



A Survey of Massachusetts Registered Nurses

April 2026



About the Survey



Mode	Respondents were contacted through text message, asking them to use the included link to participate in the survey online, through phone or computer.
Sample	484 interviews were completed with RNs currently working in healthcare in MA. This was drawn from a file of the 117,000 nurses registered with the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing as of February 2026.
Dates	March 11-24, 2026
Weights	Slight age weights were applied to ensure the data accurately matched demographic information available on the statewide list of nurses.
Margin of Error	±4% for the entire sample; higher for subgroups
Note	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	20
	Direct care outside hospital setting	28
	Healthcare worker, not direct care	15
MNA Member	Yes	42
	No	53

Category	Group	% of Sample
Years in nursing	0 – 5 years	14%
	6 – 15 years	30
	16+ years	56
Age	40 or younger	29
	41 – 50	23
	51 – 64	32
	65+	15
Gender	Female	88
	Male	9

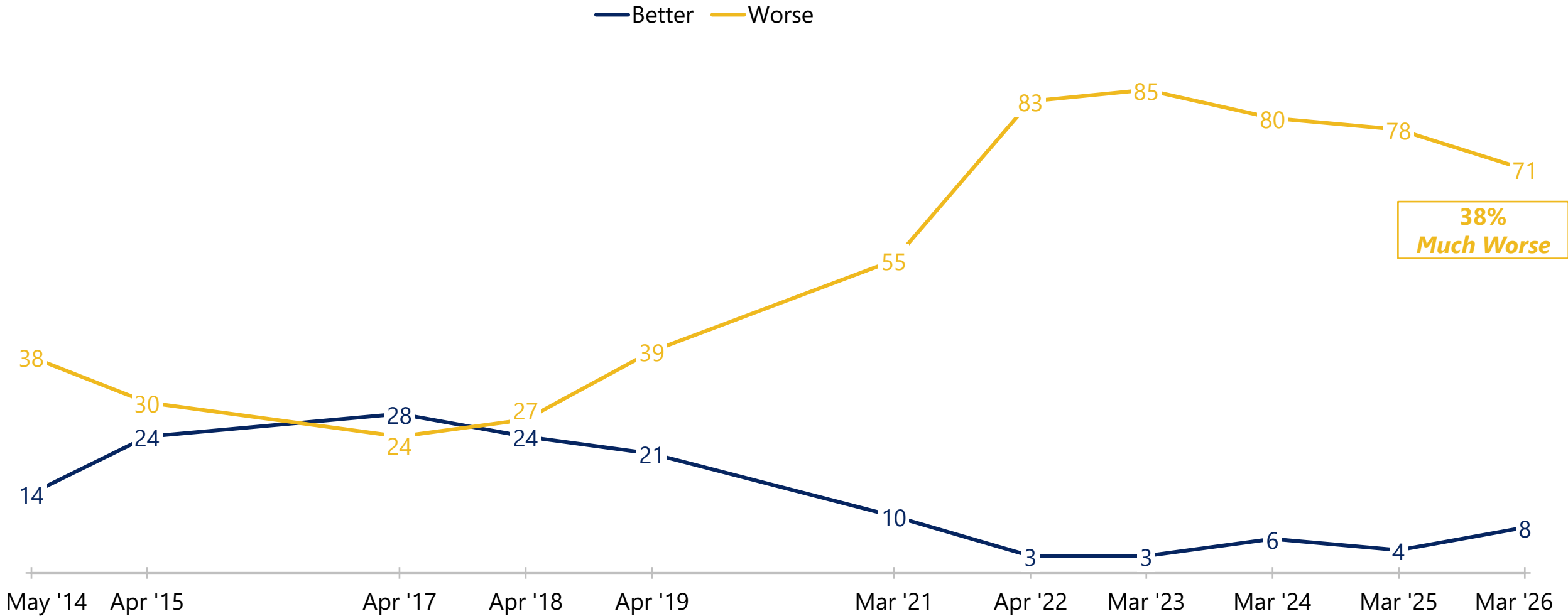
State of Care



Most RNs Say Quality of Care has Gotten Worse



Q6. In the past two years, do you think the overall quality of healthcare in Massachusetts hospitals has gotten:



Understaffing Remains Top Obstacle to Quality Care



Q7. What is the biggest problem or obstacle you face in doing your job and delivering quality care to patients?

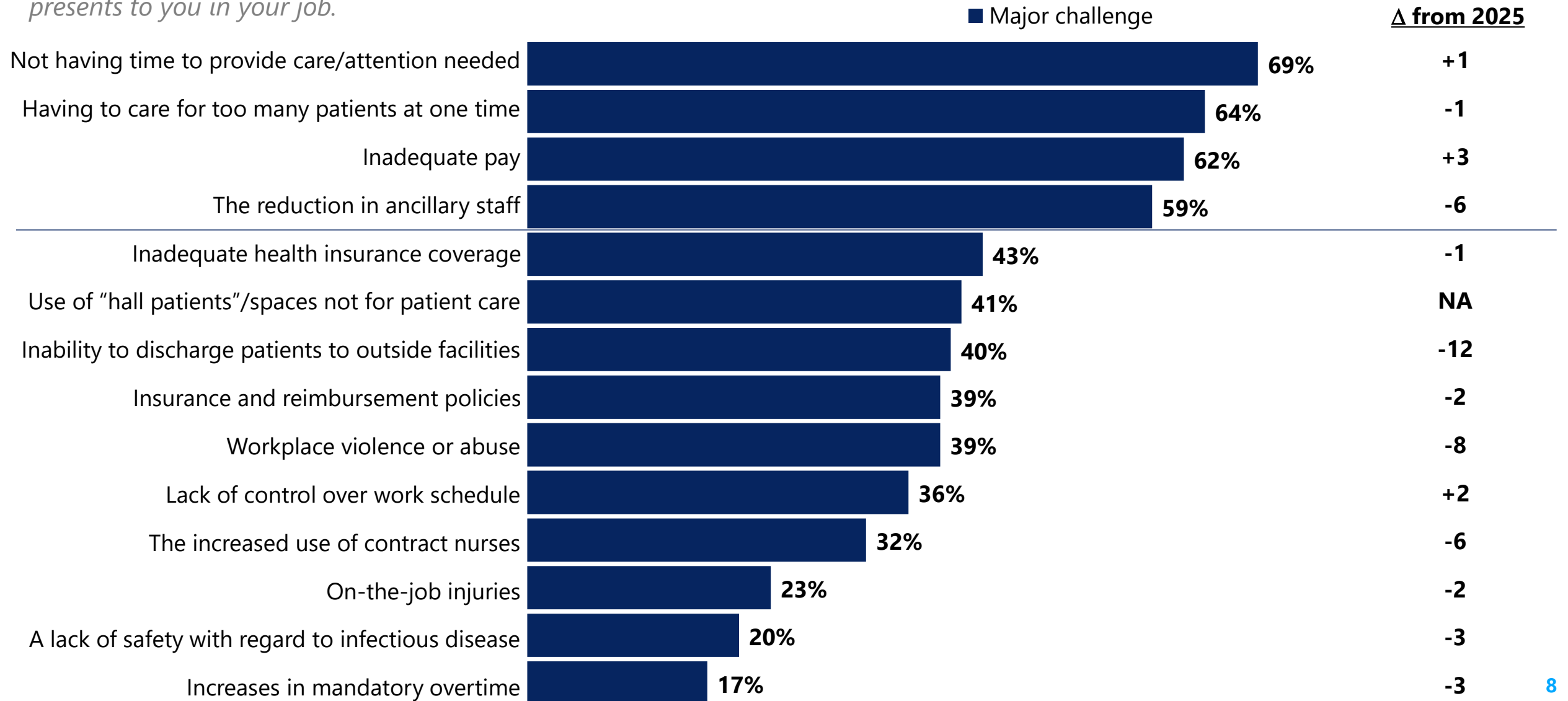
Biggest Obstacle in Delivering Quality Care to Patients	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022
Understaffing / Nurse to patient ratios / Too many patients	60%	54%	60%	66%	65%
Lack of support / Resources	8	10	10	9	12
Insurance issues	8	7	4	4	2
Sicker patients / Acuity of patients	6	5	4	6	4
Lack of trained staff / Lack of experienced staff	6	9	11	7	9
Computer / EMR / Paperwork	5	3	5	3	3
Poor management	5	10	8	7	NA
Lack of access to care / Lack of preventative care	5	8	6	4	3
Low pay / Less pay than travelers	4	5	5	5	4

