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# A Survey of Massachusetts Registered Nurses

March 2023

# About the Survey



<b>Mode</b>	Respondents were contacted through text message, asking them to use the included link to participate in the survey online, through phone or computer.
<b>Sample</b>	531 interviews were completed with RNs currently working in healthcare in Massachusetts.  This was drawn from a file of the 150,000 nurses registered with the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing as of February 2023, for whom cell phone numbers were available.
<b>Dates</b>	February 28-March 5, 2023
<b>Weights</b>	Slight age and care setting (teaching hospital, community hospital, non-hospital care) weights were applied to ensure the data accurately matched demographic information available on the statewide list of nurses and the actual breakdown of healthcare facilities across the state.
<b>Margin of Error</b>	±4% at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample; the margin of error for subgroups is higher
<b>Note</b>	Some data may not add up to 100% due to rounding



# Profile of the Sample

Category	Group	% of Sample
Current role	Direct care at teaching hospital	36%
	Direct care at community hospital	19
	Direct care outside hospital setting	31
	Healthcare worker, not direct care	12
MNA Member	Yes	39
	No	59

Category	Group	% of Sample
Years in nursing	0 – 5 years	13%
	6 – 15 years	30
	16+ years	58
Age	40 or younger	31
	41 – 50	23
	51 – 64	30
	65+	16
Gender	Female	89
	Male	8

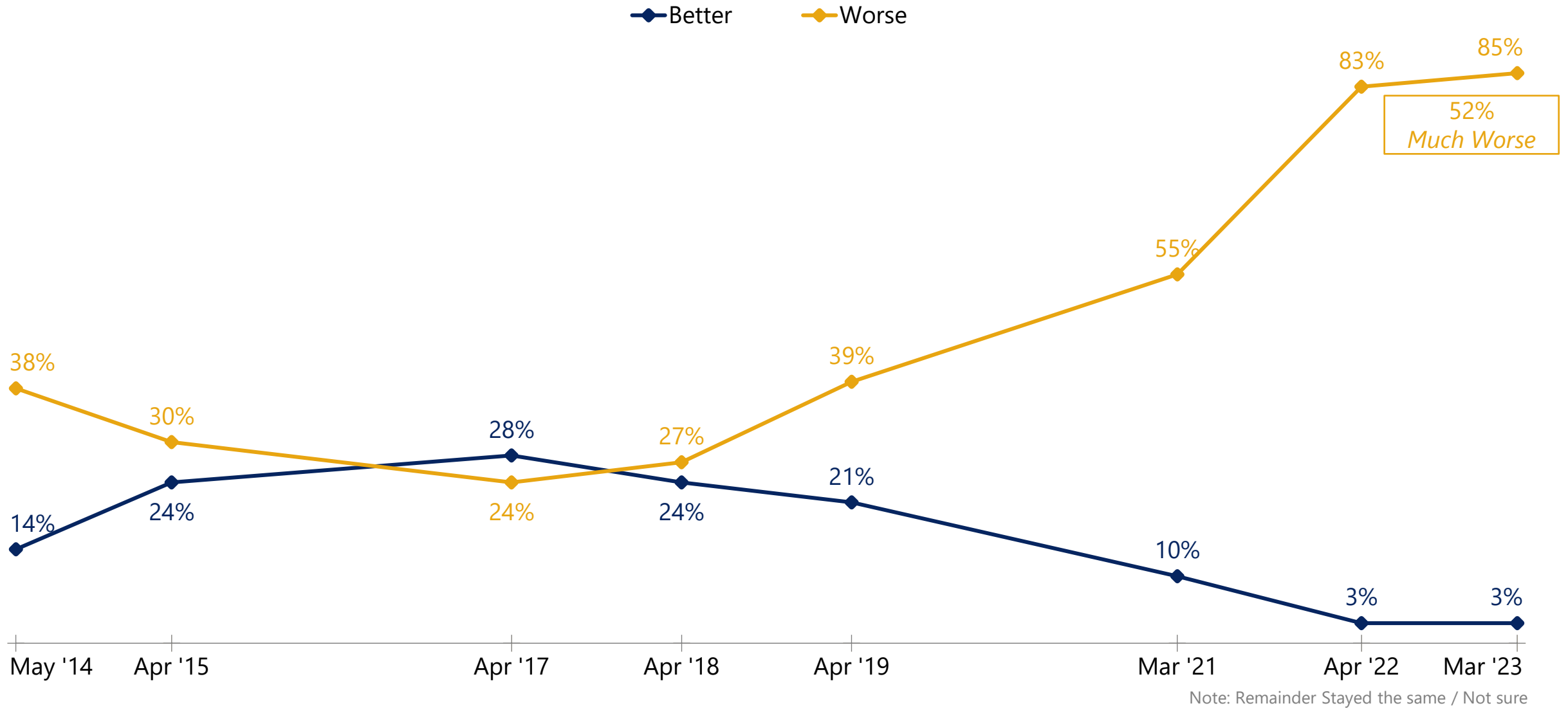
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# State of Care





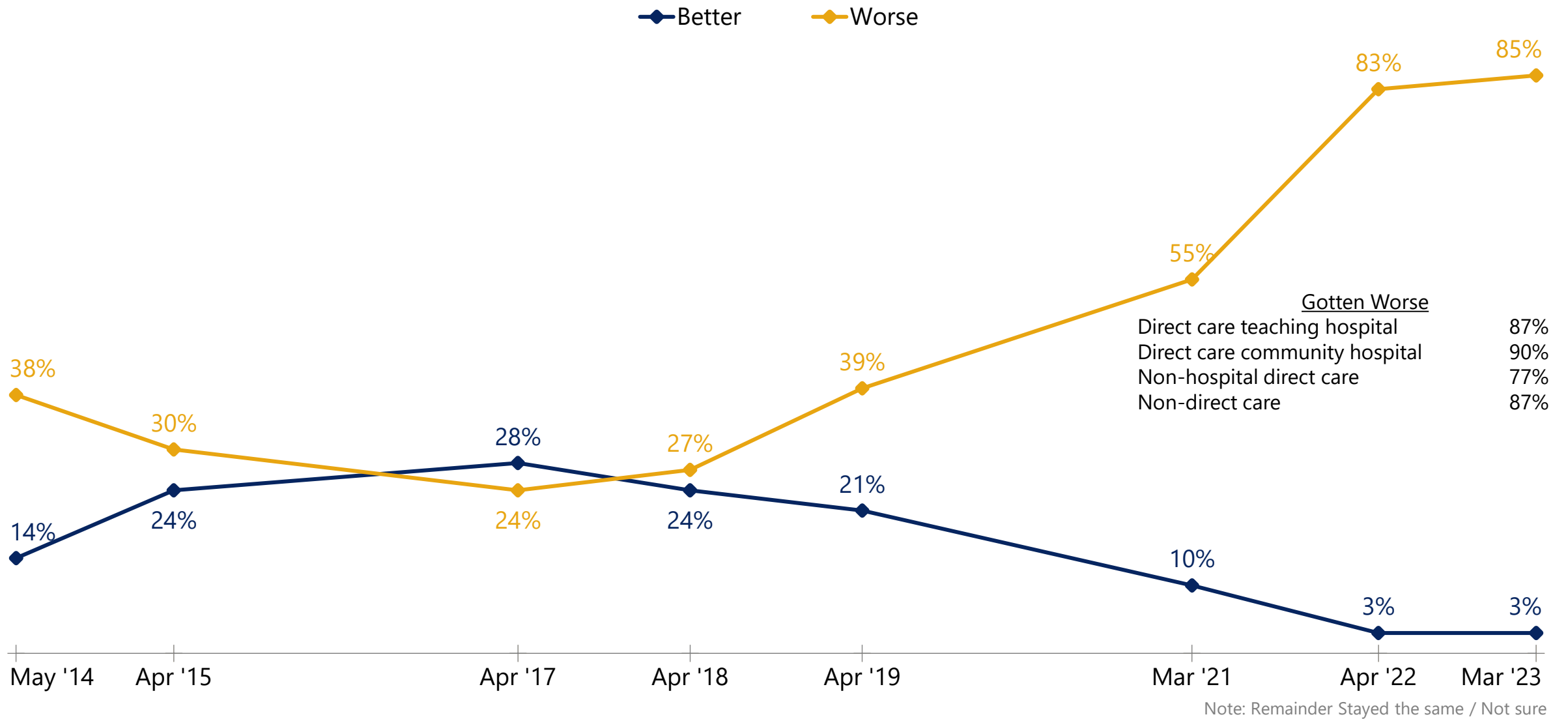
# RNs saying the quality of care has gotten worse remains at an all-time high.



Q7: In the past two years, do you think the overall quality of healthcare in Massachusetts hospitals has gotten:



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## By a wide margin, *understaffing* leads the list of obstacles facing RNs.

Biggest Obstacle in Delivering Quality Care to Patients	2023	2022
<b>Understaffing</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Nurse to patient ratios / Too many patients</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
Lack of support / Resources	9	12
Lack of trained staff / Lack of experienced staff	7	9
Poor management	7	NA
Sicker patients / Acuity of patients	6	4
Increasing responsibilities / Expected to do more	5	6
Time management	5	4
Low pay / Less pay than travelers	5	4
Lack of access to care	4	3
Insurance issues	4	2
Lack of coordinated care / Premature discharge / Rushed care	4	4

Note: Responses under 4% are not shown. Multiple responses accepted, so equals more than 100%.



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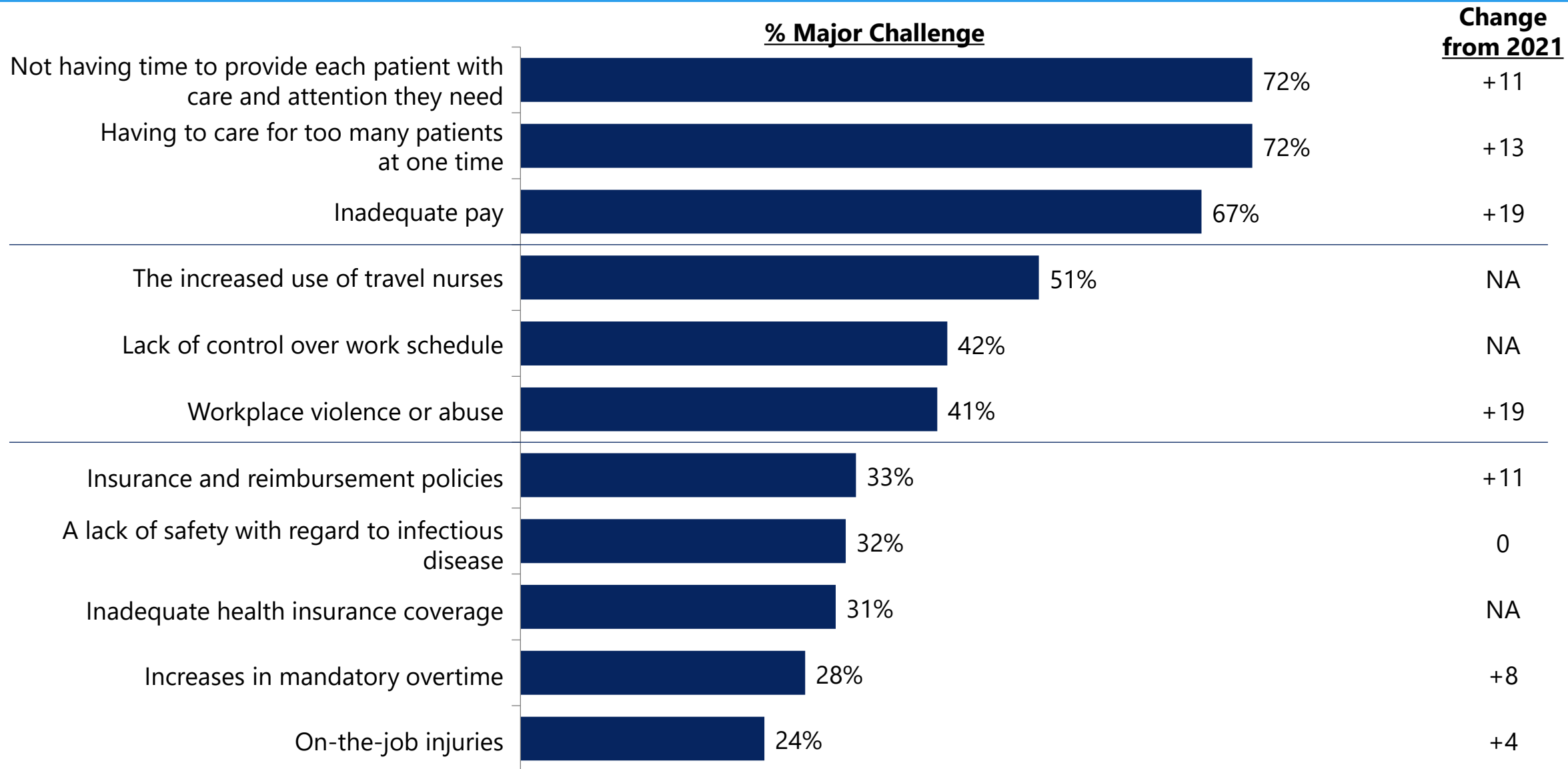
→ Direct care teaching hospital 64%  
 Direct care community hospital 67%  
 0-5 years as nurse 63%

Note: Responses under 4% are not shown. Multiple responses accepted, so equals more than 100%.





