

## BACKGROUND & AIMS

In a first of its kind collaboration, cancer support charity Maggie's Manchester and The Christie are working together to enhance the way vital support and information is provided to thousands of people just diagnosed with cancer in Greater Manchester and surrounding areas with its new 'Getting Started' programme.

The Christie Hospital sees around 16,000 patients a year and of these 4,000 patients are receiving SACT within days or weeks of diagnosis.

Previously, patients could watch a video on what treatment entails on their first SACT appointment at the hospital. Delivering this information in a busy clinical environment can often make

people feel anxious and overwhelmed at what is already an unfamiliar experience. It was also shown to the patient while they were in a chemotherapy chair, thus meaning it is out of use for some time.

Due to the record numbers of people being diagnosed with cancer, The Christie's cancer services are facing greater demand. In 2023, Maggie's and The Christie worked together to launch Getting Started, a programme that helps patients better understand their treatment. Getting Started gives back time to NHS clinical teams and eases pressure on their busy schedules, as well as at the same time providing better support to those starting treatment.

## METHODS

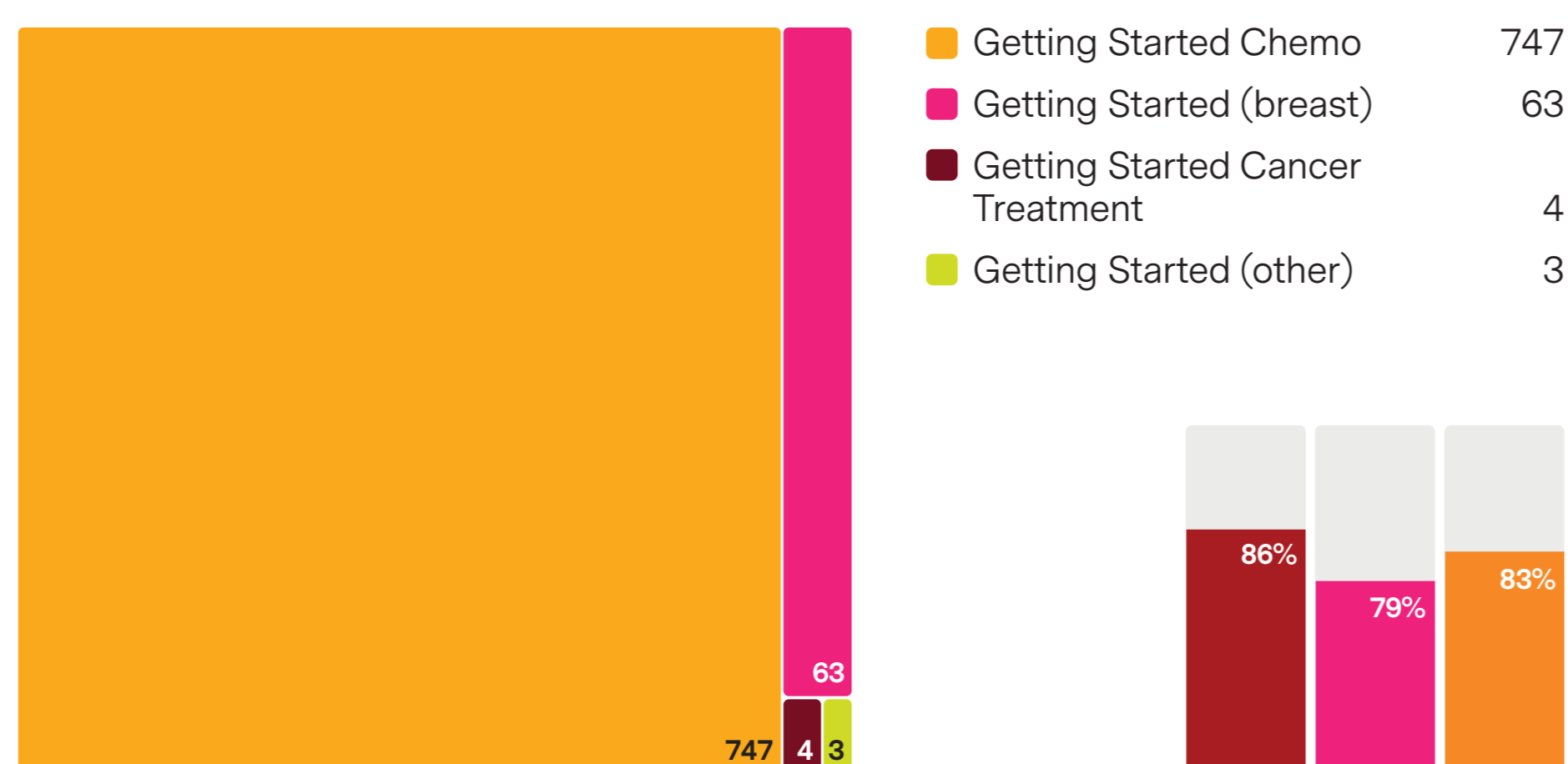


At the beginning of 2023 a full three month pilot took place with two sessions of Getting Started per week taking place at Maggie's. This included:

- Bespoke video featuring Christie and Maggie's experts, as well as centre visitors who have had experience of cancer, created for participants.
- Sessions were interactive and lasted 90 minutes, including everything to expect from treatment, as well as professional support as to how to deal with emotional impact.
- Delivered jointly by a Christie Chemotherapy Nurse and a Maggie's Cancer Support Specialist, in the supportive and welcoming environment of Maggie's Manchester.
- Delivered in a group setting, enabling people to benefit from peer to peer support, as well as from answers and queries.
- Both patients and their loved one could attend the session, which previously was not possible when this was delivered in hospital.