RN for 5 yrs or less	75%
Direct care teaching hospital	71
Direct care community hospital	68

Major Challenges Facing Bedside Nurses



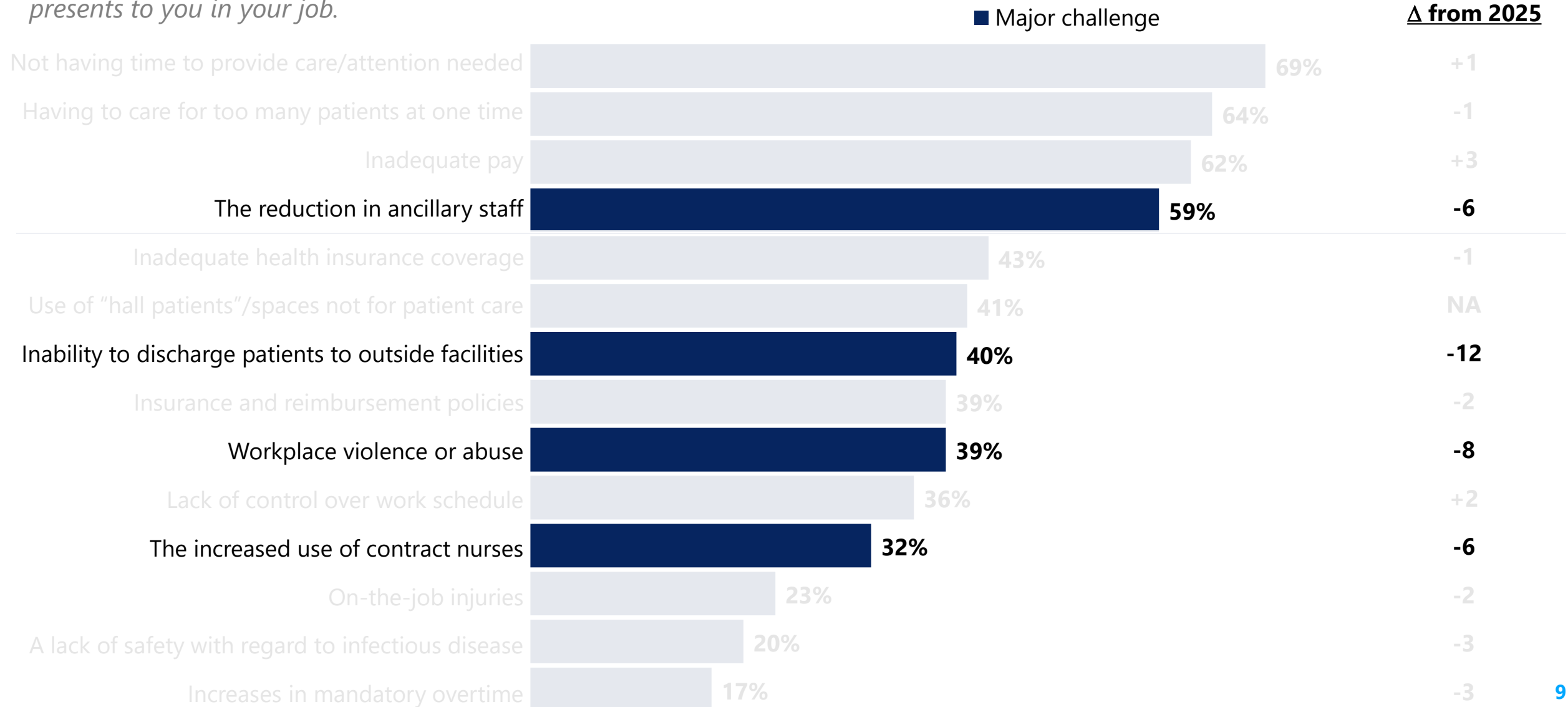
Q19-32. [DIRECT PATIENT CARE NURSE, N=412] Below are some challenges facing bedside nurses. Please rate the challenge each presents to you in your job.



Major Challenges Facing Bedside Nurses



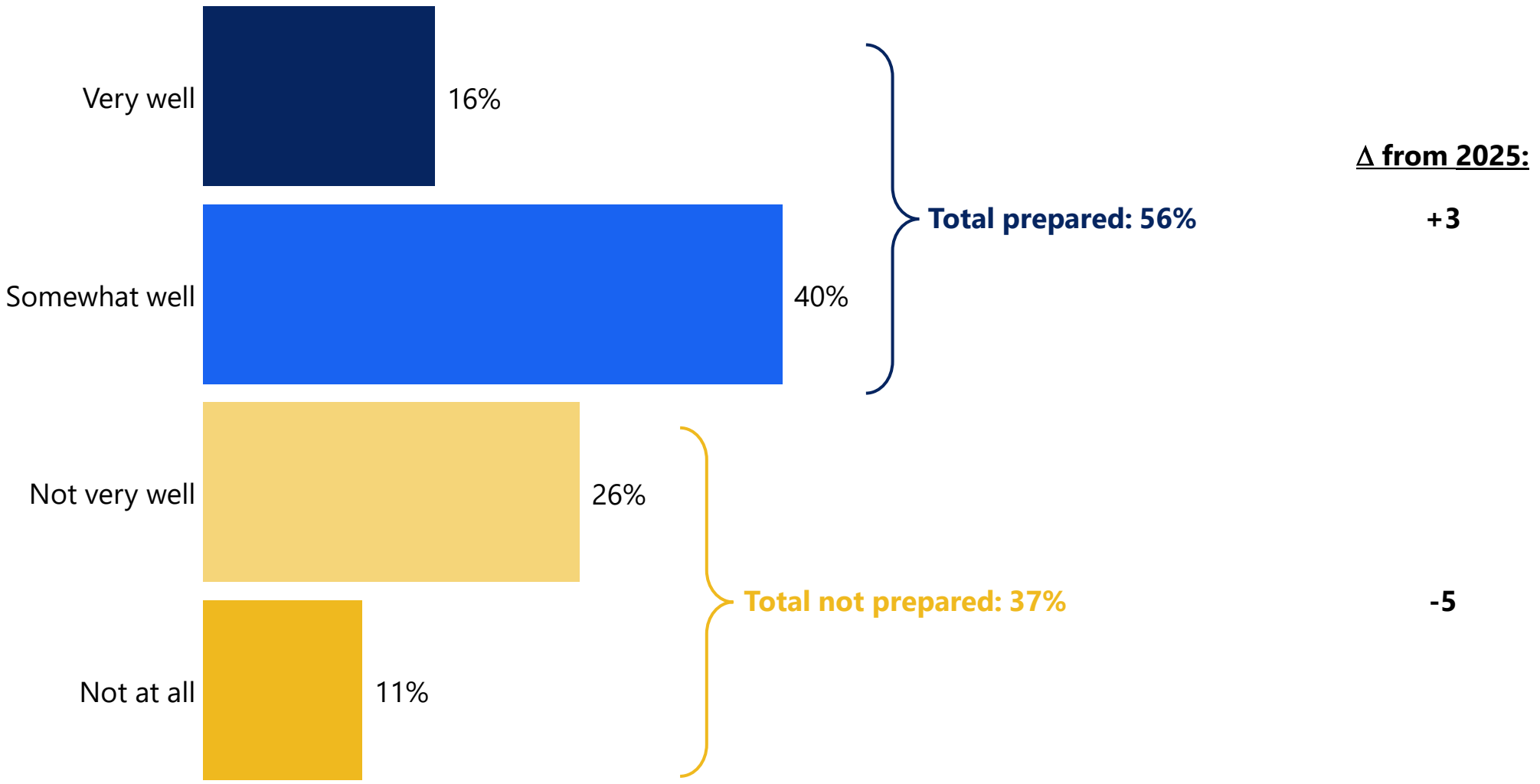
Q19-32. [DIRECT PATIENT CARE NURSE, N=412] Below are some challenges facing bedside nurses. Please rate the challenge each presents to you in your job.