# Inadequate staffing tops the list of challenges facing bedside nurses.



[AMONG DIRECT PATIENT CARE NURSES, N=462] Q17–Q27: Below are some challenges facing bedside nurses. Please rate the challenge each presents to you in your job on a scale of major challenge, minor challenge, or not much of a challenge.

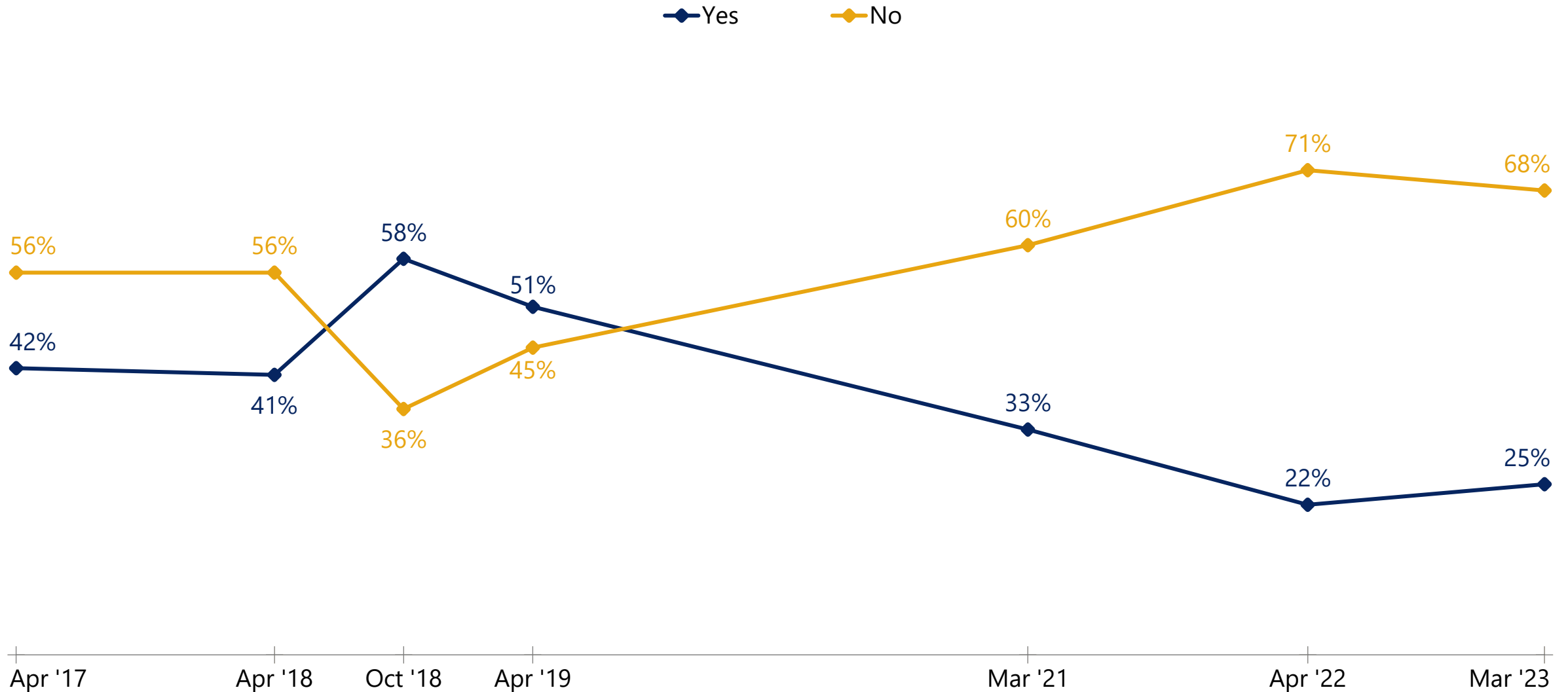
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# Staffing and Patient Care





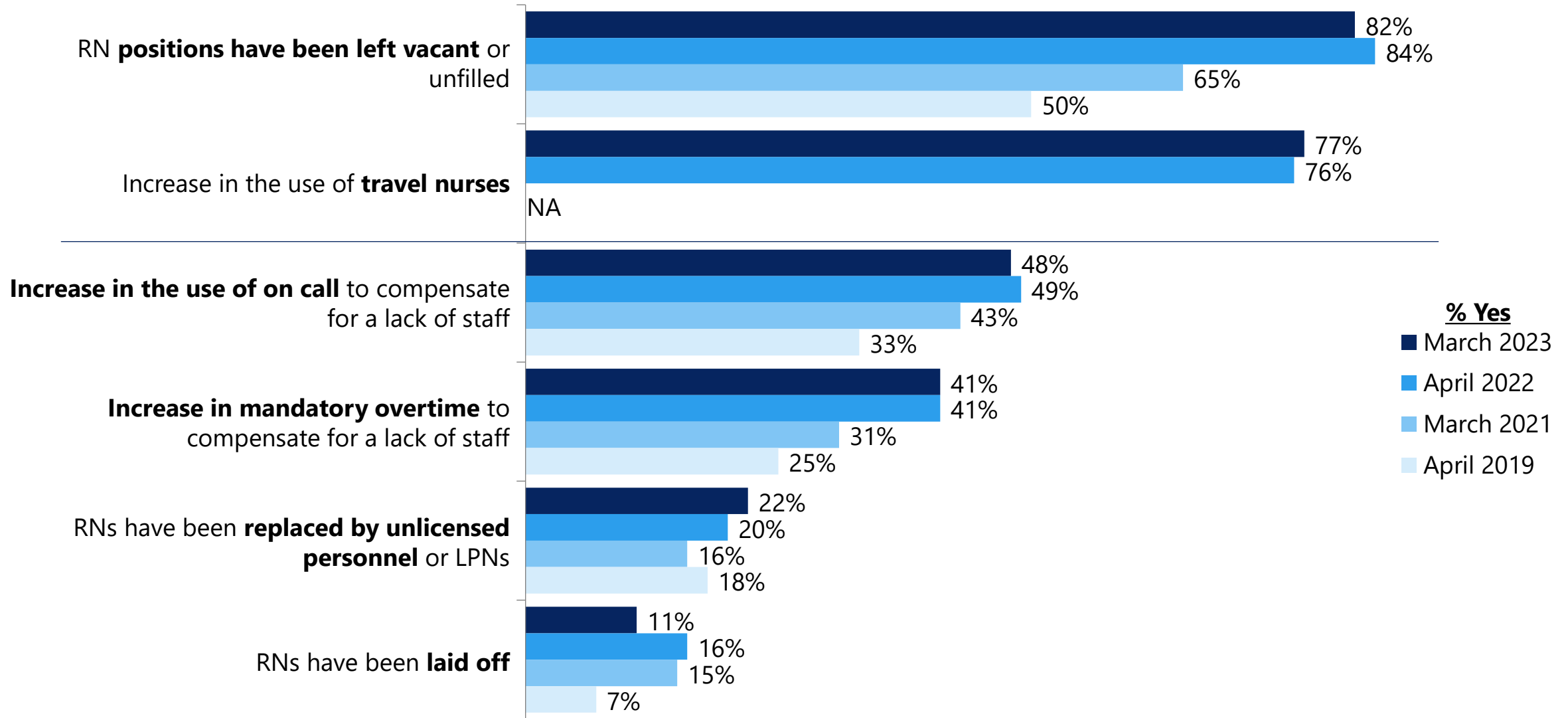
# RNs continue to report inadequate time with patients.



Note: Remainder Not sure

Q9: Do you have enough time to provide your patients with the care and attention each one needs?

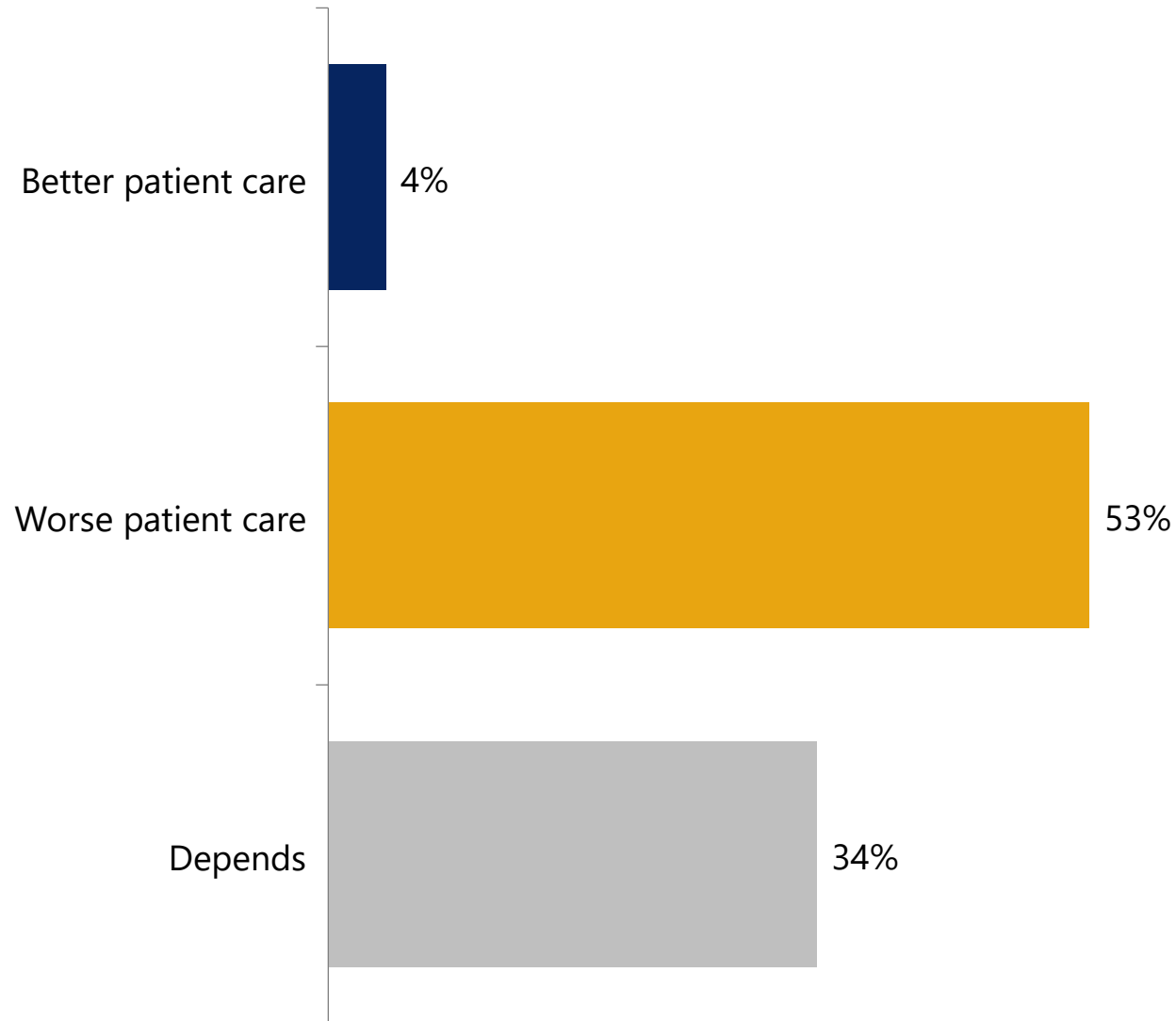
# By a wide margin, *vacant positions* and *increase in travel nurses* remain most prevalent changes.



Q10–Q15: In the past two years or so, please tell me if any of the following changes have been made where you work.



