

# WHAT DOES A FINNISH SCHOOL DOCTOR DO?

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# BACKGROUND

- ❖ Required by law, Finnish school doctors mostly perform extensive health check-ups to pupils in the first, fifth and eighth grade
- ❖ In practice, school doctors are needed for a number of other tasks, that are usually not taken into count when providing the resources
- ❖ We wanted to take a closer look on what kind of problems are evaluated and/or treated by the school doctor.

# METHODS

❖ We conducted a small follow-up study, in which a school doctor enlisted the following data during a two-month period in autumn 2013:

- 1) type of appointment (check-up or other)
- 2) health problems that occurred
- 3) the follow-up plan for the patient.

❖ 232 appointments were held in six different schools in Helsinki during this period, three primary schools, two junior high schools and one high school.

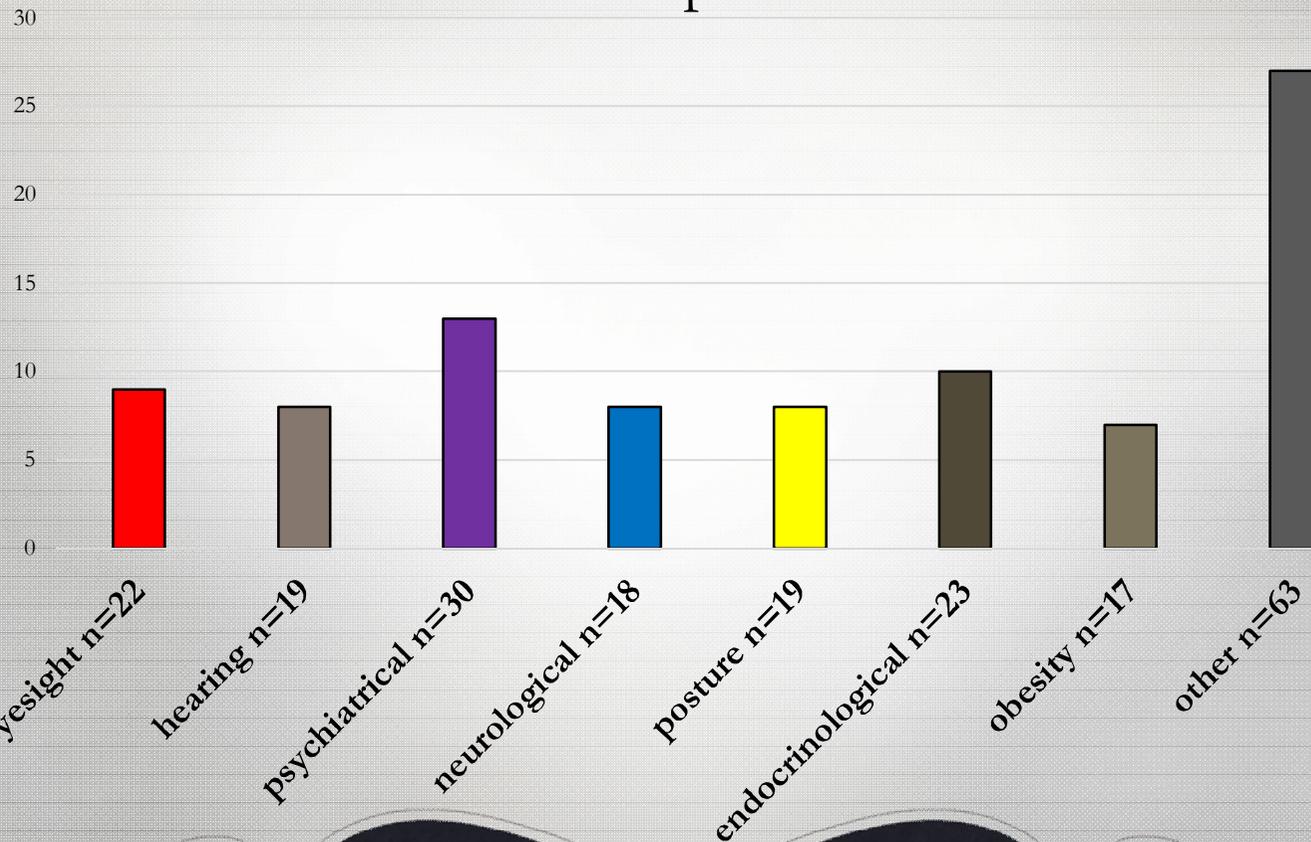
# RESULTS 1 / 3

- ❖ Of all appointments, 88% were extensive health check-ups.
- ❖ The remaining part conducted of control visits, appointments due to the nurses' or some other school professionals worries or appointments to assess mental health problems.
- ❖ Of all the patients, 12% received a referral to specialist care, 7% were referred to the laboratory and 2% to radiologic examination.