Few Think Workplace is Very Well Prepared for Outbreak



Q43. How well prepared do you think your hospital or workplace is in the event of another infectious disease outbreak?



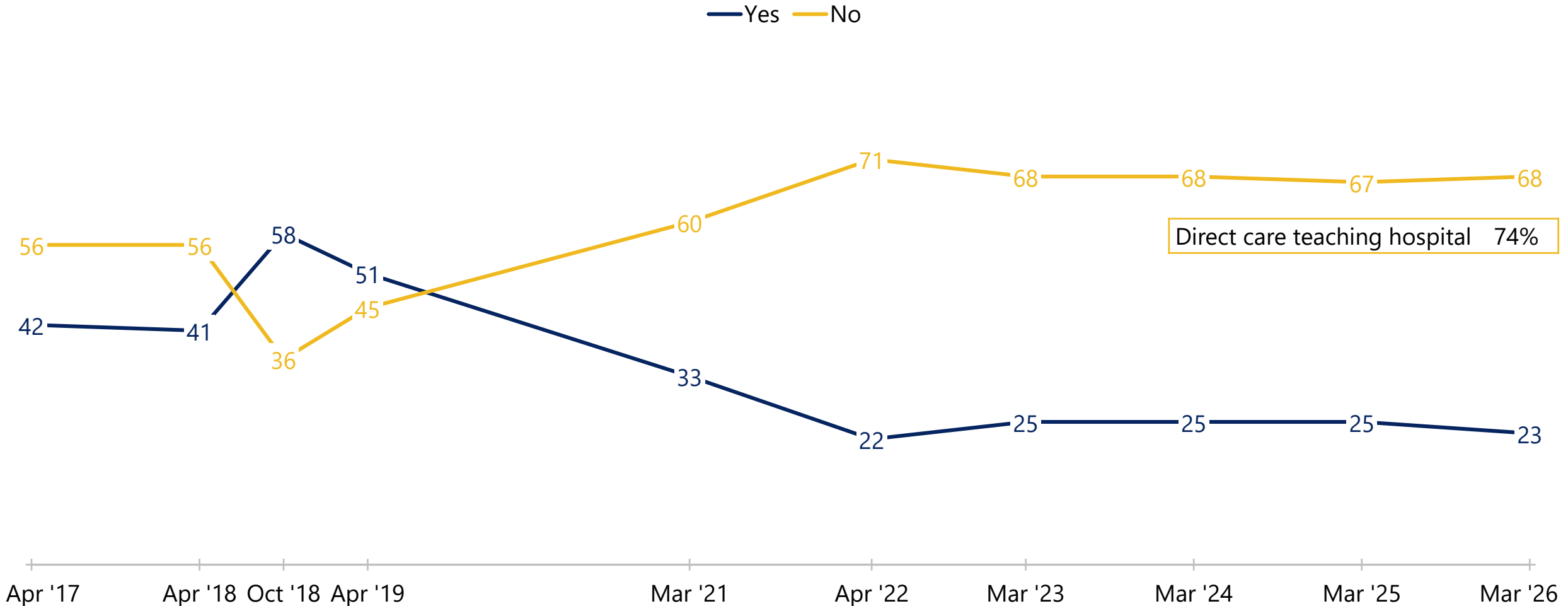
Staffing and Patient Care



RNs Continue to Report Inadequate Time with Patients



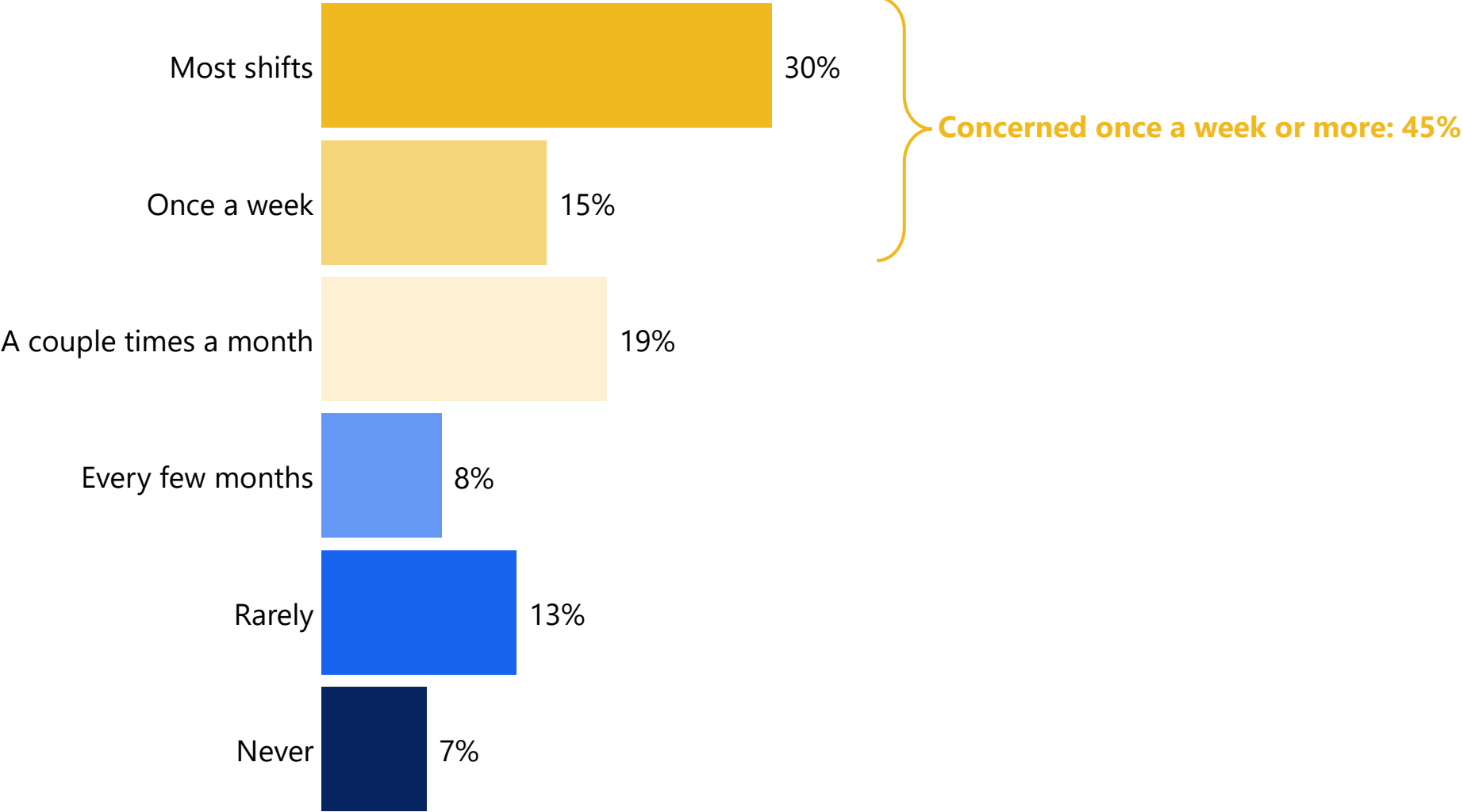
Q8. Do you have enough time to provide your patients with the care and attention each one needs?