# Very few think patient care is better at hospitals that rely on travel nurses.

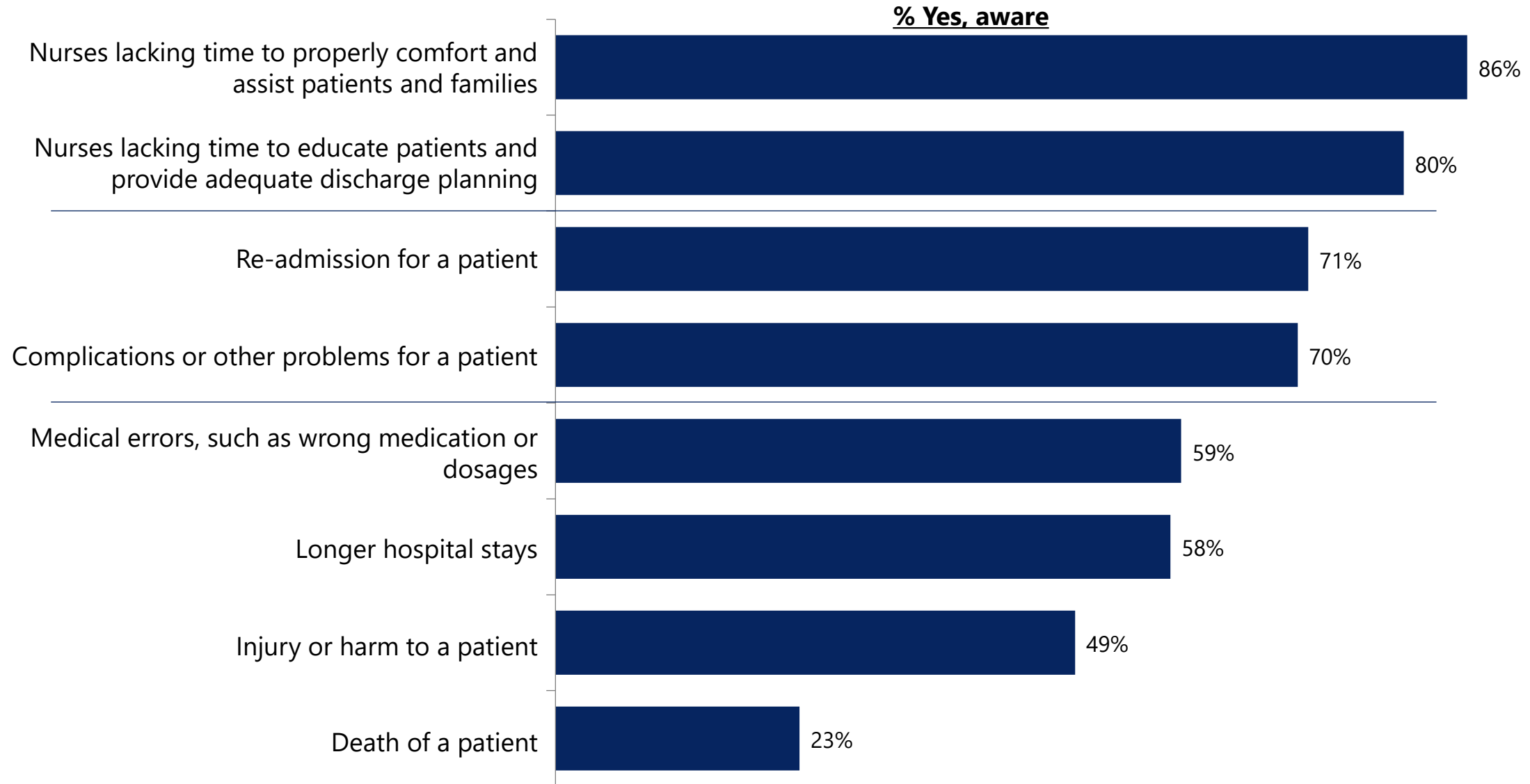


Note: Remainder Not sure

Q16: Do you think the quality of patient care is better or worse at hospitals that increasingly rely on the use of travel nurses?



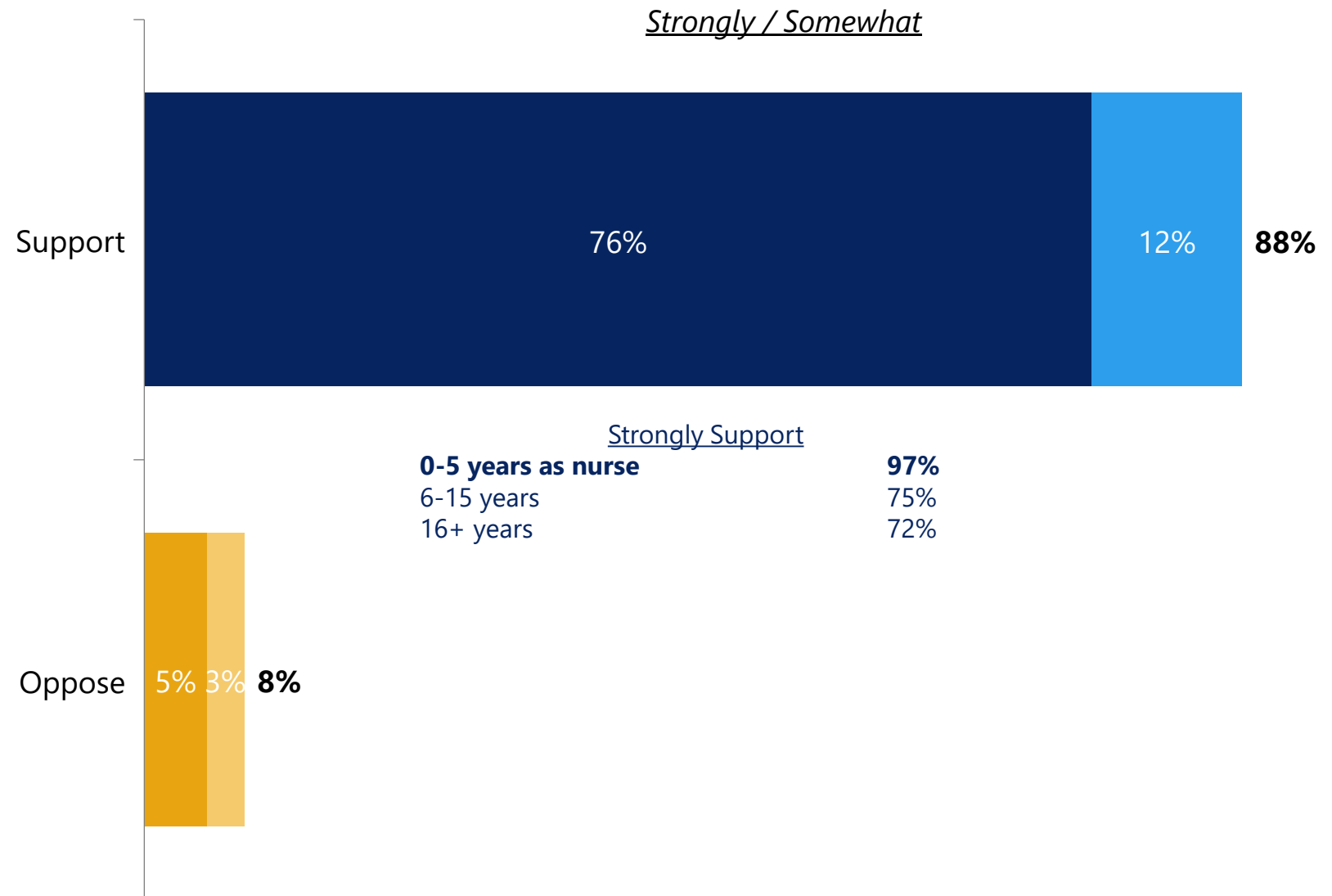
# High awareness of negative outcomes from unsafe patient loads.



Q28–Q35: Next, you'll see some negative outcomes that could result from RNs having to care for too many patients at one time. For each one, please indicate if you are aware of any instances where an RN's patient load has led to that outcome.



# Overwhelming support for passing new safe staffing bill.



Note: Remainder Not sure

Q66: The Massachusetts Legislature is reviewing a new bill that if passed would allow the Massachusetts Nurses Association, to develop a statewide maximum limit on the number of patients a registered nurse at Massachusetts hospitals can be assigned at one time. As of now, would you support or oppose the passing of this bill?

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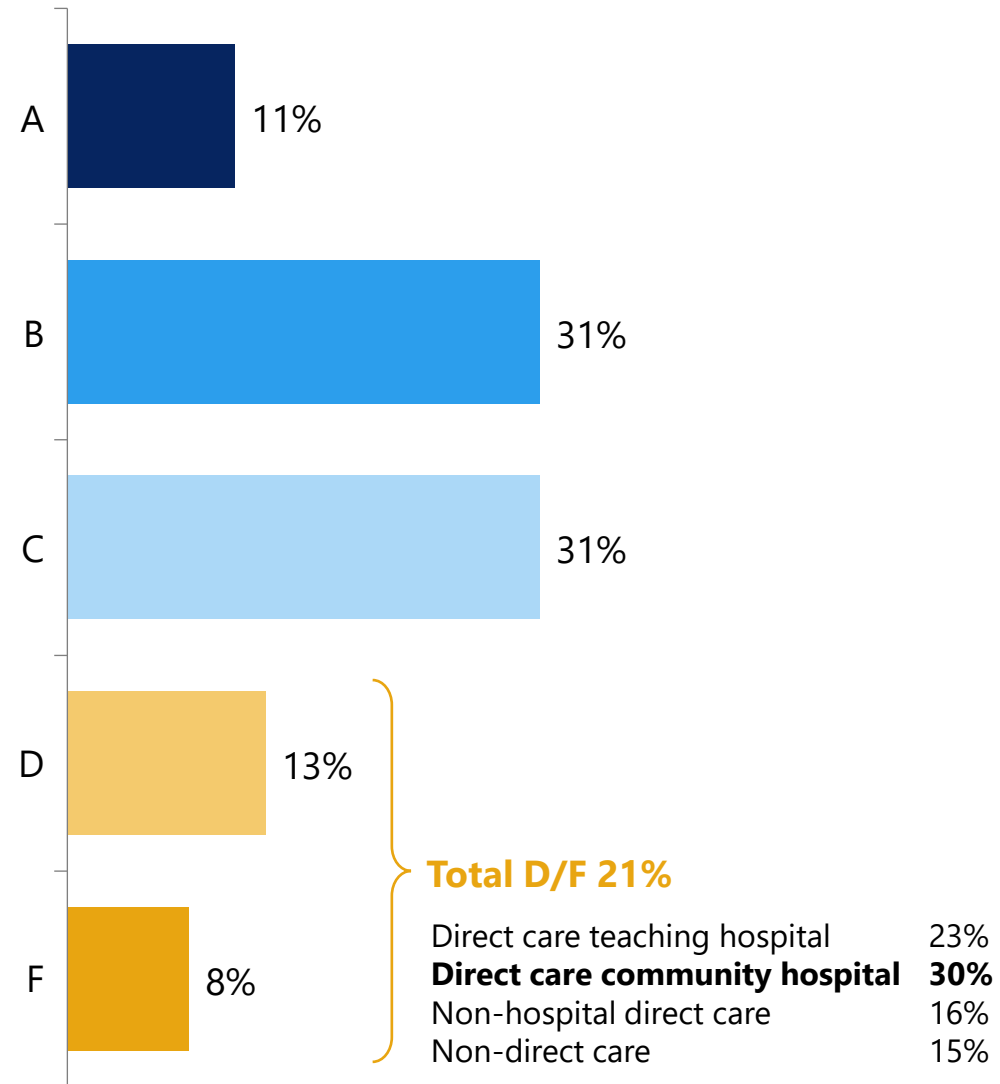
# COVID