## RESULTS 2/3

- ❖ In 72% of all appointments, some health problem was discussed with the doctor
- ❖ In 35% of the cases some sort of follow-up in school health care were programmed, most follow-ups programmed to the school nurse

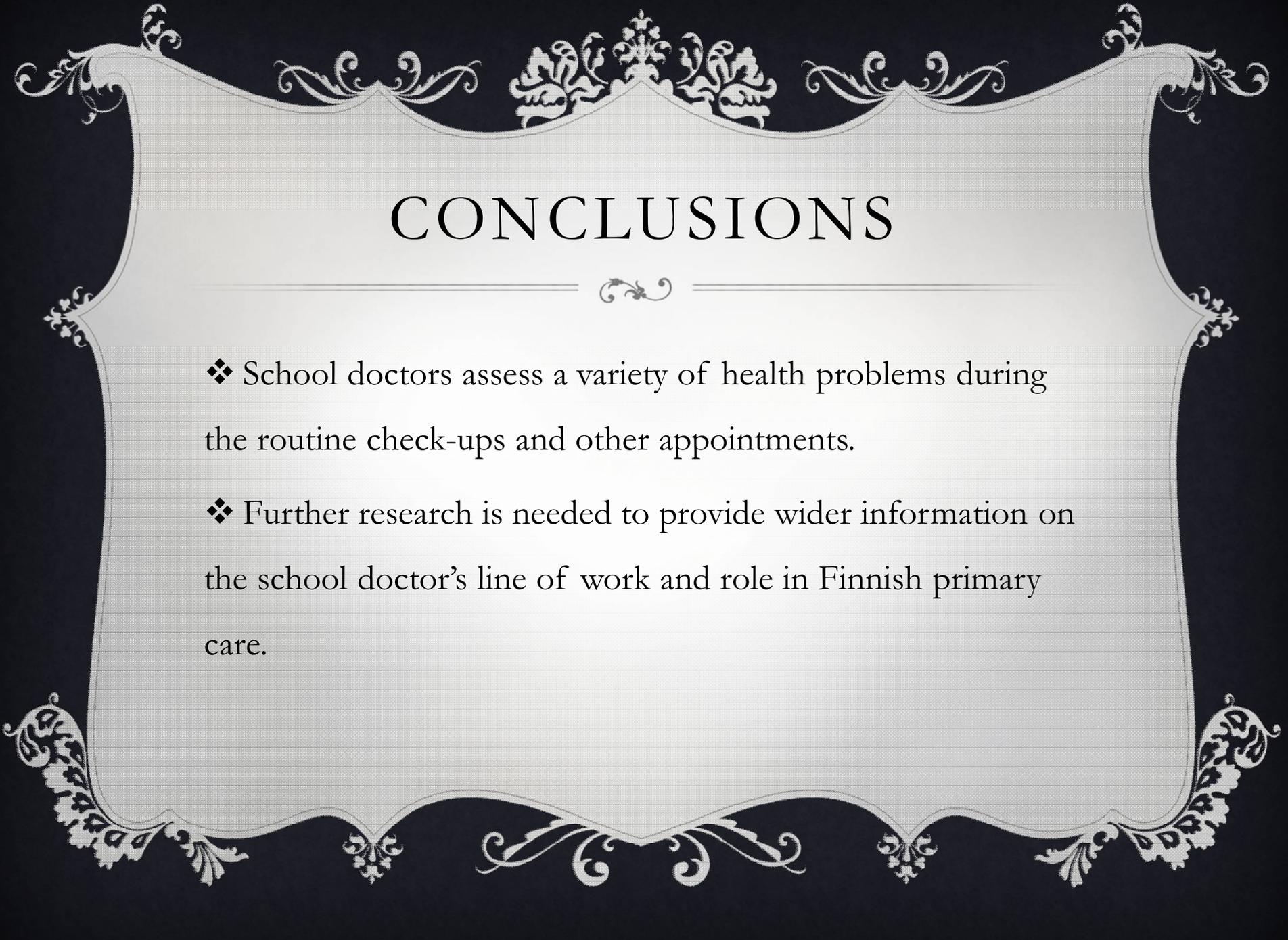
## Percentage of pupils (n=232) with a certain health problem



## RESULTS 3 / 3

❖ 65 (28%) of the pupils had no health problem  
whereas 56 pupils (24%) had multiple (two or more)  
health problems

❖ The pupils with multiple health problems were more  
frequent in the socioeconomically poorer areas

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# CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ School doctors assess a variety of health problems during the routine check-ups and other appointments.
- ❖ Further research is needed to provide wider information on the school doctor's line of work and role in Finnish primary care.

THANK YOU