Concern that Unsafe Staffing put Nursing License at Risk



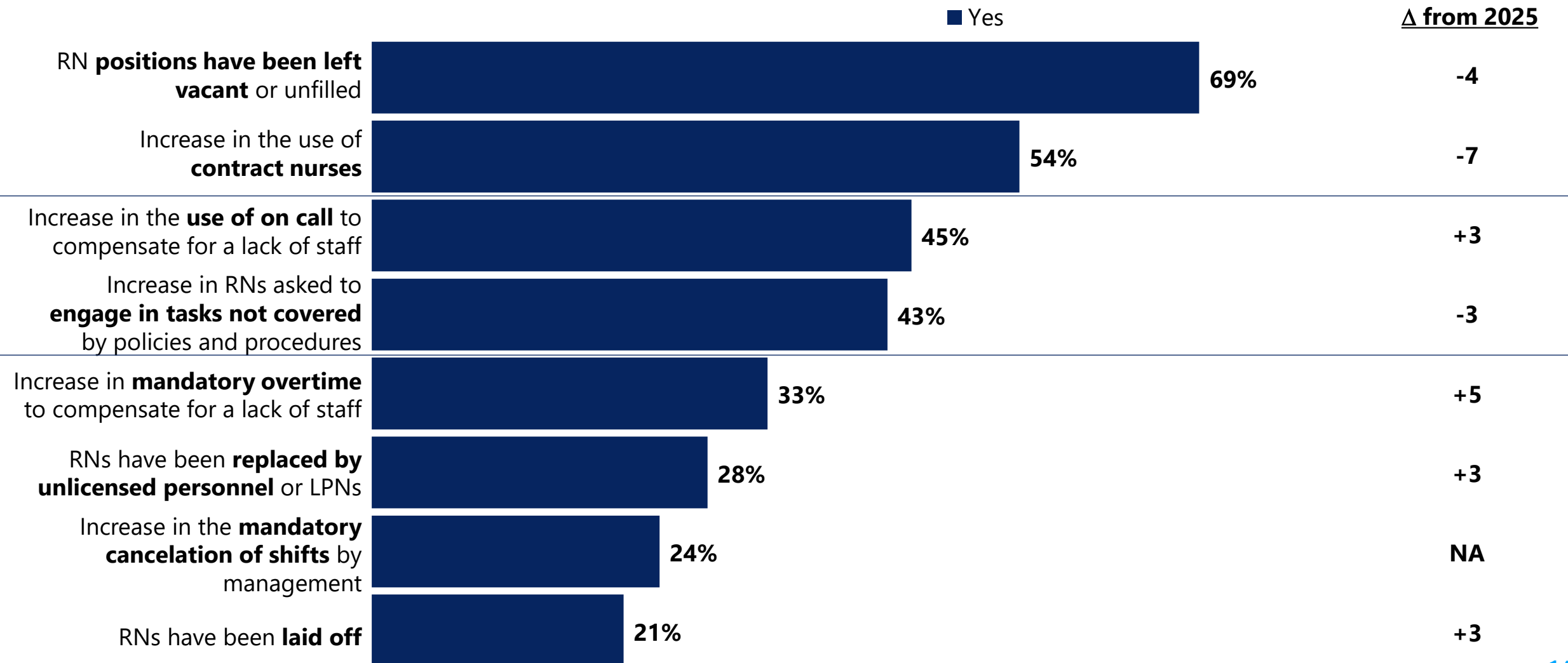
Q41. How often are you concerned that unsafe staffing conditions could jeopardize your nursing license?



RNs See Changes Being Made to Workplace



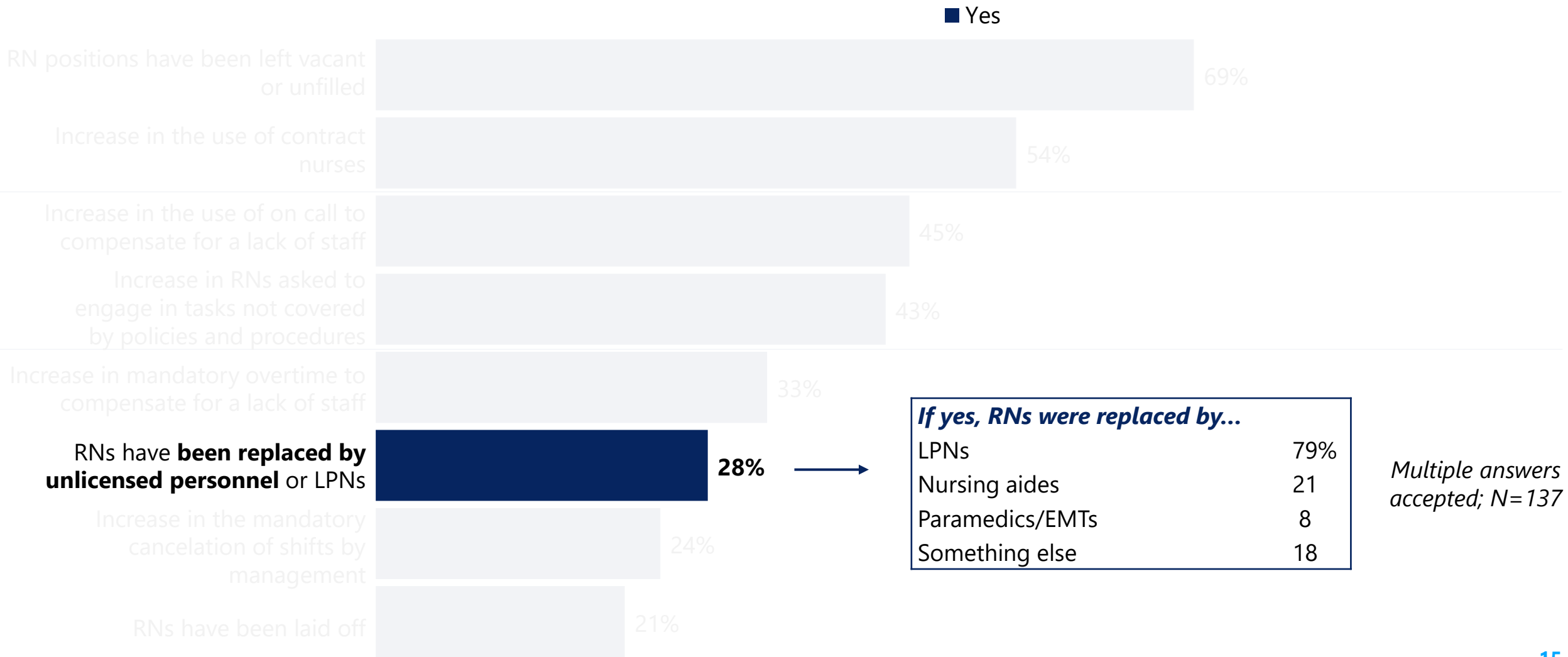
Q9-16. In the past two years or so, please indicate whether any of the following changes have been made where you work.