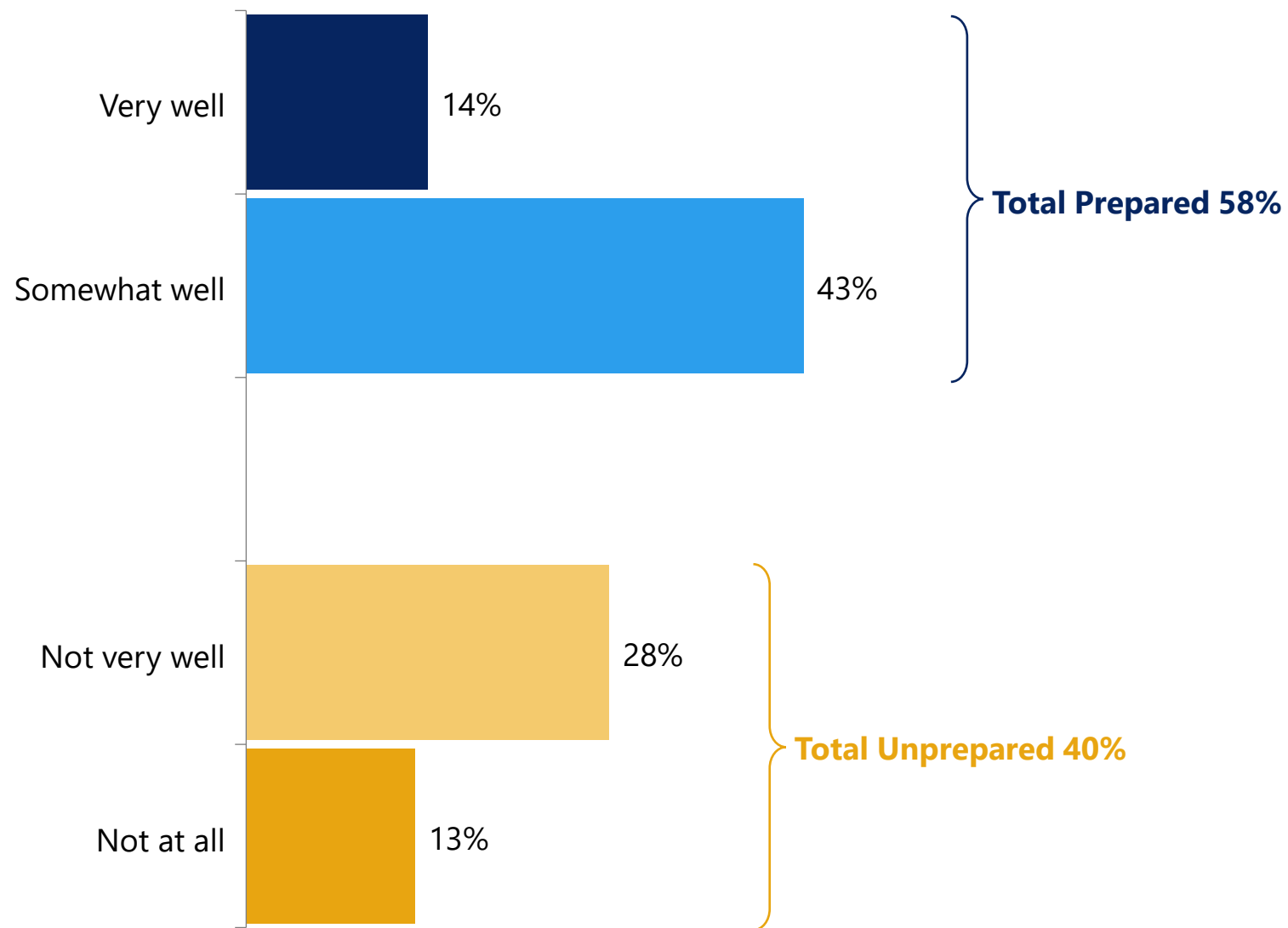


# RNs give their employers middling grades for handling the pandemic.



Note: Remainder Not sure

# Most RNs think their workplace is at least somewhat prepared for another outbreak.



Note: Remainder Not sure

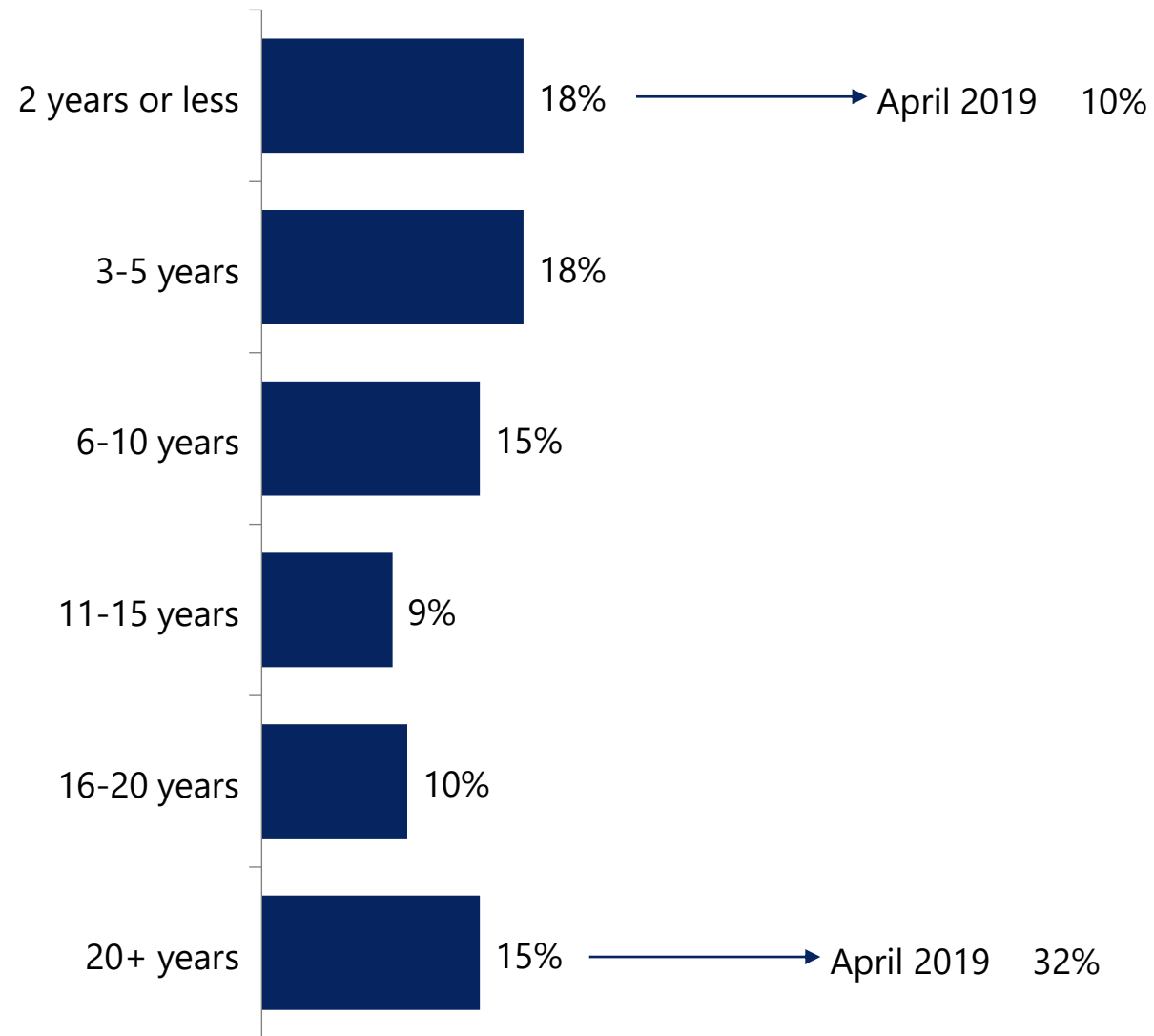
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# Retention





## 2-in-10 RNs plan to leave nursing in 2 years or less.

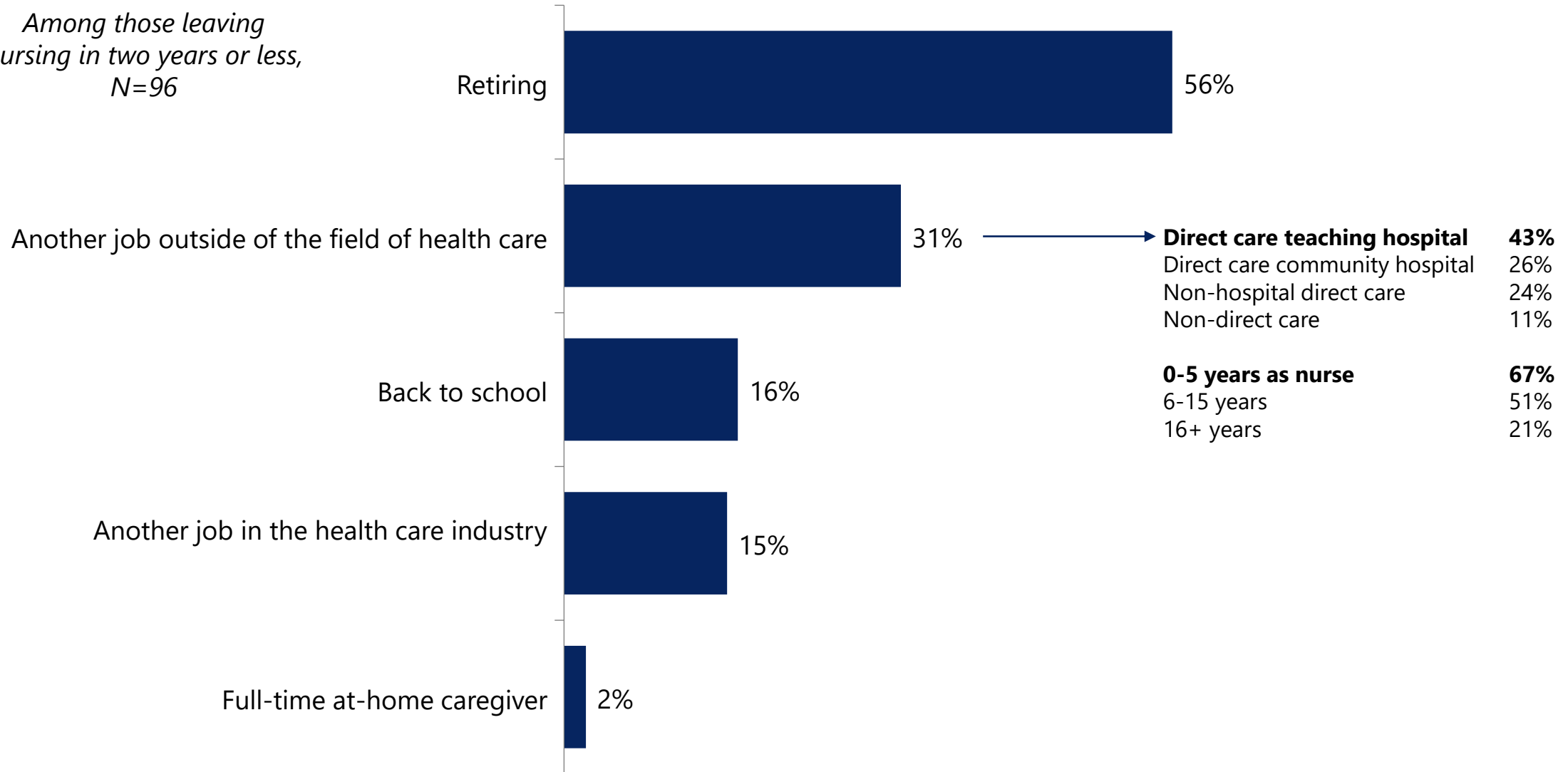


Note: Remainder Not sure

# Half of nurses planning to leave in 2 years or less are retiring; another third plan to find a job outside of health care.



Among those leaving nursing in two years or less, N=96



Note: Remainder None of the above / Not sure. Multiple responses accepted, so equals more than 100%.

Q39: Which, if any, of the following describe your plans for after you leave the field of nursing? Please select all that apply.

