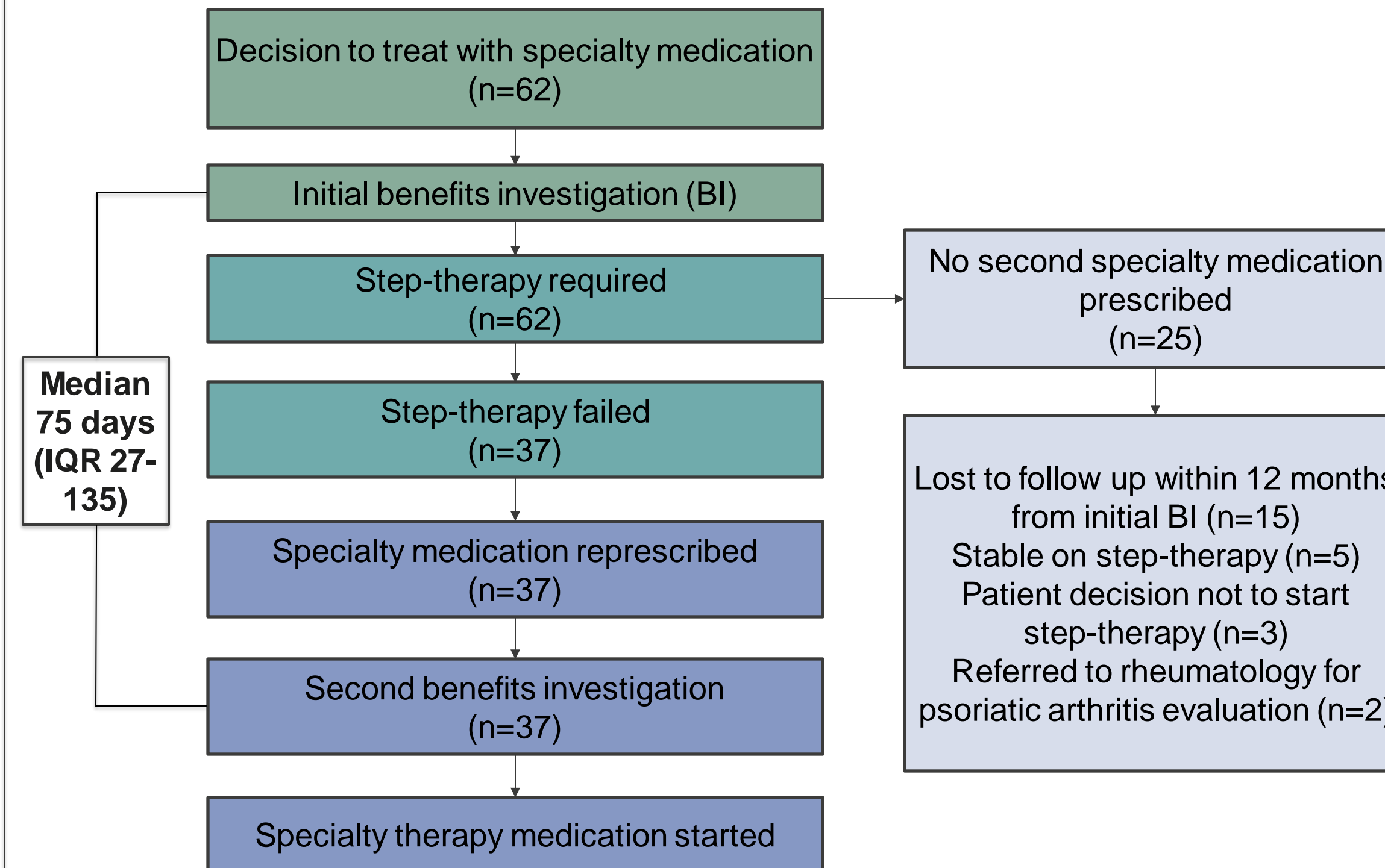


Figure 3. Primary Outcome Measure*

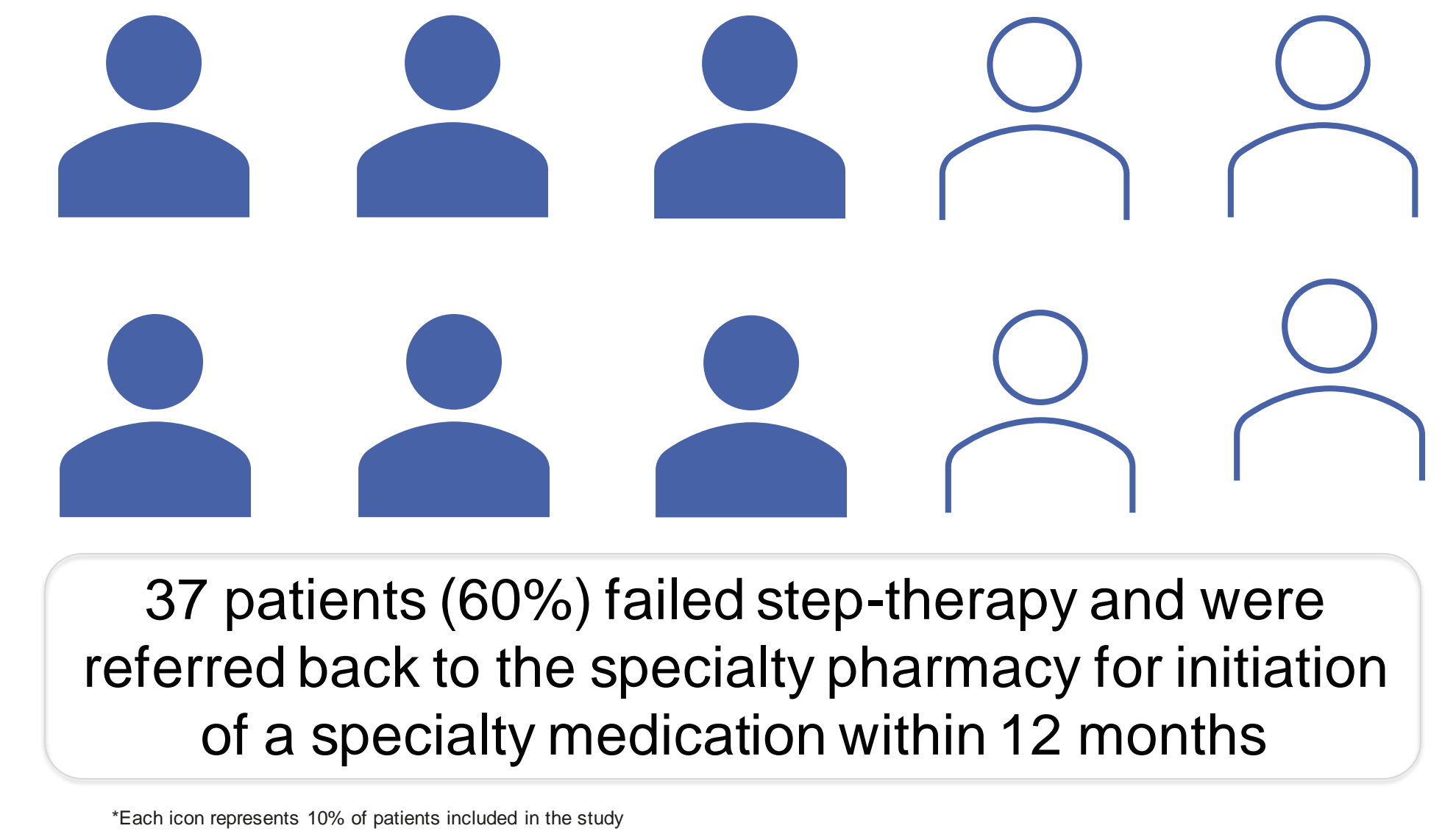


Figure 4. Patient Journey to Specialty Medication Initiation

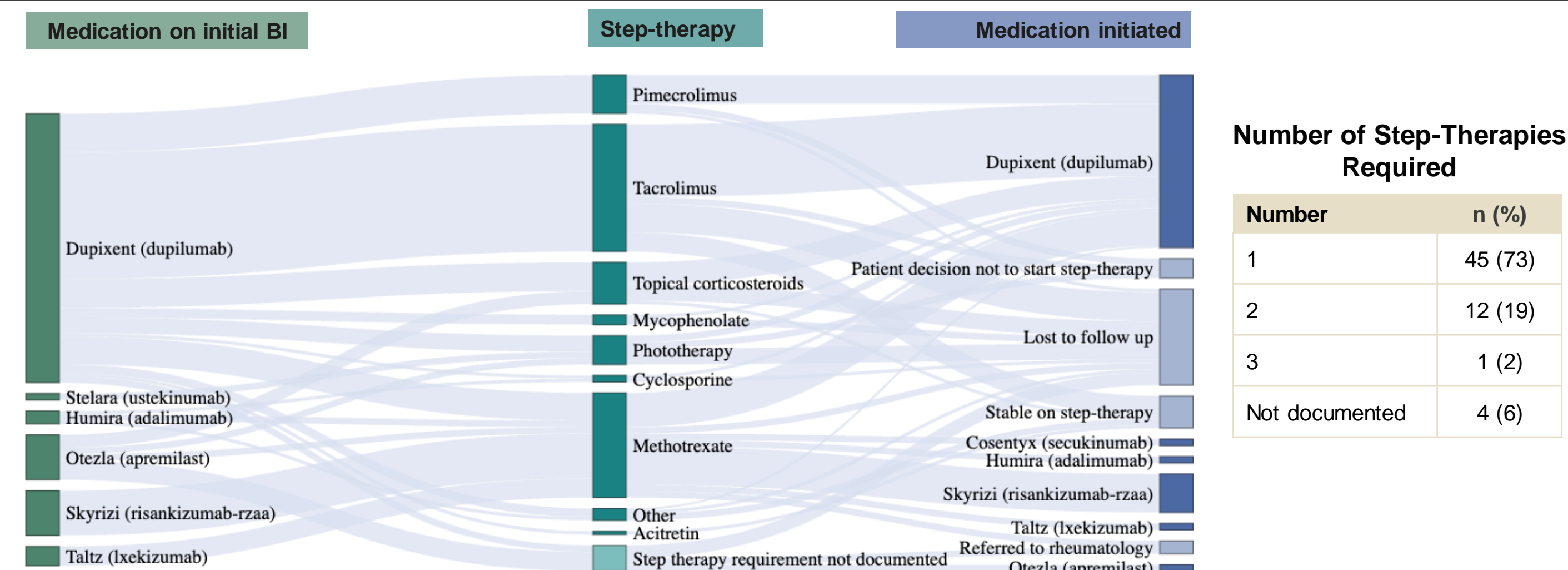


Table 2. Medication Initiated for Step-Therapy^a

| Medication | Step-therapy, n (%) |
|--|---------------------|
| Tacrolimus | 24 (39) |
| Methotrexate | 18 (29) |
| Topical Corticosteroids | 9 (15) |
| Pimecrolimus | 8 (13) |
| Step-therapy requirement not document in patient chart | 4 (7) |
| Cyclosporine | 2 (3) |
| Mycophenolate | 2 (3) |
| Acitretin | 1 (2) |
| Aquaphor topical | 1 (2) |
| Amitriptyline/ketamine | 1 (2) |

^aNumbers will not add up to 62 as some patients were required to complete two or more medications as part of step-therapy