More RNs Being Replaced by LPNs

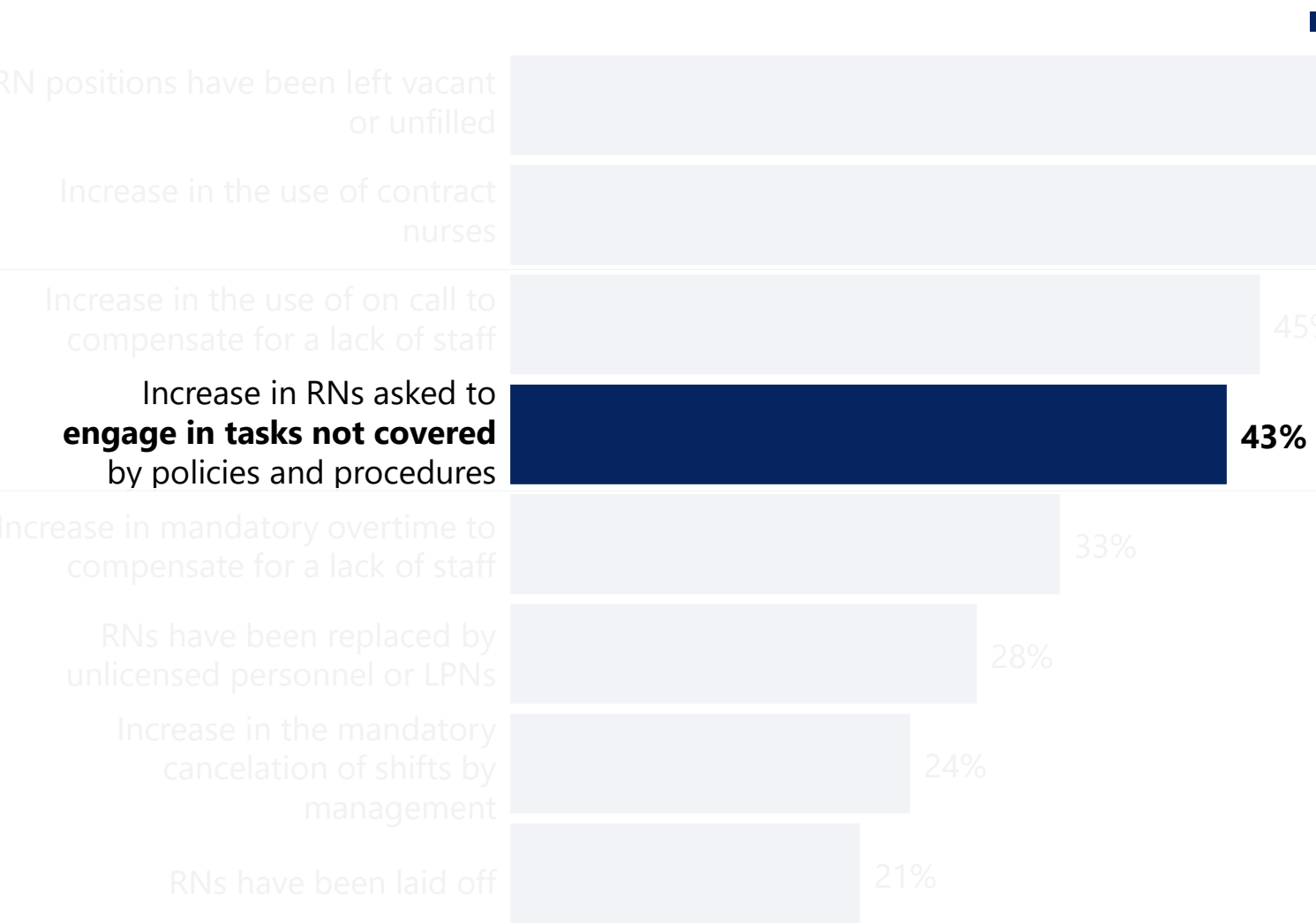
Q17. Which of the following have replaced RNs in your workplace? [IF YES TO Q9 – REPLACED BY UNLICENSED OR LPN] [N=137]



Specific Tasks RNs are Asked to Cover Outside of Policies



Q18. What specific tasks have RNs in your workplace been asked to engage in that are not covered by nursing policies or your institution's procedures? [OPEN-ENDED] [IF YES TO Q15 – ENGAGE IN TASKS NOT COVERED BY POLICIES] [N=207]



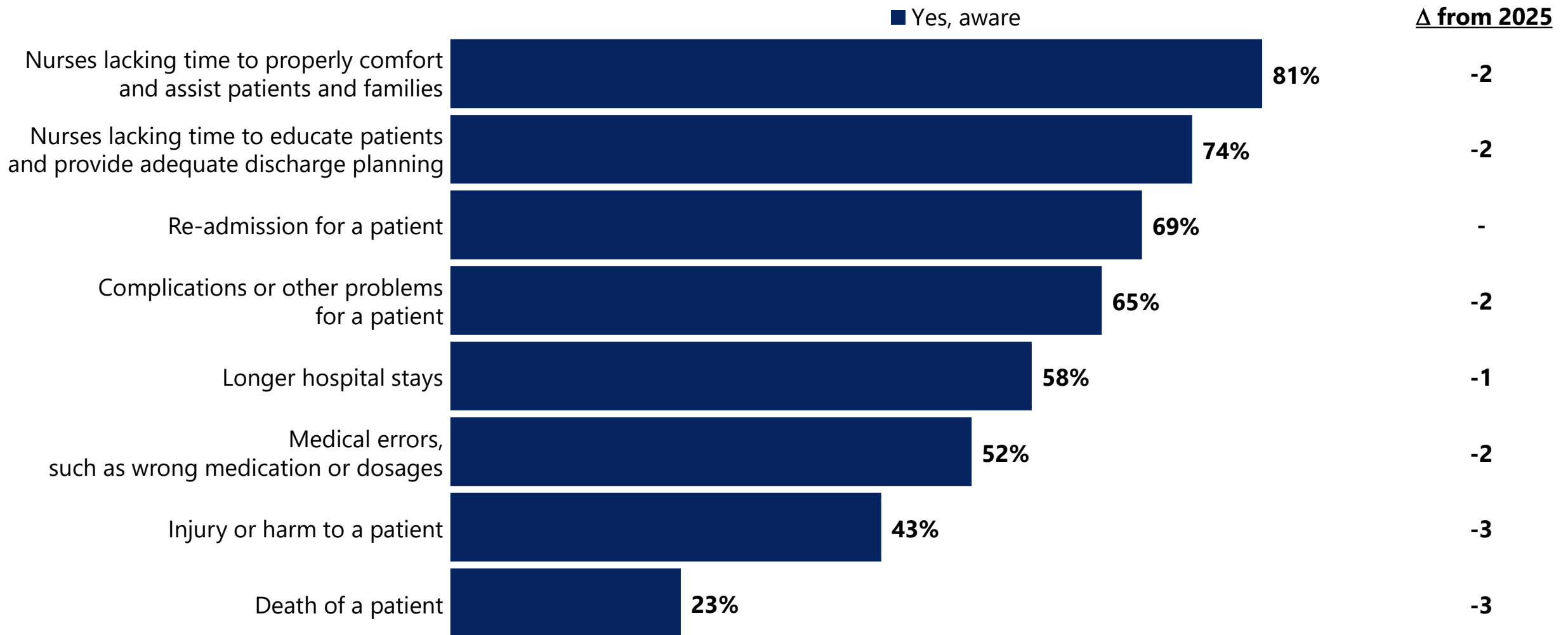
■ Yes

Specific Tasks Performed Outside of Policies	
[Among those asked to engage in tasks; N=207]	
Procedures / Clinical tasks outside nursing scope or without proper training	15%
Secretarial / Clerical / Administrative tasks	15
Housekeeping / Cleaning / Environmental services duties	12
CNA / PCA / Aide duties	8
Caring for patients beyond safe ratios / Acuity outside scope	7
Staffing / Scheduling / Management / Supervisory duties	6
Covering other clinical roles	6
Social work / Case management / Care coordination	4