# 4-in-10 RNs say they're leaving field due to retirement, and just as many are leaving because of staffing and burnout.



*Among those leaving nursing in two years or less, N=96*

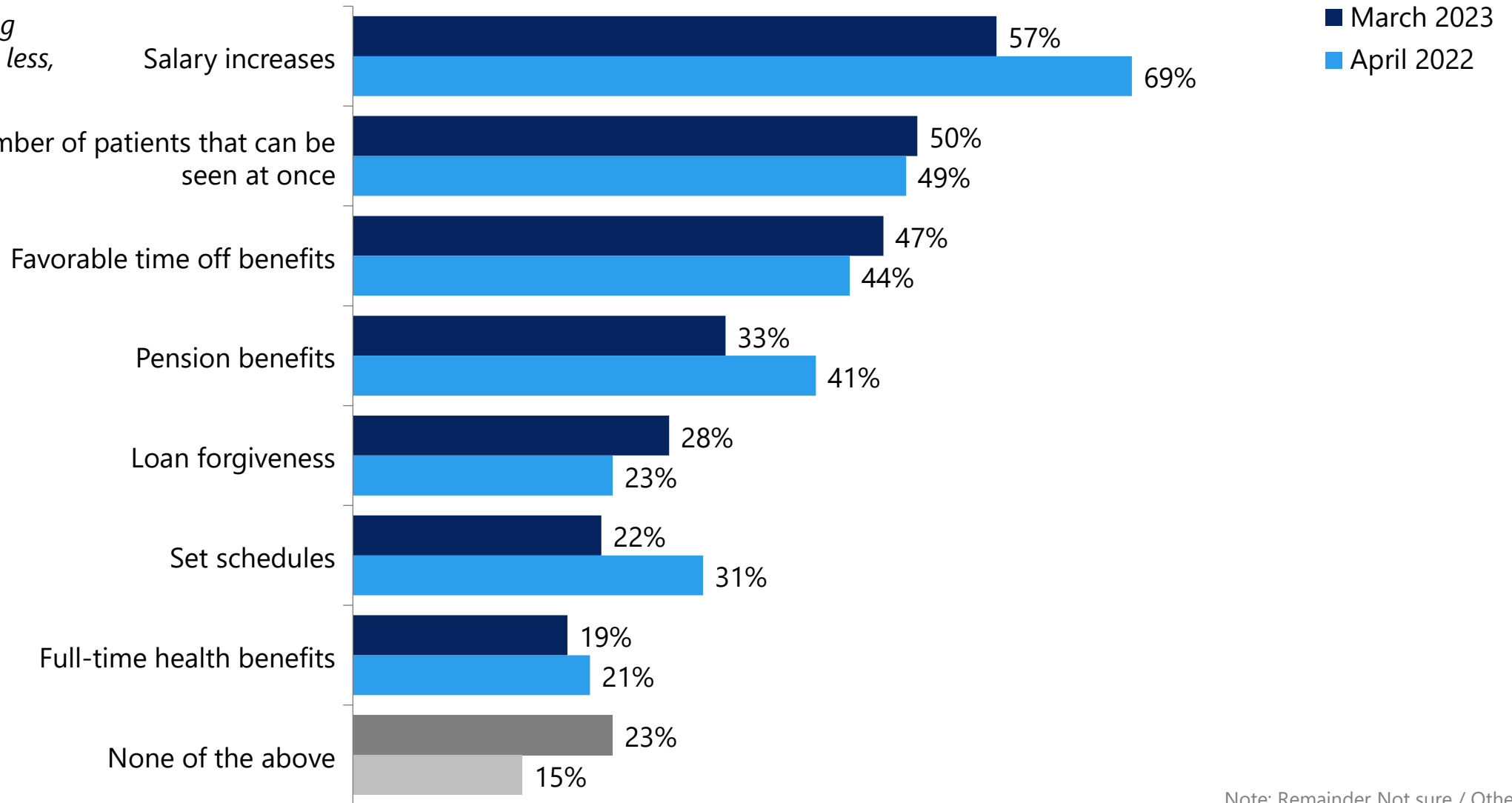
Main Reason Leaving Nursing	
Age / Retiring	40%
Overworked / Understaffed	20
Burnout / Exhaustion / Stress	19
Lack of pay	15
Prevented from providing quality care	13
Poor working conditions	11
Healthcare has changed	10
Lack of respect	8
Lack of support from employer	7
Lack of appreciation	4
Rude patients / Mistreated by patients	4

Note: Responses under 4% are not shown. Multiple responses accepted, so equals more than 100%.



# Patient limits and raises could persuade nurses to keep working.

Among those leaving nursing in two years or less, N=96



Note: Remainder Not sure / Other  
Multiple responses accepted, so equals more than 100%.

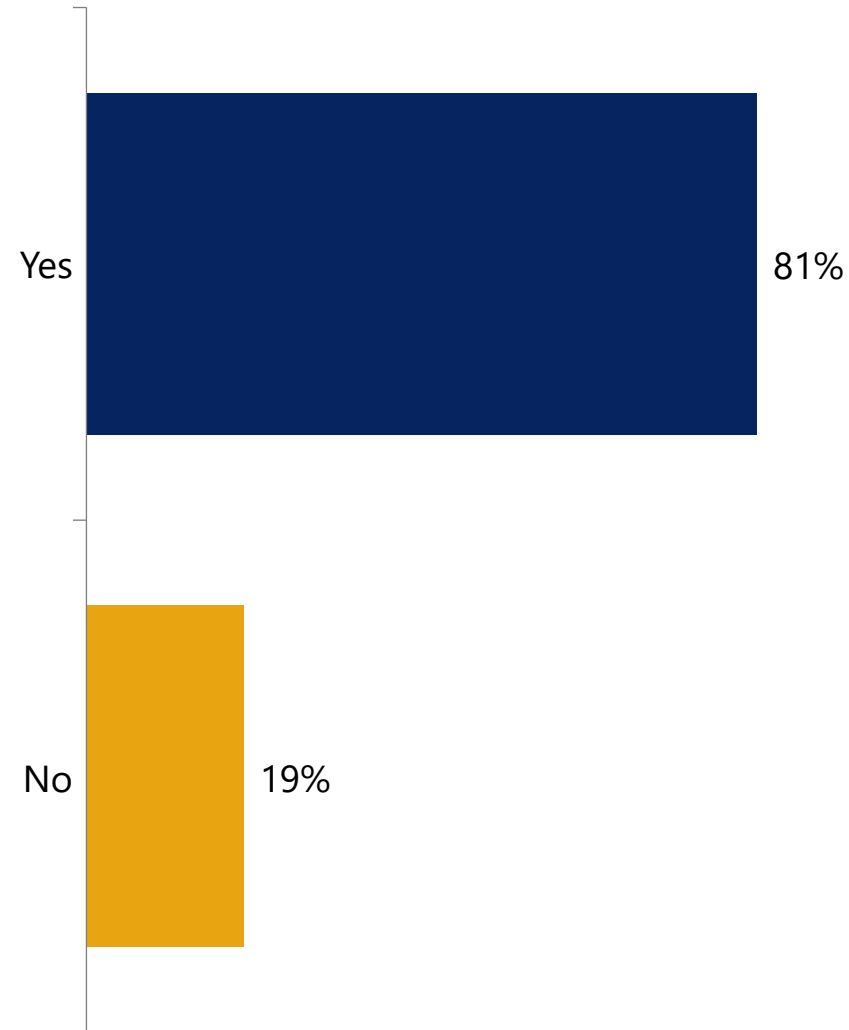
Q41: If your employer offered the following benefits, which, if any, would persuade you to continue working as a nurse? Please select all that apply.



# Most RNs who left the hospital did so because of *understaffing* and *scheduling*.

Among those not working in a hospital, N=199

## Previous Work in Hospital Setting



Reason for No Longer Working in Hospital [N=160]	
Understaffing / Unsafe staffing / Nurse to patient ratios / Too many patients	18%
Work hours / Overtime / Schedule	15
Burnout / Exhaustion / Stress	8
Poor management	7
Shift to other personal care setting (home care, school nurse)	6
Shift to non-personal care setting (consulting, education)	5
Lack of pay / Benefits	5
Family obligations	4
Medical leave / Personal health reasons	4
Workplace culture / Toxic culture	4

Note: Remainder Not sure / Refused. Responses under 4% are not shown.

Q42: [AMONG THOSE NOT WORKING IN A HOSPITAL, N=199] Have you ever worked in a hospital setting?  
AND Q43: [IF YES, N=160] What is the main reason you stopped working in a hospital?



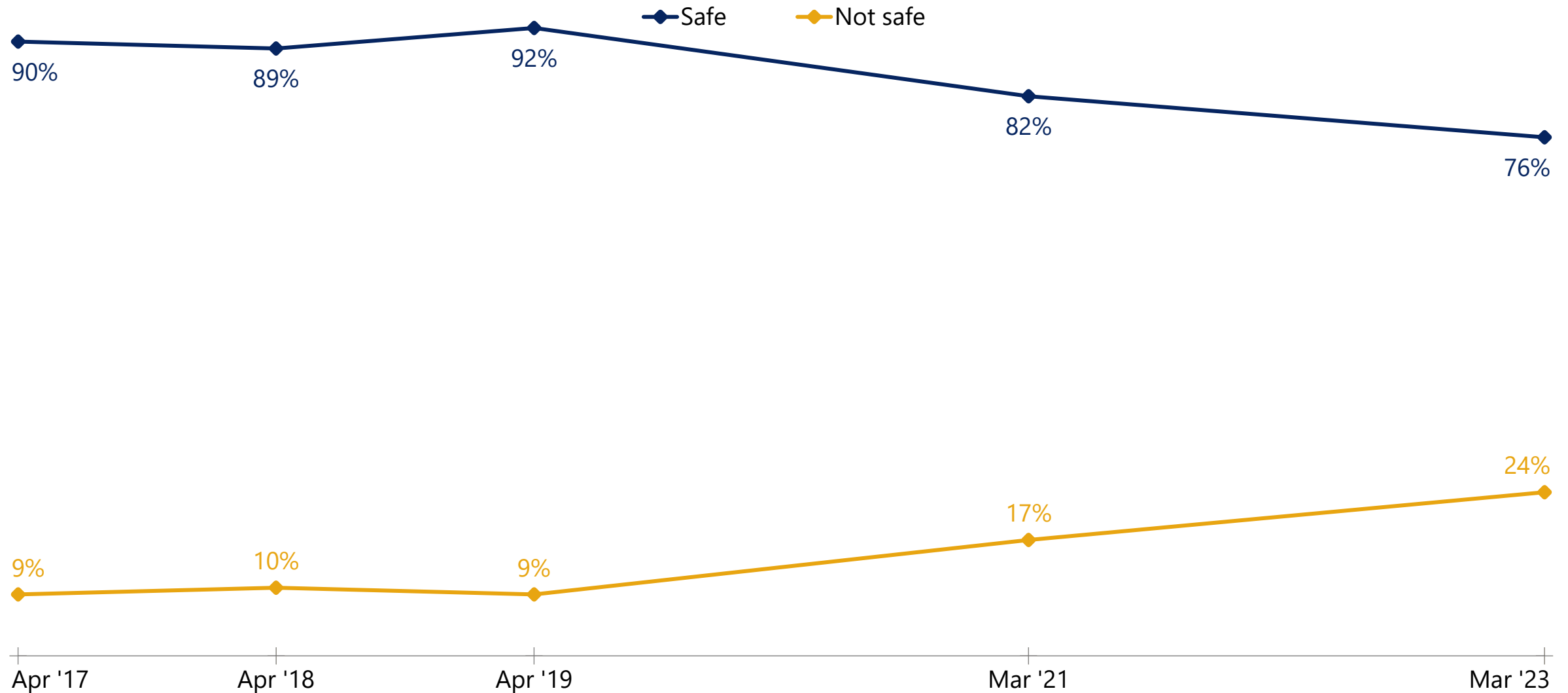
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# Workplace Violence





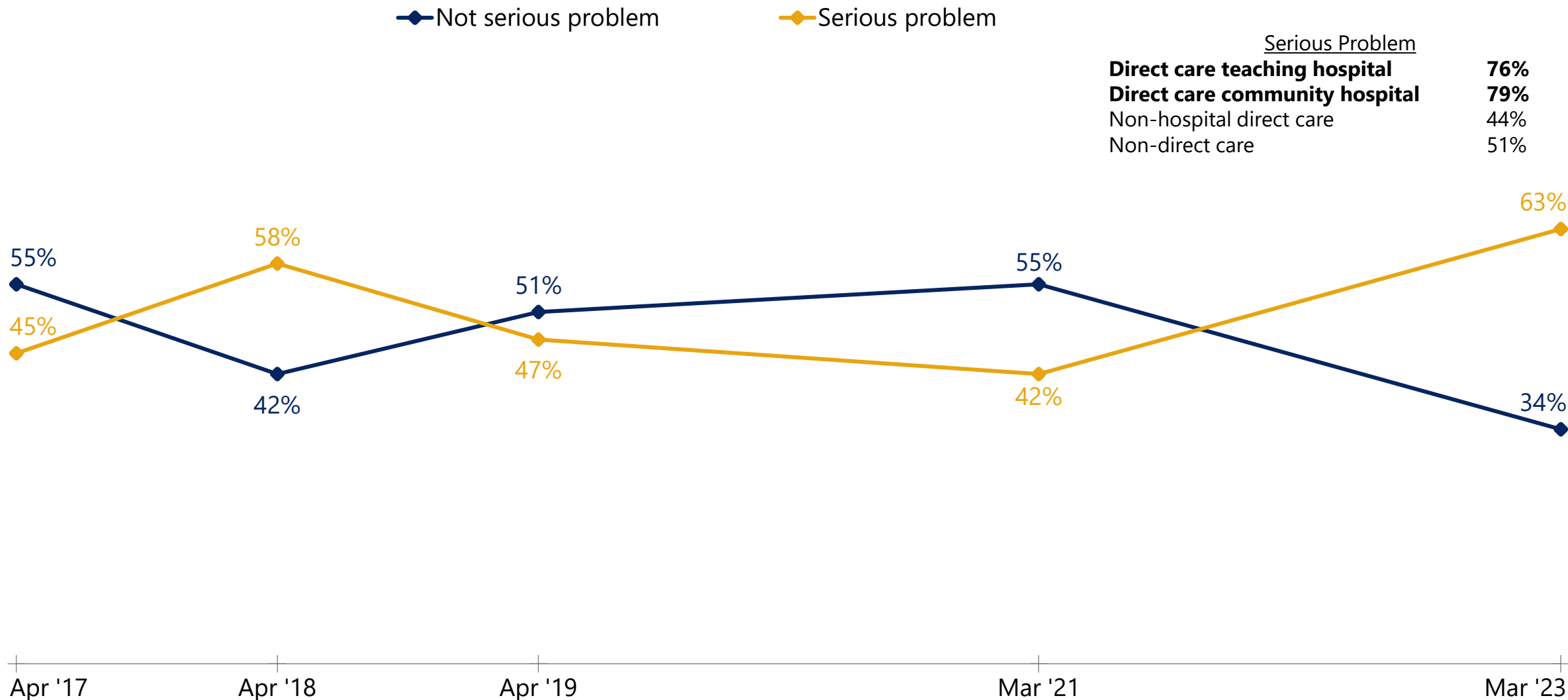
# A quarter of nurses do not feel safe in their workplace.



