

# Prevalence of Malnutrition among patients attending the Interstitial Lung Disease Outpatient Clinic at Tallaght University Hospital

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## Introduction

At present, the Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD) clinic in Tallaght University Hospital (TUH) does not have access to a dietitian as part of their service. Patients with ILD who are malnourished experience more adverse outcomes during hospitalisation, including higher mortality, longer hospital stays and increased risk of complications. Early identification of malnutrition in chronic diseases is important in order to develop appropriate and timely nutrition care plans, thereby improving quality of life and tolerance to medical treatments.

## Objectives

- To identify:
- 1) % of patients attending the new and review Interstitial Lung Disease OPD clinic who meet GLIM criteria for moderate/severe malnutrition.
  - 2) % of patients attending these clinics who have been seen by inpatient dietetics services within the past year.

## Methods

This study was conducted between October 2024 to March 2025 among patients attending the New and Review ILD OPD clinic. Data was collected on demographics, anthropometrics (weight, weight history, height, calf circumference), patient’s perception of their appetite, and dietetic input as an inpatient within the last year. This data was analysed to diagnose and grade the severity of malnutrition by using the Global Leadership Initiative on Malnutrition (GLIM) criteria. Data analysis was completed using Excel.

## Results

- 105 people participated in the study. The mean age of participants was 59 years.
- Approximately ¼ of patients attending the clinics were malnourished. Patients attending the review ILD clinic had higher rates of malnutrition (n=21/66, 32%).
- 38% of those who met GLIM criteria for malnutrition were known to inpatient dietetics in TUH within the past year.