RNs See Many Negative Outcomes from Understaffing



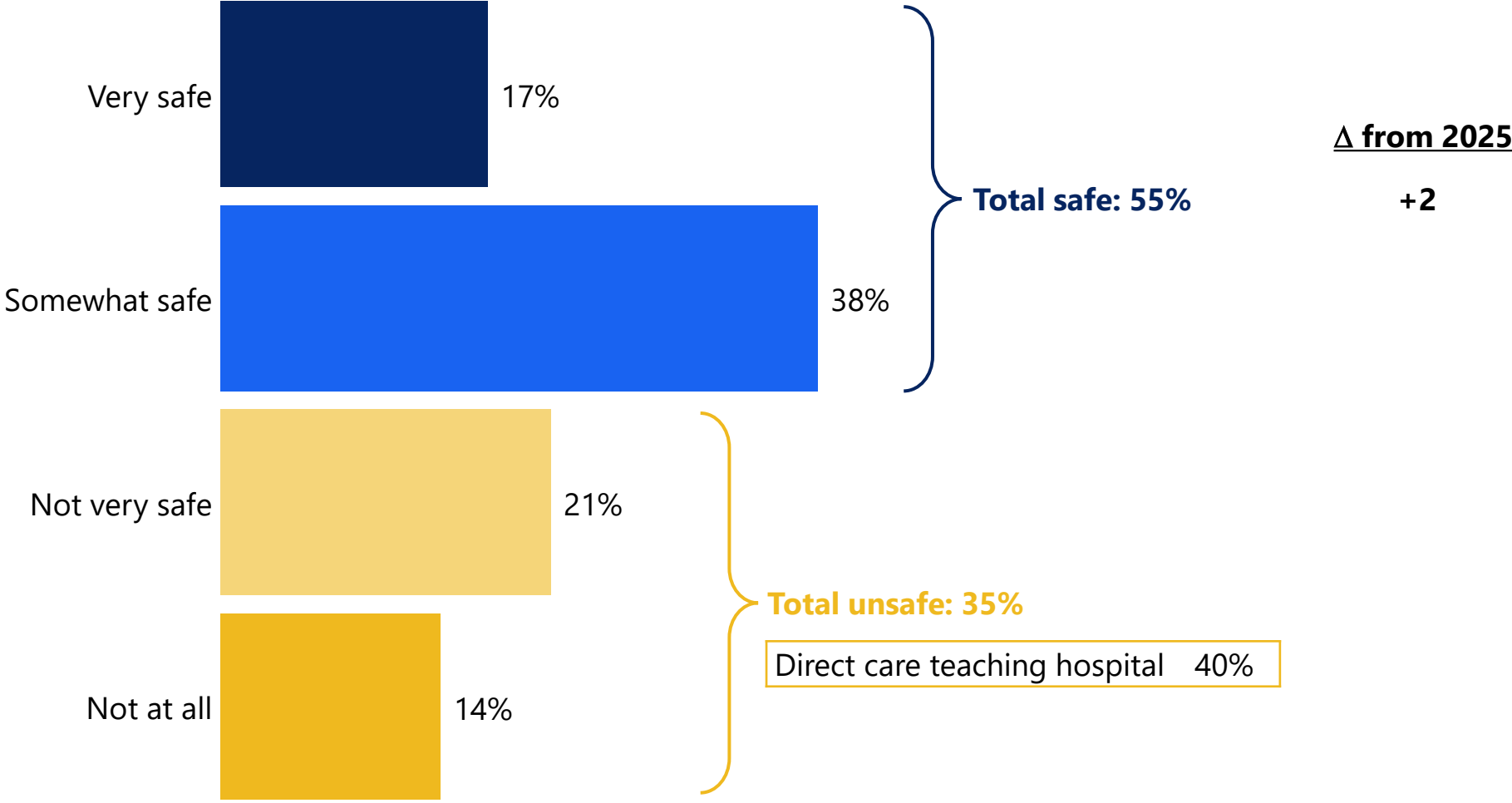
Q33-40. Next, you'll see some negative outcomes that could result from RNs having to care for too many patients at one time. For each one, please indicate if you are aware of any instances where an RN's patient load has led to that outcome.



Over a Third Would Not Feel Safe Admitting Family



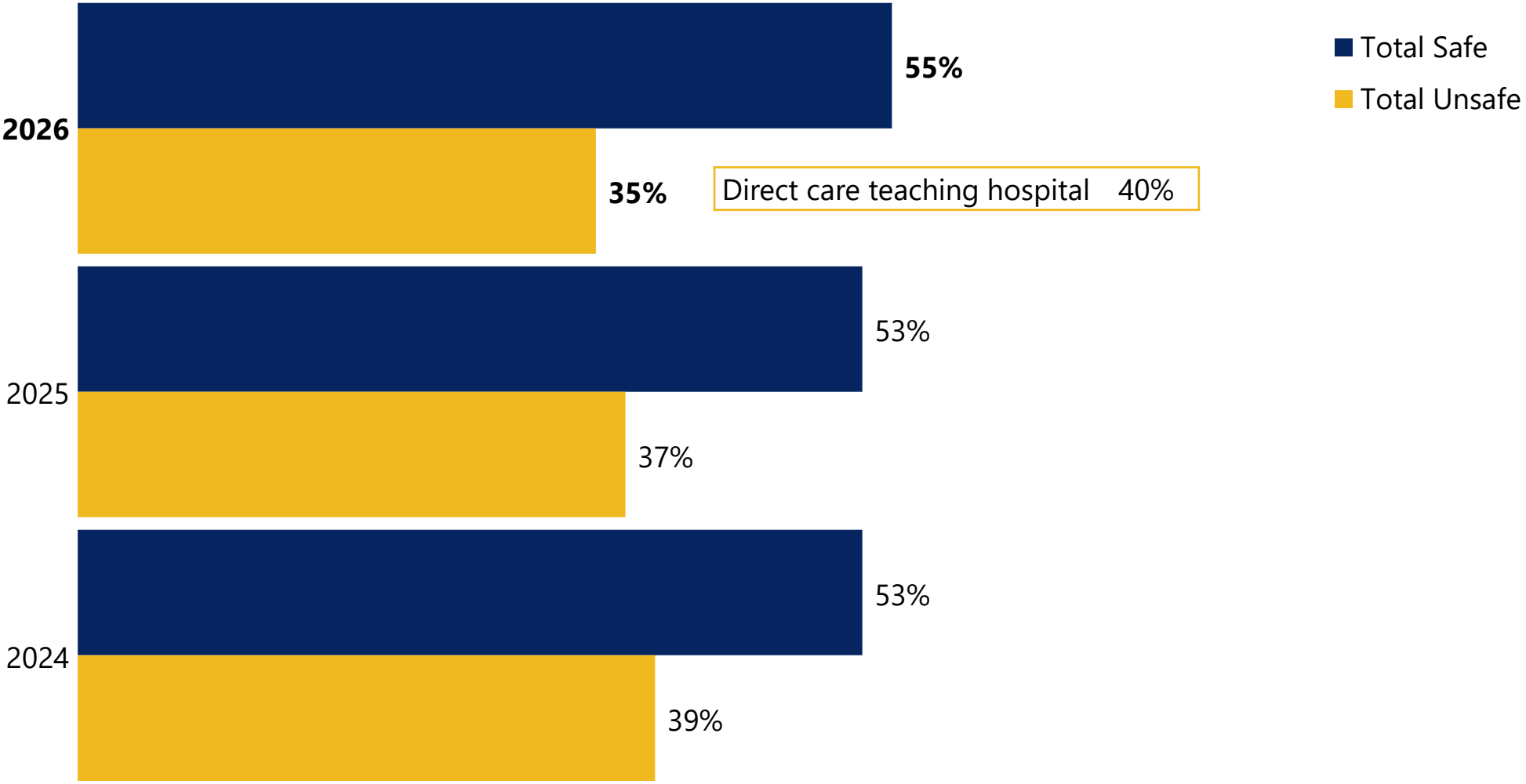
Q42. Given current conditions at your [hospital / organization], how safe would you feel admitting a family member to the unit on which you work?