Note: Remainder Not sure

Q44: Overall, how safe do you feel in your workplace?

# Large increase in nurses saying that workplace violence and abuse is a serious problem.

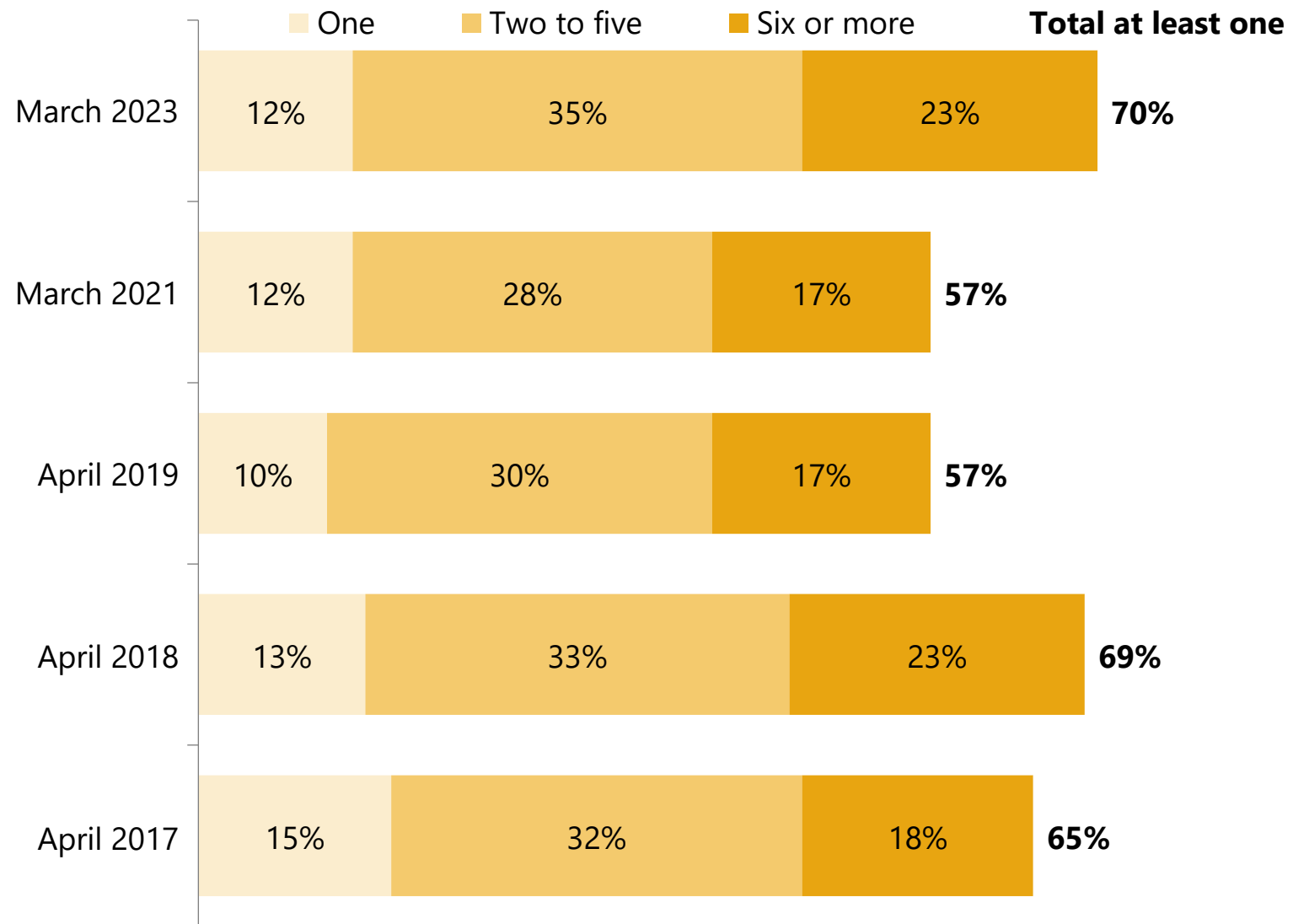


Serious Problem	
Direct care teaching hospital	76%
Direct care community hospital	79%
Non-hospital direct care	44%
Non-direct care	51%

Note: Remainder Not sure

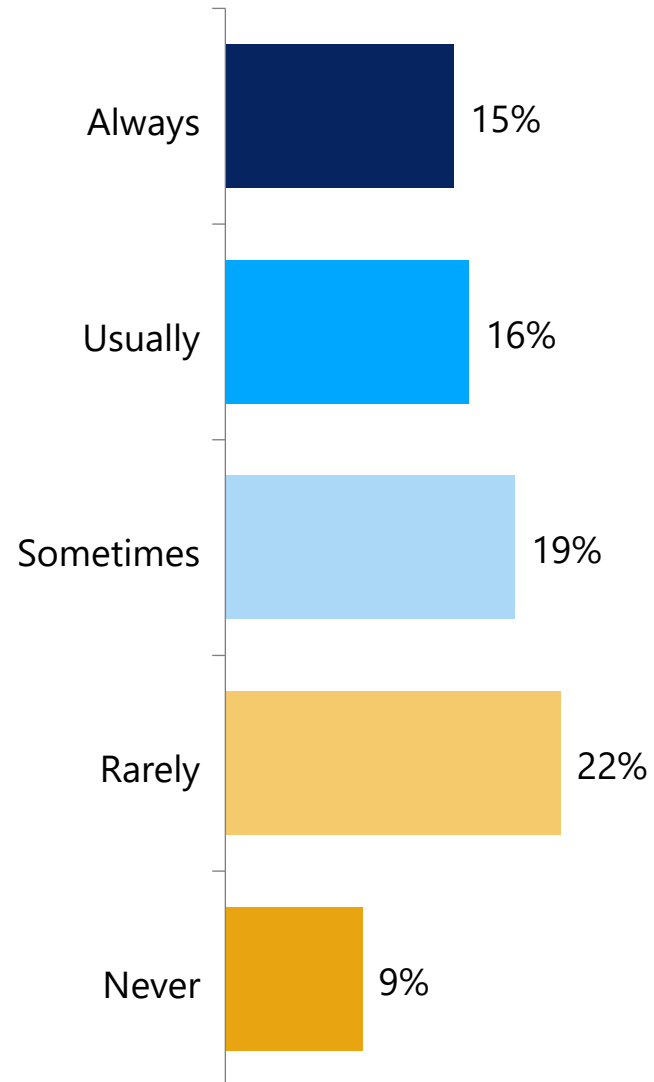
Q45: In the past two years, how serious has the problem of workplace violence and abuse, including both verbal and physical abuse, been for nurses like you?

# 7-in-10 report encountering at least one instance of workplace violence or abuse.



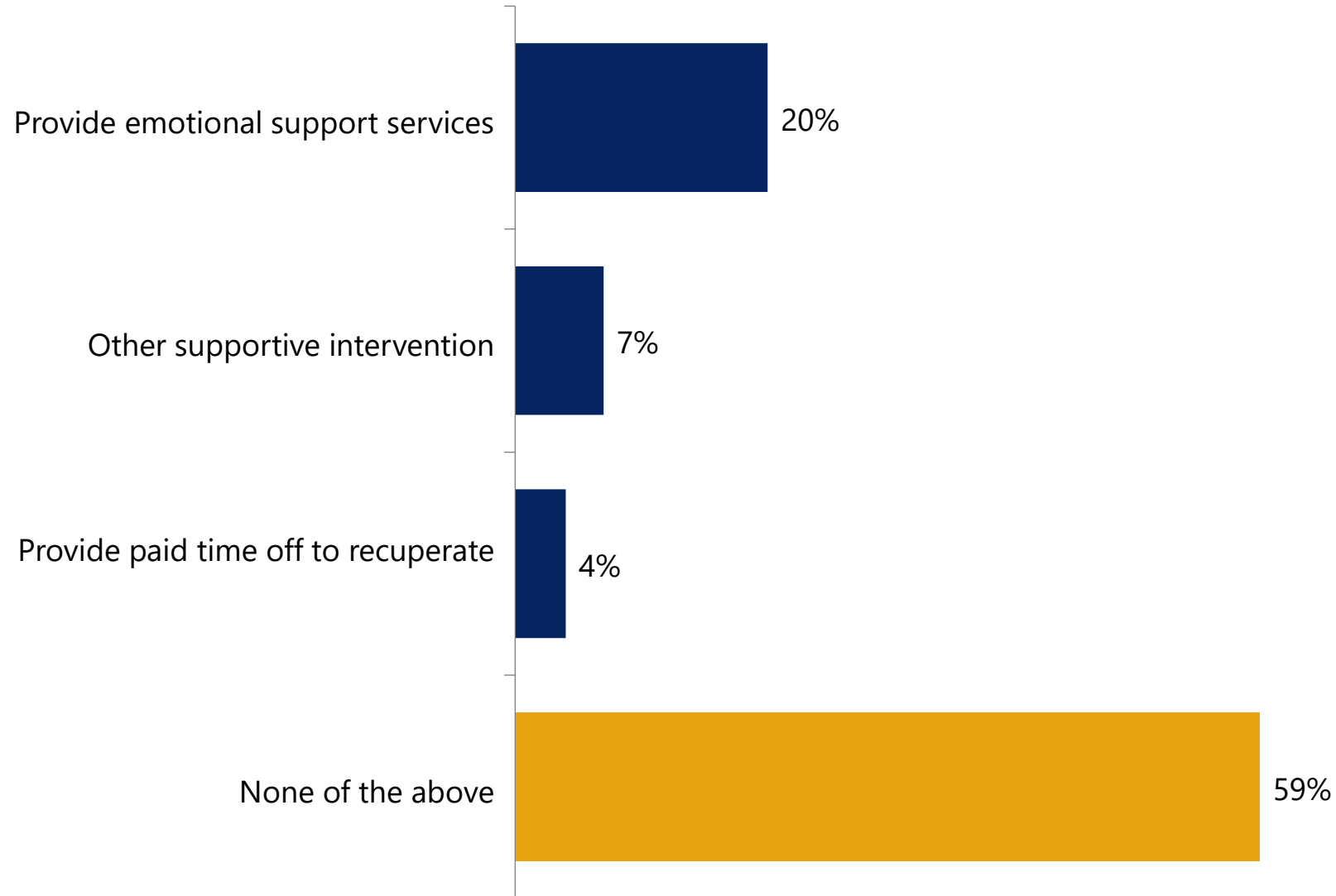
Q46: How many instances of workplace violence or abuse did you personally encounter in the past two years?

# A third of RNs say their employer does not take appropriate actions to prevent further violence or abuse.



Note: Remainder Not applicable / Not sure

# Majority say their employer did not take any supportive intervention actions after violence or abuse occurred.



*Among those who encountered at least one instance of violence, N=366*

Note: Remainder Not sure. Multiple responses accepted, so equals more than 100%.