## RESULTS

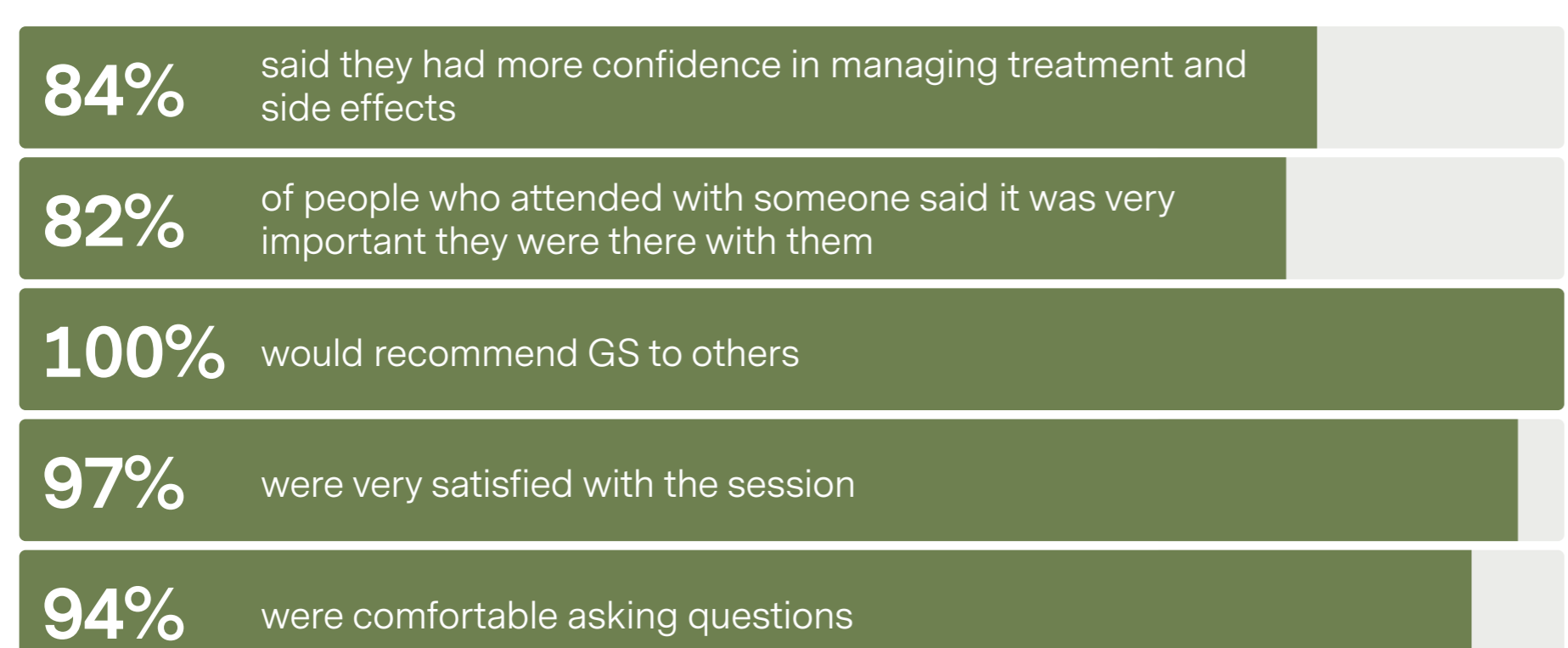
- 817 Getting Started sessions delivered in 2024 to date:



- Attendees have shown increased knowledge in:



- Feedback on Getting Started sessions:



## IMPACT

- Since the launch of the programme, including a pilot which took place in 2023, the sessions have been attended by 841 people.
- Positive feedback from patients and The Christie.
- Increase in numbers of patients accessing other areas of Maggie's programme of emotional and practical support.

"I was terrified about chemo, I didn't know what to expect. The session was brilliant. It was great to meet others facing the same situation as me, and it was great my partner could be there with me."

Robin Muir, Centre Head at Maggie's Manchester, said:

"The feedback from The Christie was fantastic – patients had a better understanding of what was going to happen and how the treatment would be delivered. They understood what they could do to manage treatment, how they could prepare and look after themselves. Patients were less stressed and loved ones felt more part of the process."

Gemma Jones, SACT lead nurse at The Christie, said:

"The introduction of our Getting Started sessions in collaboration with Maggie's has been a huge gear shift in helping new patients to feel more prepared and equipped for their first session of treatment. Taking the session away from the treatment floor means that our staff and patients can engage with the sessions without distraction, allowing sufficient protected time for questions and answers."