Over a Third Would Not Feel Safe Admitting Family



Q42. Given current conditions at your [hospital / organization], how safe would you feel admitting a family member to the unit on which you work?



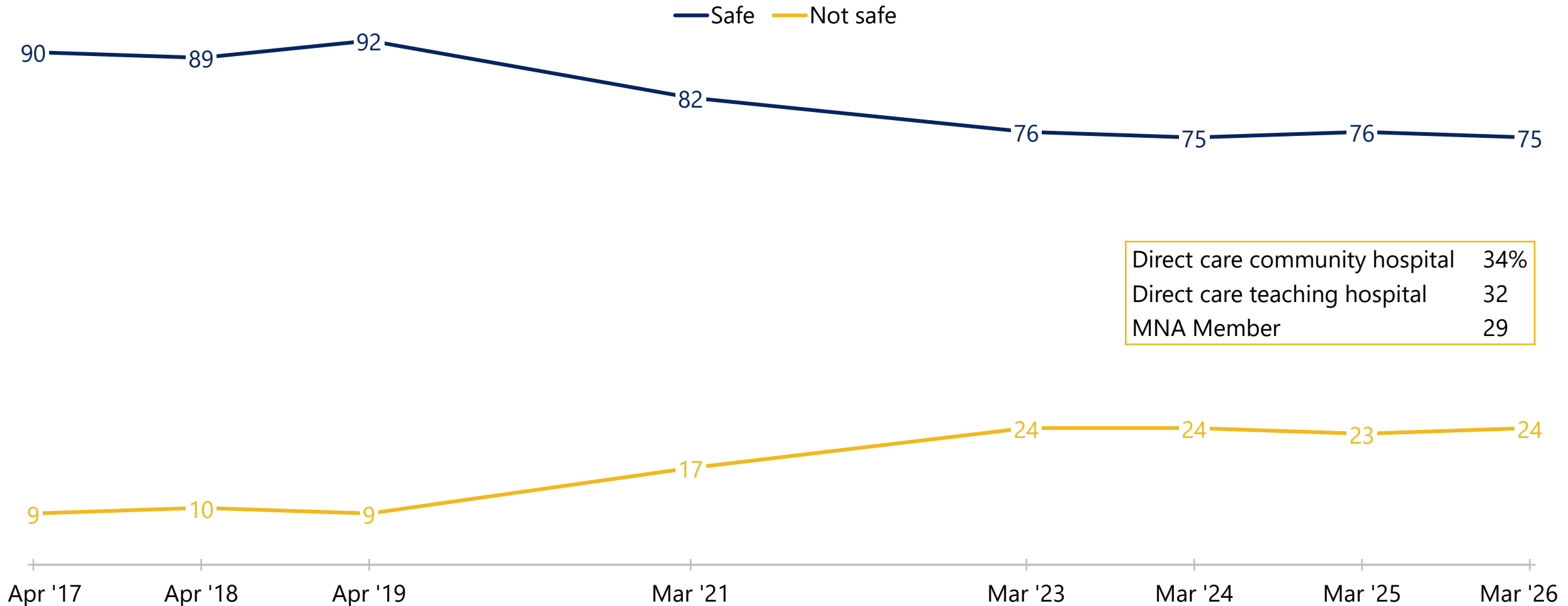
Workplace Violence





A Quarter Do Not Feel Safe in Their Workplace

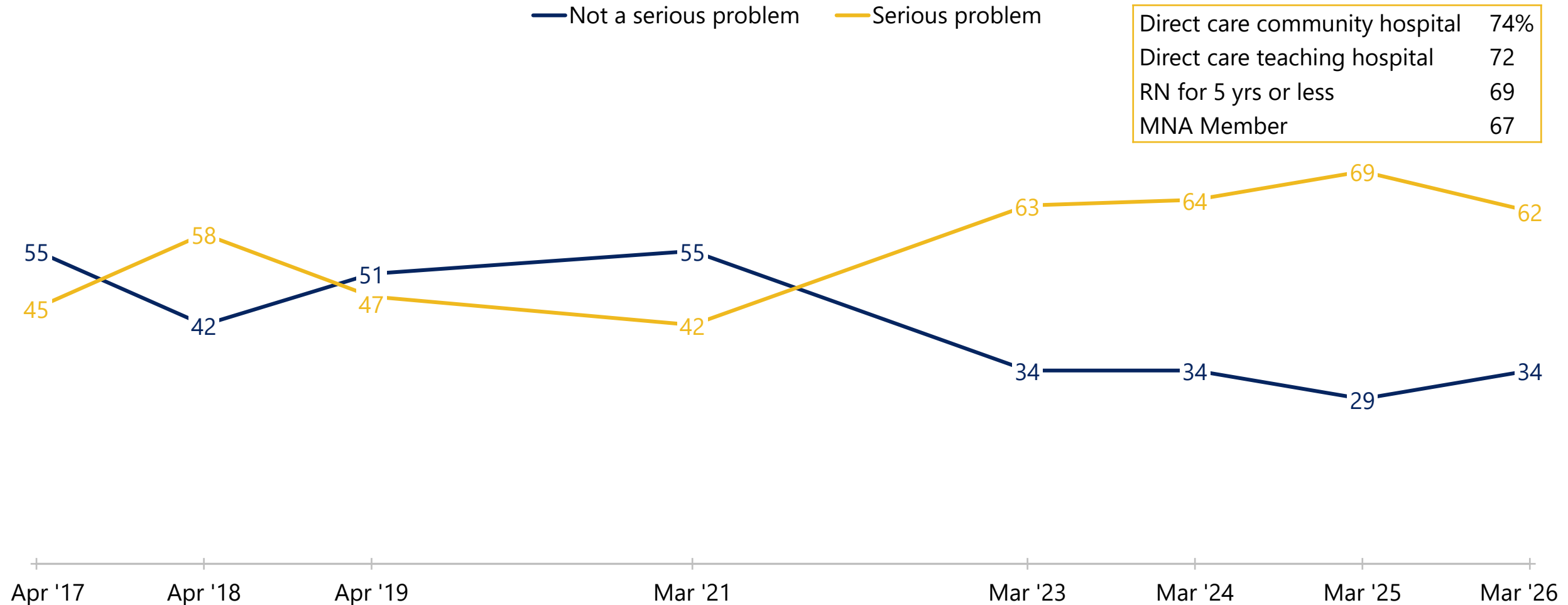
Q51. Overall, how safe do you feel in your workplace?



Workplace Violence & Abuse Remains Serious Problem



Q52. 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?