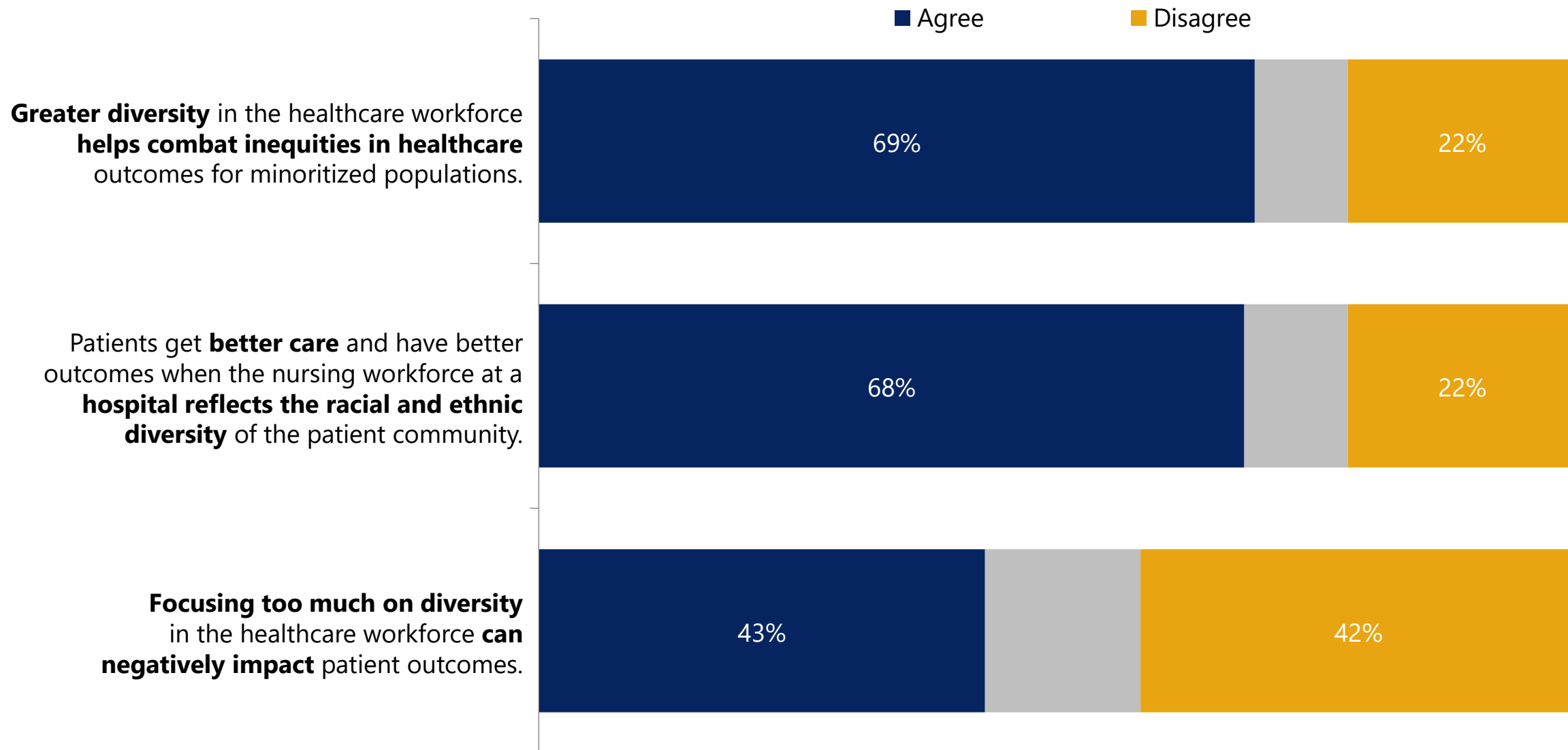
Q48: [AMONG THOSE WHO ENCOUNTERED AT LEAST ONE INSTANCE OF VIOLENCE]  
After you encountered workplace violence or abuse, did your employer take any of the following actions?

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# Racial Disparities



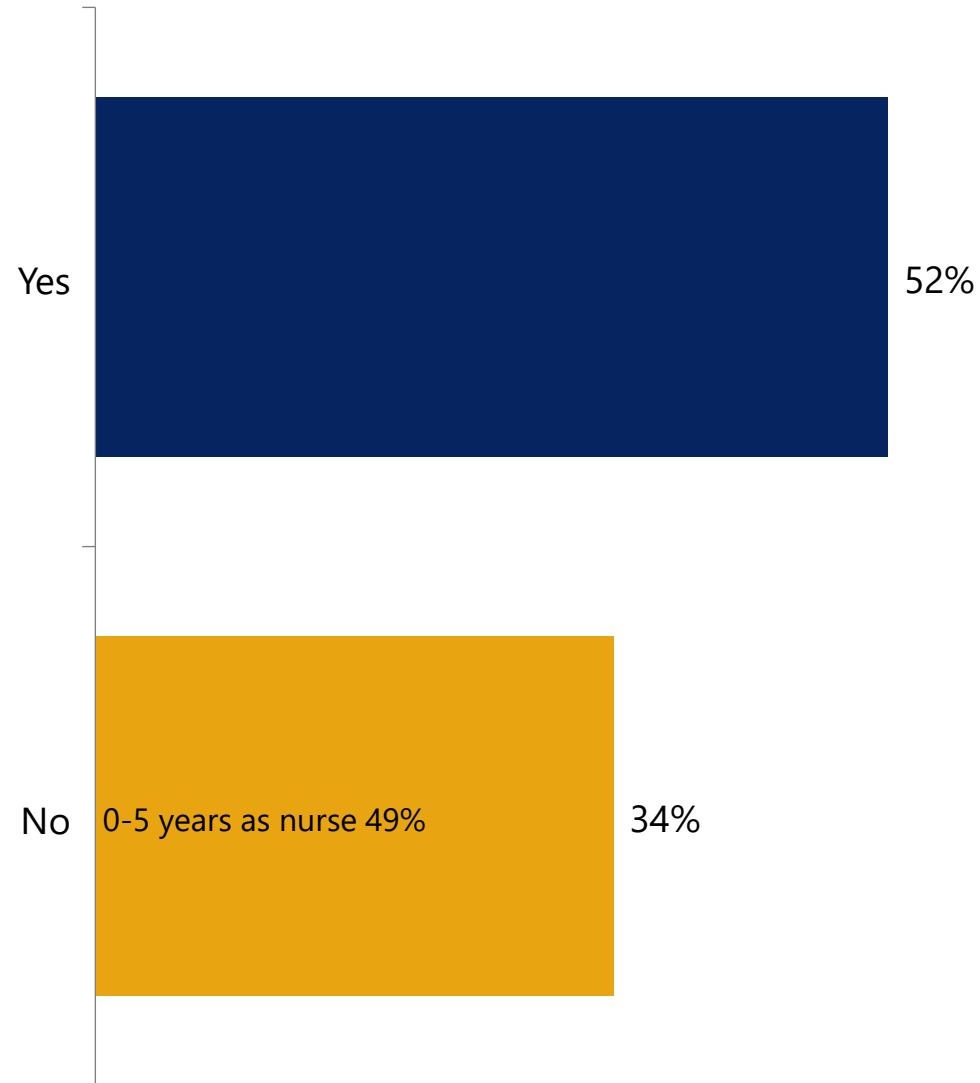
# RNs think greater diversity in healthcare workforce has positive impact on patient care.



Note: Remainder Not sure



# A third of RNs do *not* feel they receive enough training to combat healthcare outcome inequities.



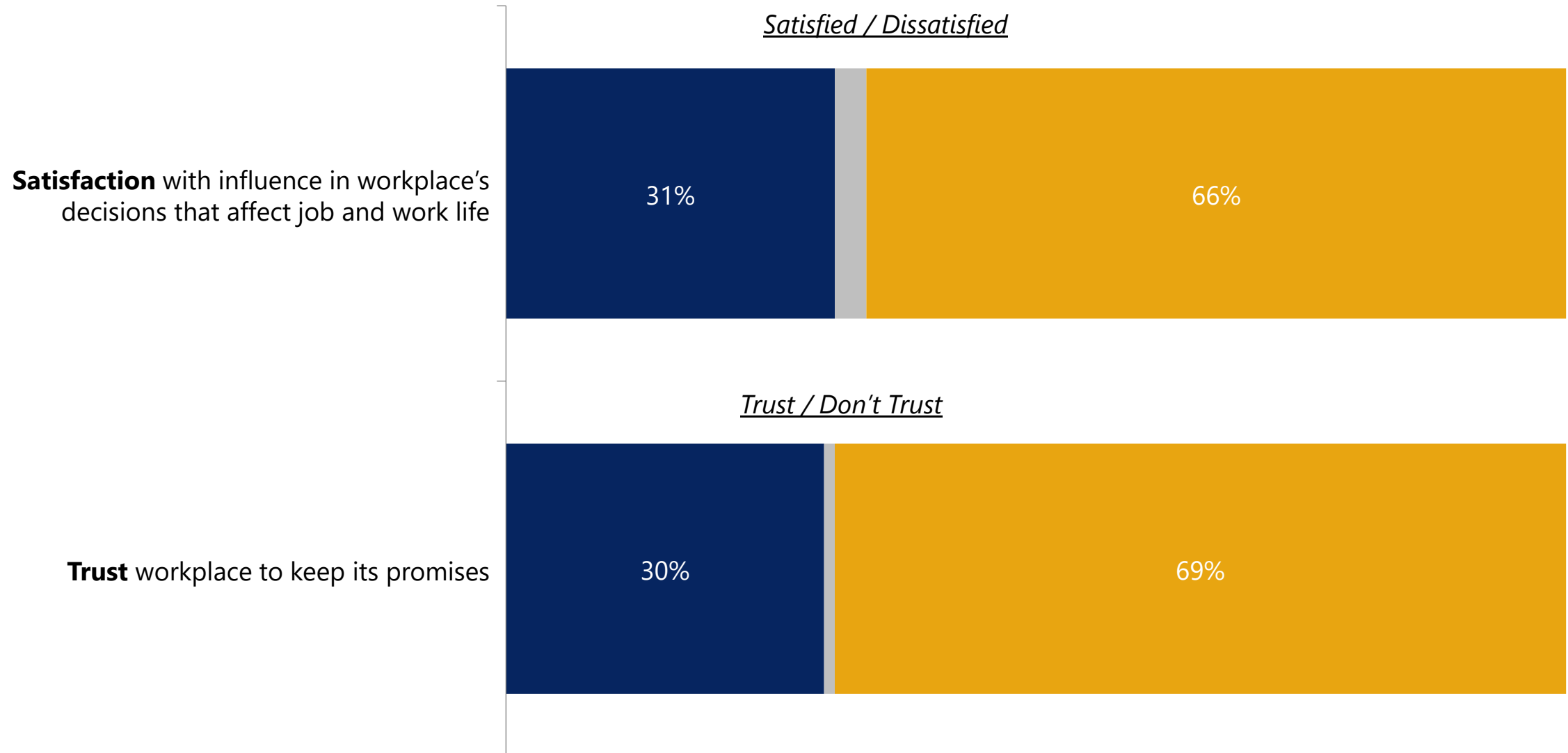
Note: Remainder Not sure

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# Union



# Majority of RNs dissatisfied with influence in workplace decisions and don't trust their workplace to keep its promises.

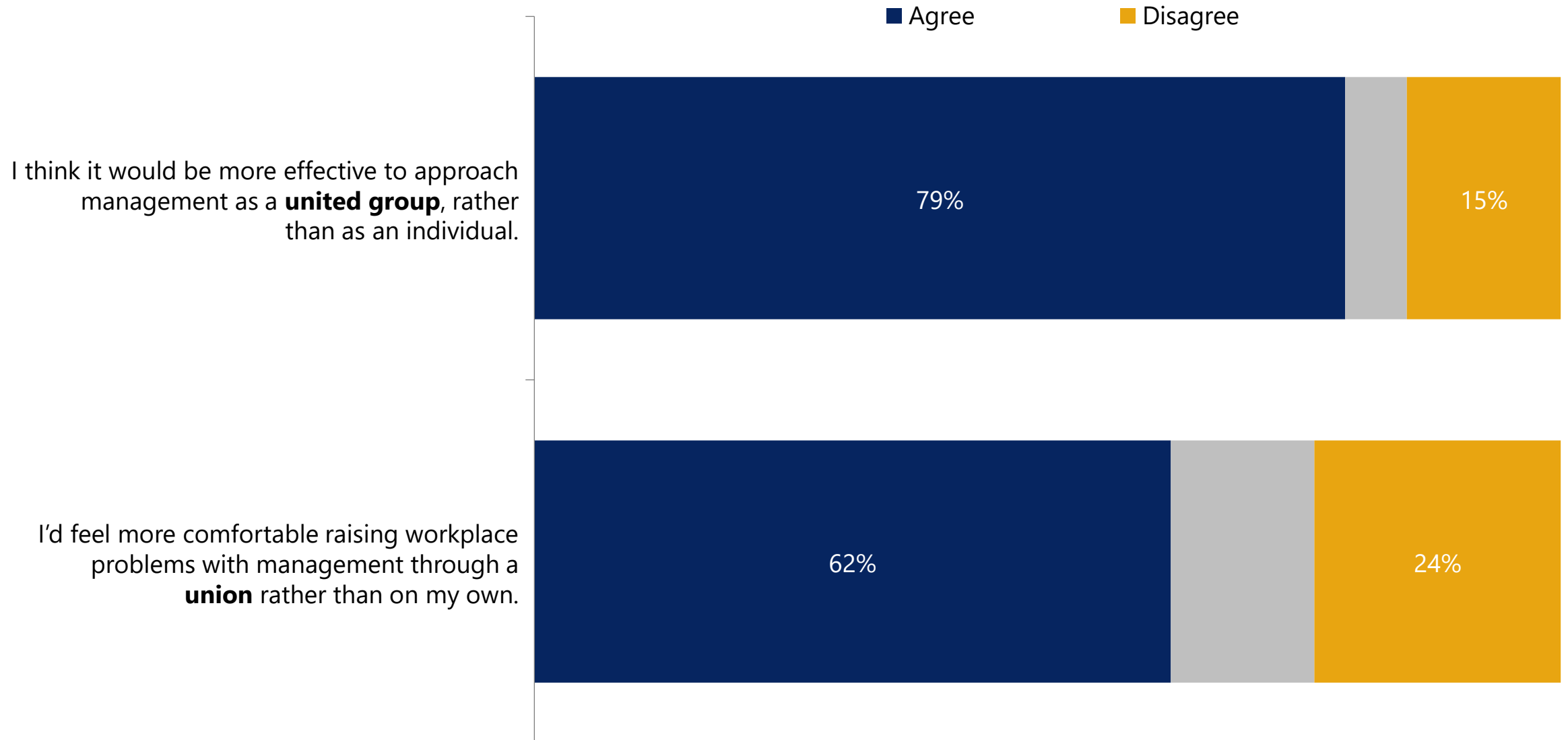


Note: Remainder Not sure

Q53: Overall, how satisfied are you with the influence you have in your [hospital's / organization's] decisions that affect your job and work life?