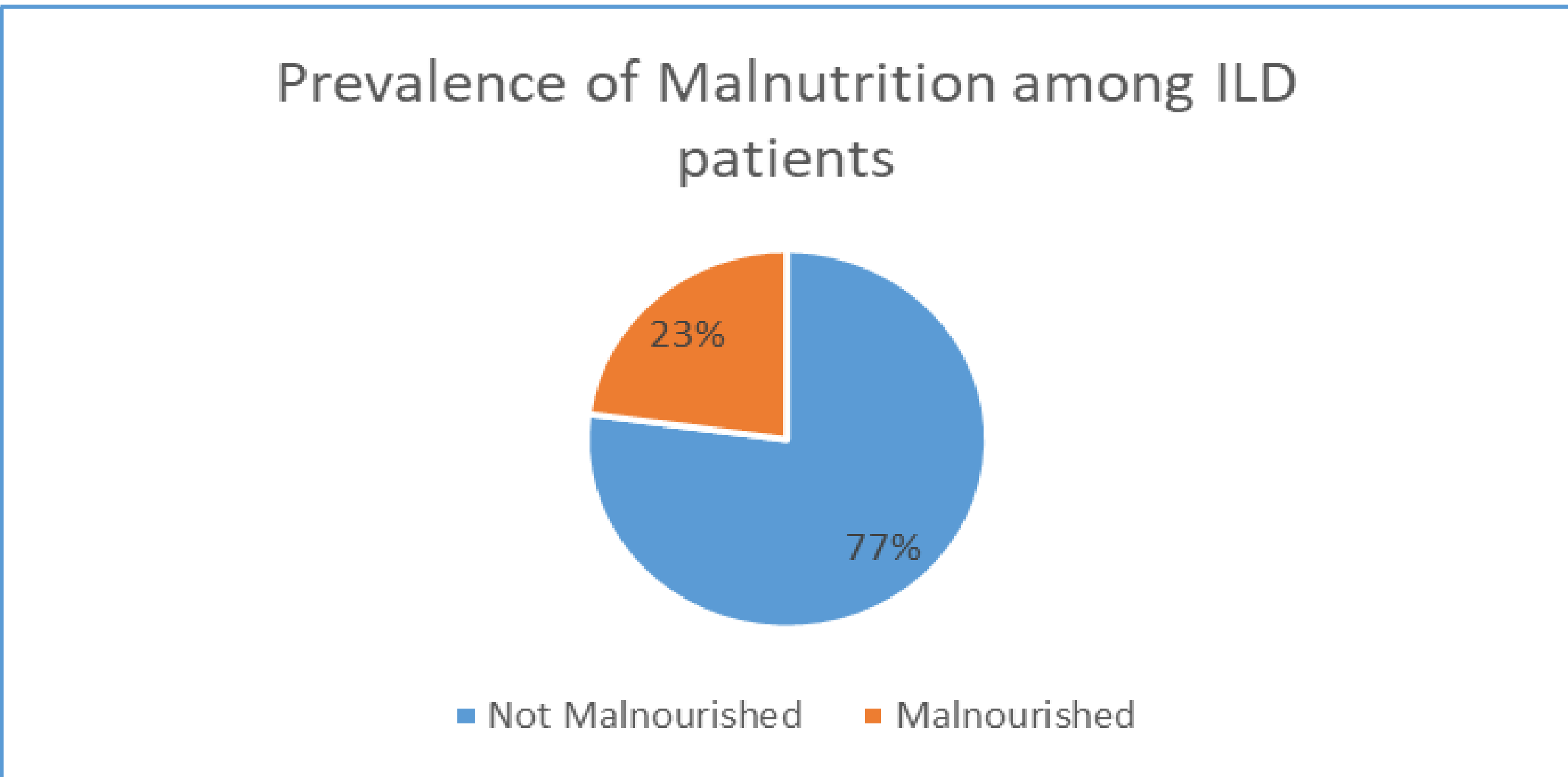


Figure 1 – Prevalence of Malnutrition among ILD patients

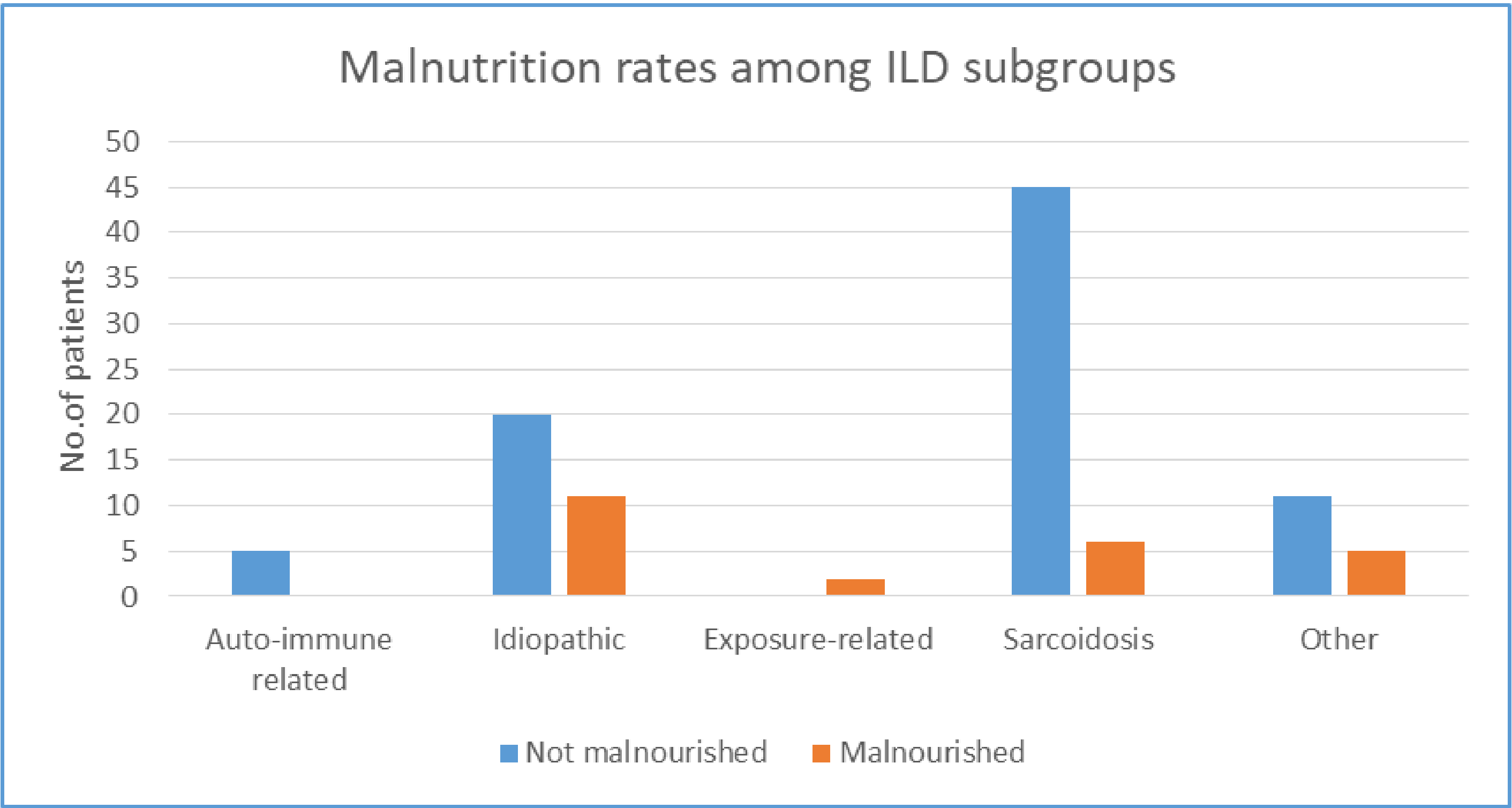


Figure 2- Malnutrition rates among ILD subgroups

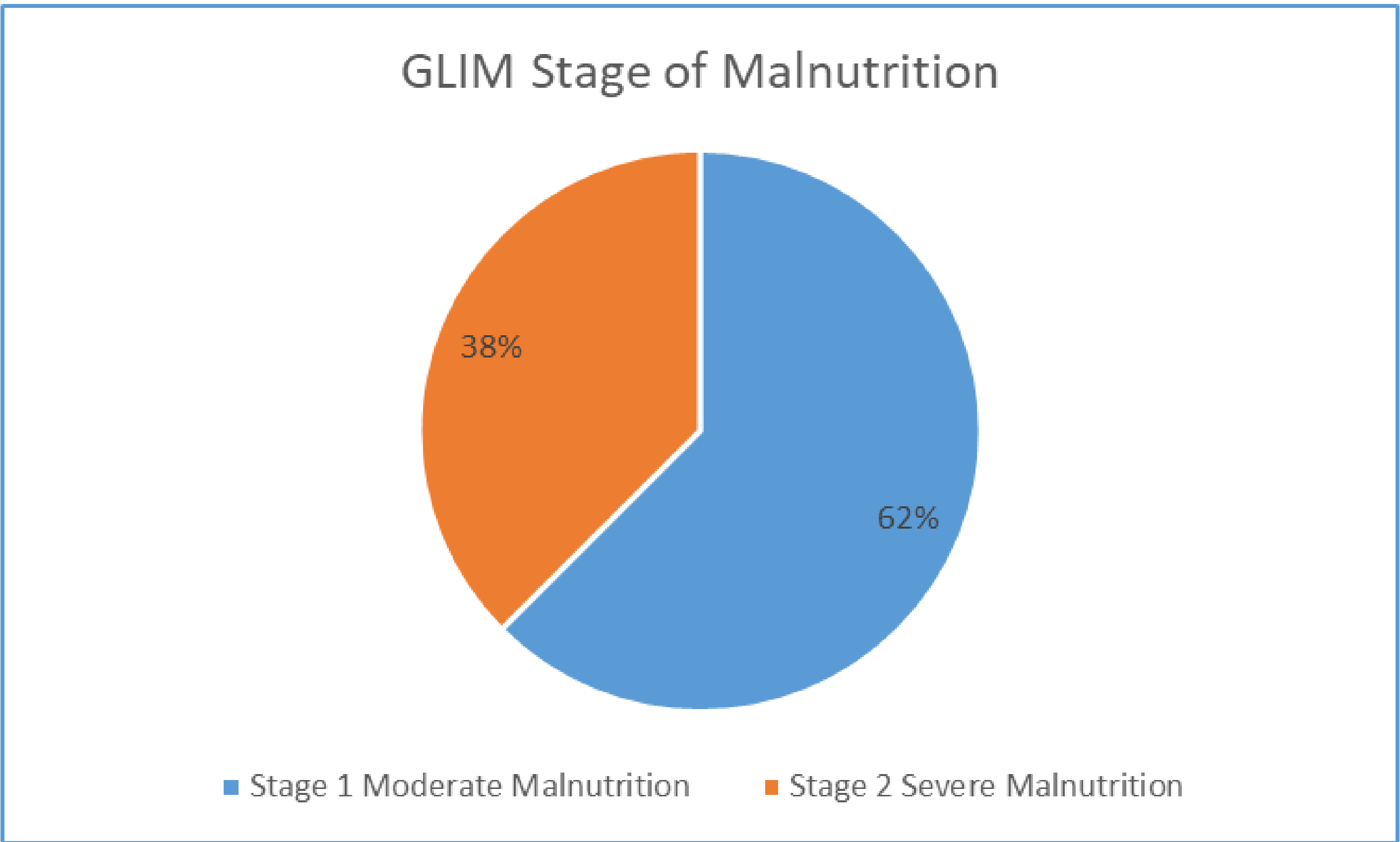


Figure 3- GLIM stage of Malnutrition among those who met GLIM diagnosis

## Conclusion

Malnutrition is prevalent among patients attending the OPD ILD clinic at Tallaght University Hospital. In this study, it is evident that malnutrition rates are higher among patients attending the Review ILD OPD clinic. This suggests that malnutrition is more common with disease progression. There is a need for a dietitian as part of the ILD multidisciplinary team to address nutritional concerns among this cohort. A nutritional screening tool should be used in the ILD OPD clinic in Tallaght University Hospital to identify those who are at risk of malnutrition.