AND Q54: In general, how much do you trust your [hospital / organization] to keep its promises to you and other employees?

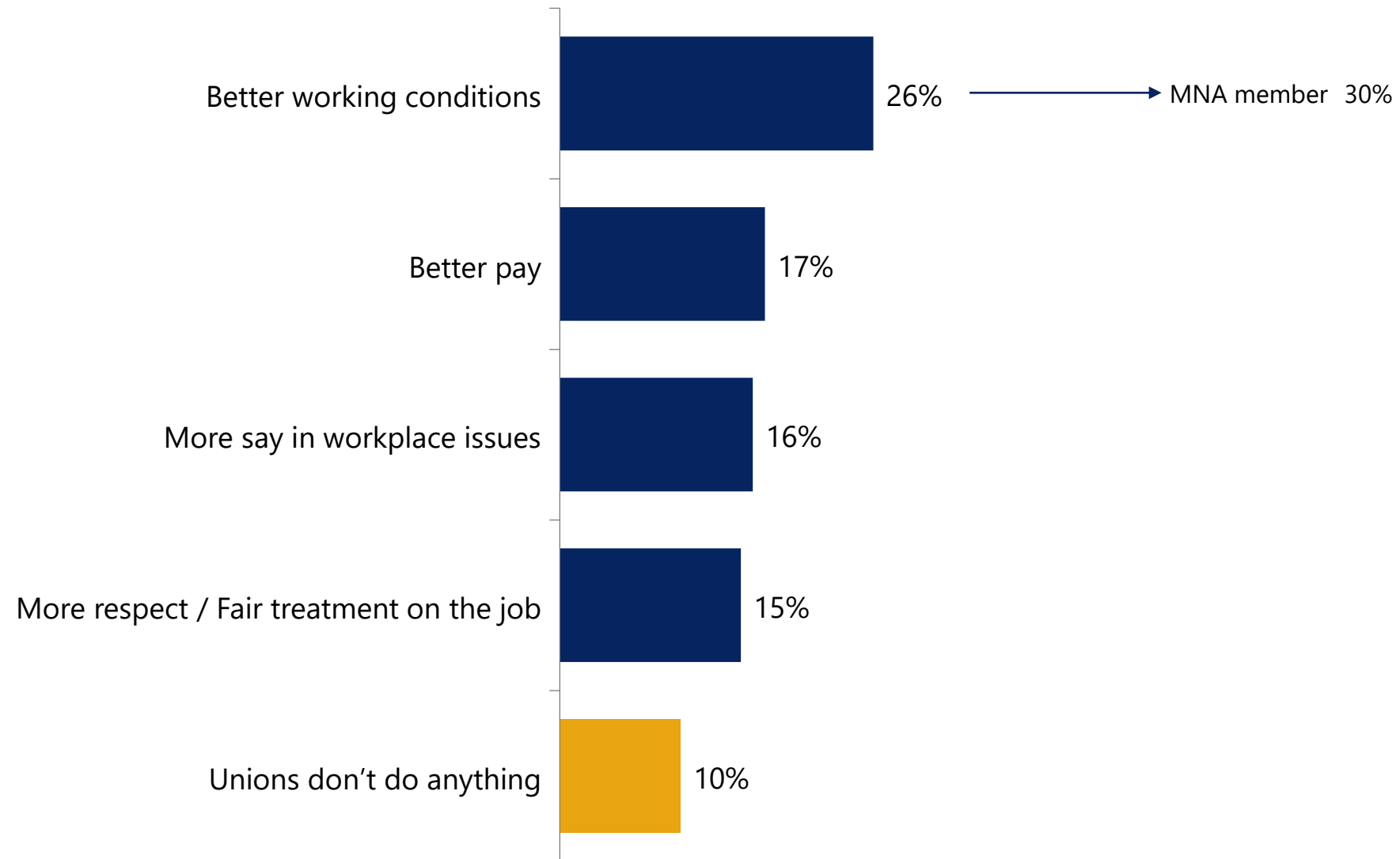
# Agreement that going through a union has benefits when approaching management.



Note: Remainder Not sure



# ***Better working conditions is the top benefit RNs think a union provides.***

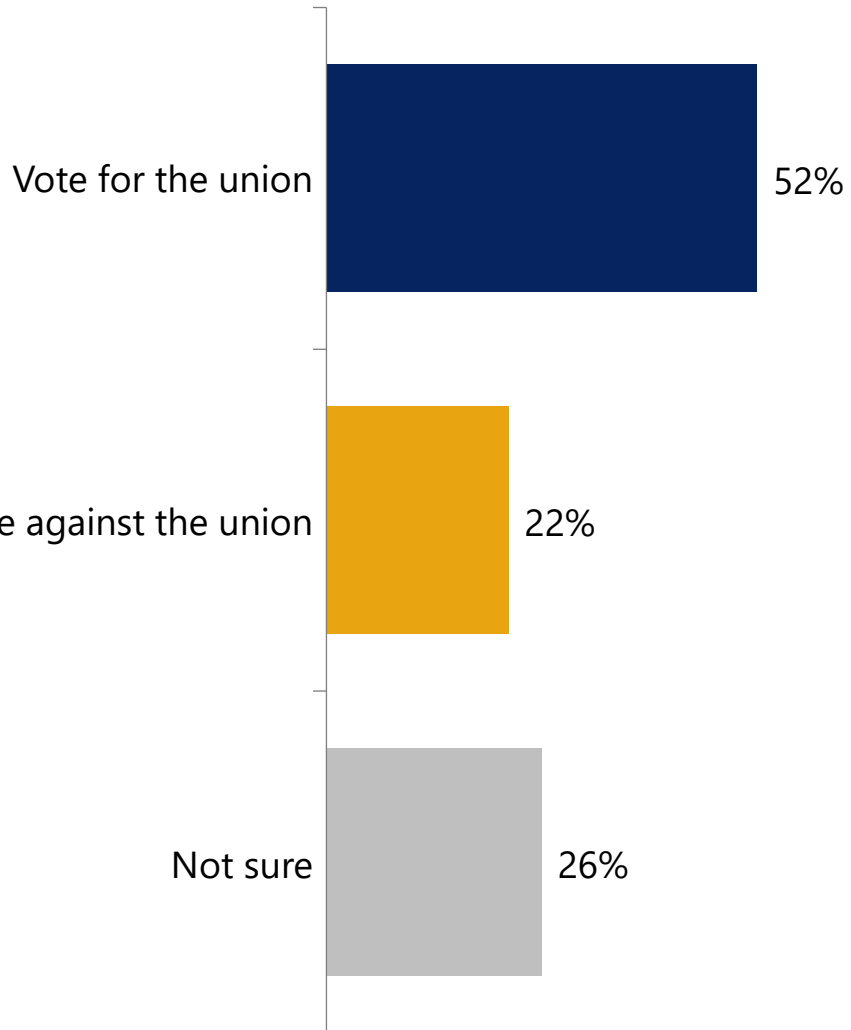


Note: Remainder Not sure

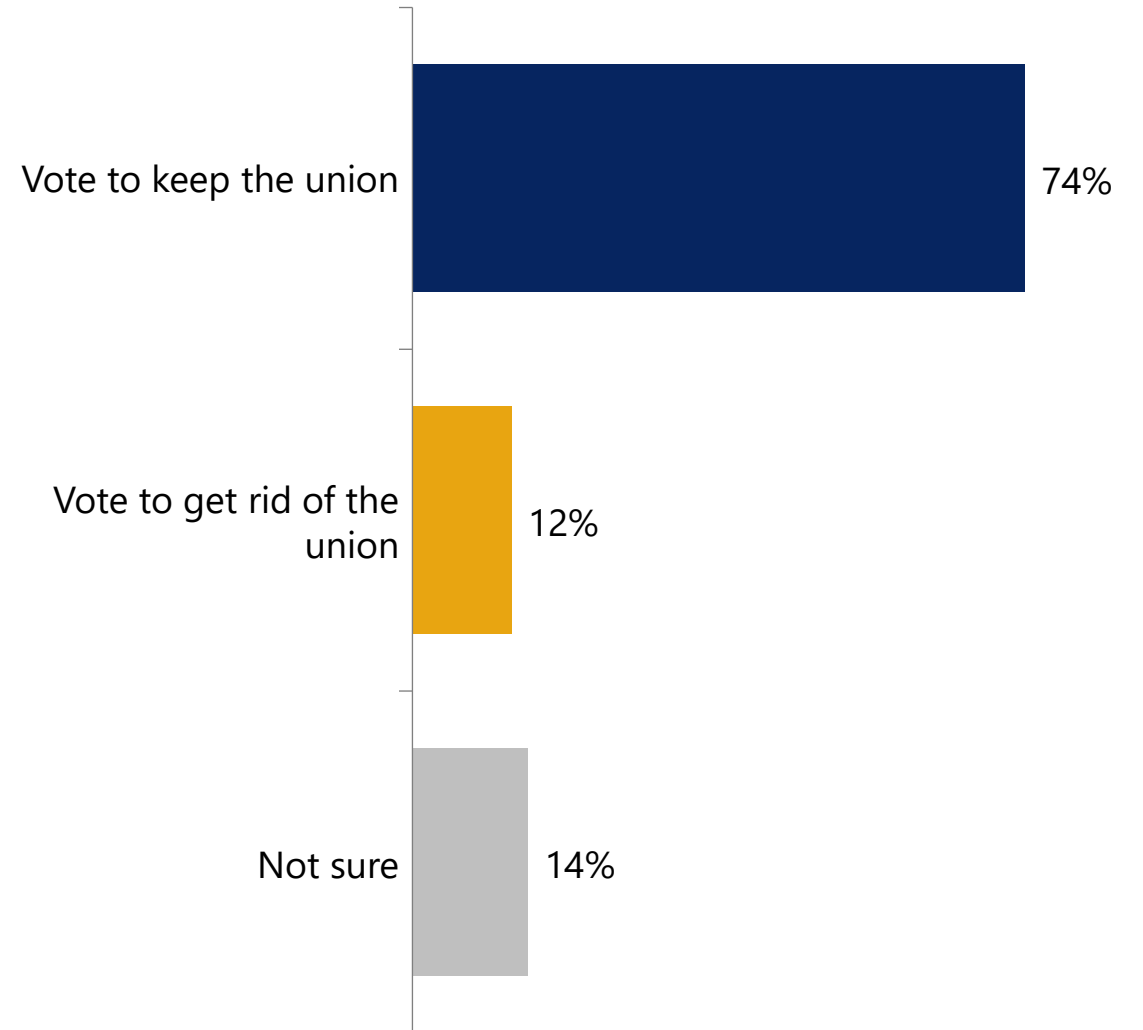
# Majority would vote for the union.



**Non-Union Nurses [N=326]**



**Union Members [N=205]**



Q58: If an election were held today to decide whether employees like you should be represented by a union, would you vote for the union or against the union?  
AND Q59: If a new election were held today to decide whether to keep the union at your [hospital / organization] would you vote to keep the union or get rid of it?



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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT**

**Chris Anderson**  
617.742.3766  
[Chris@BeaconResearch.com](mailto:Chris@BeaconResearch.com)

**Sarah Tower-Richardi**  
781.812.3530  
[Sarah@BeaconResearch.com](mailto:Sarah@BeaconResearch.com)

6 Beacon Street, Suite 510  
Boston, MA 02108