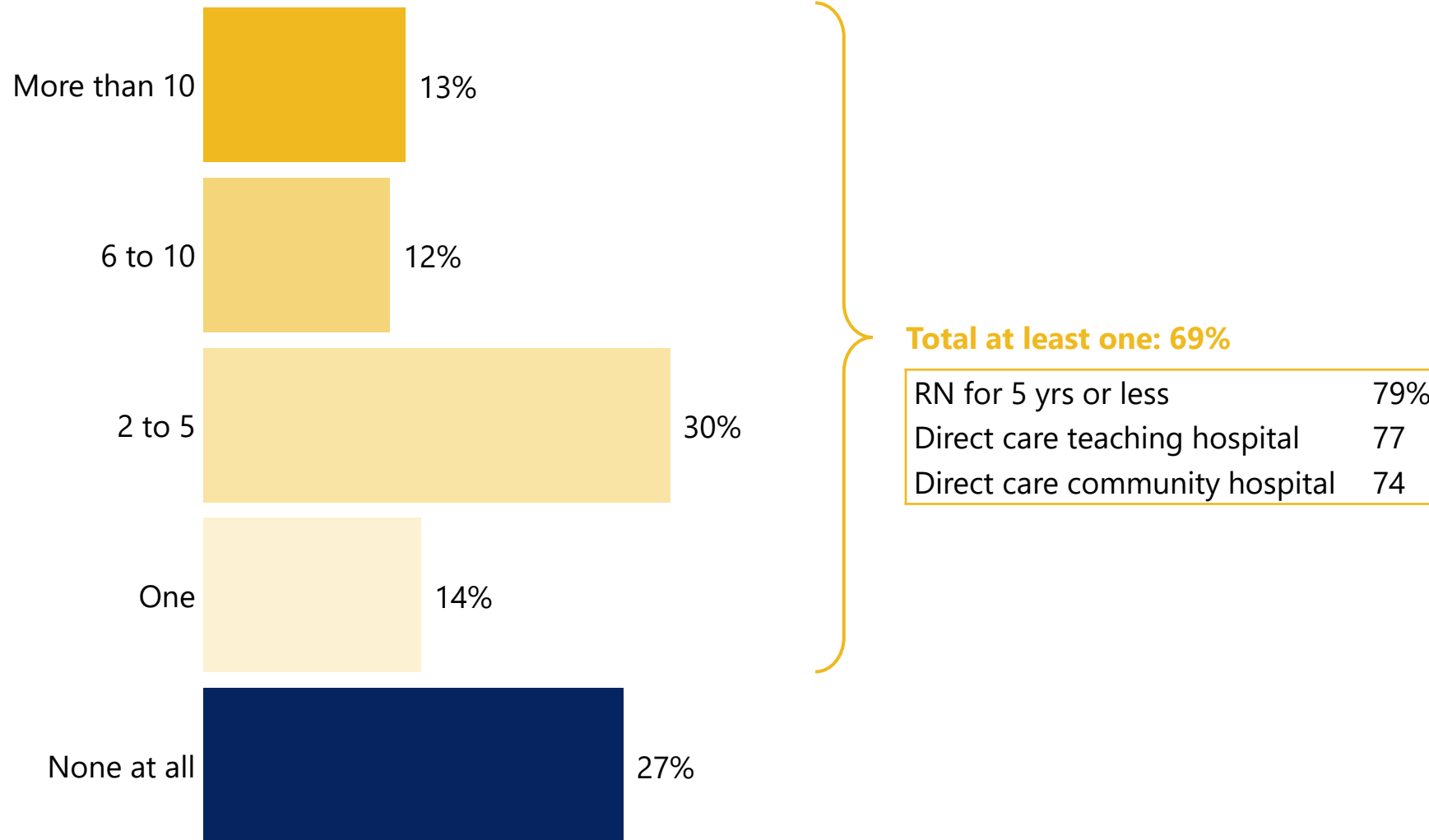


Direct care community hospital	74%
Direct care teaching hospital	72
RN for 5 yrs or less	69
MNA Member	67

Majority Experience Workplace Violence or Abuse



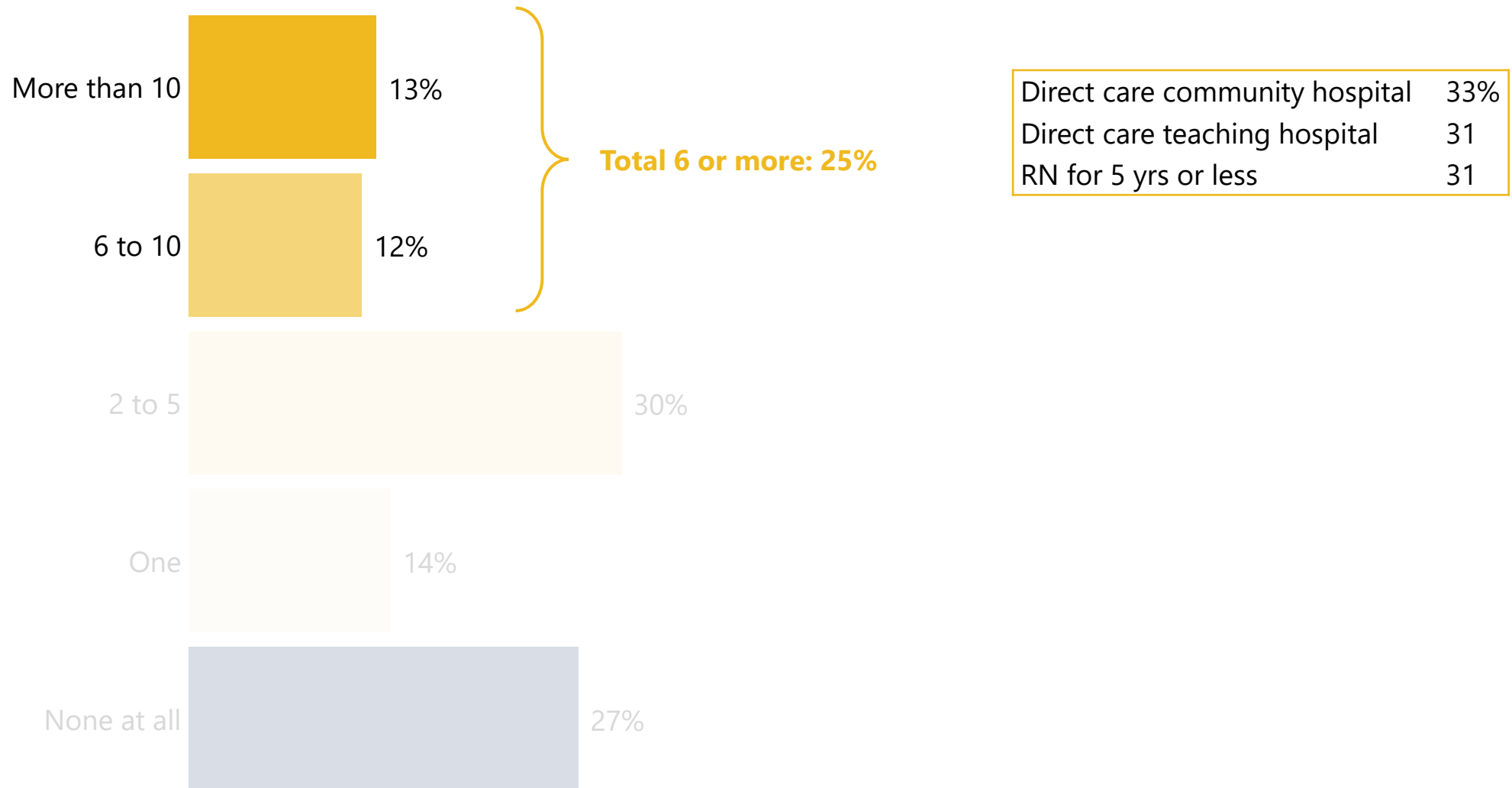
Q53. How many instances of workplace violence or abuse did you personally encounter in the past two years?



1 in 4 RNs Experience High Frequency Violence



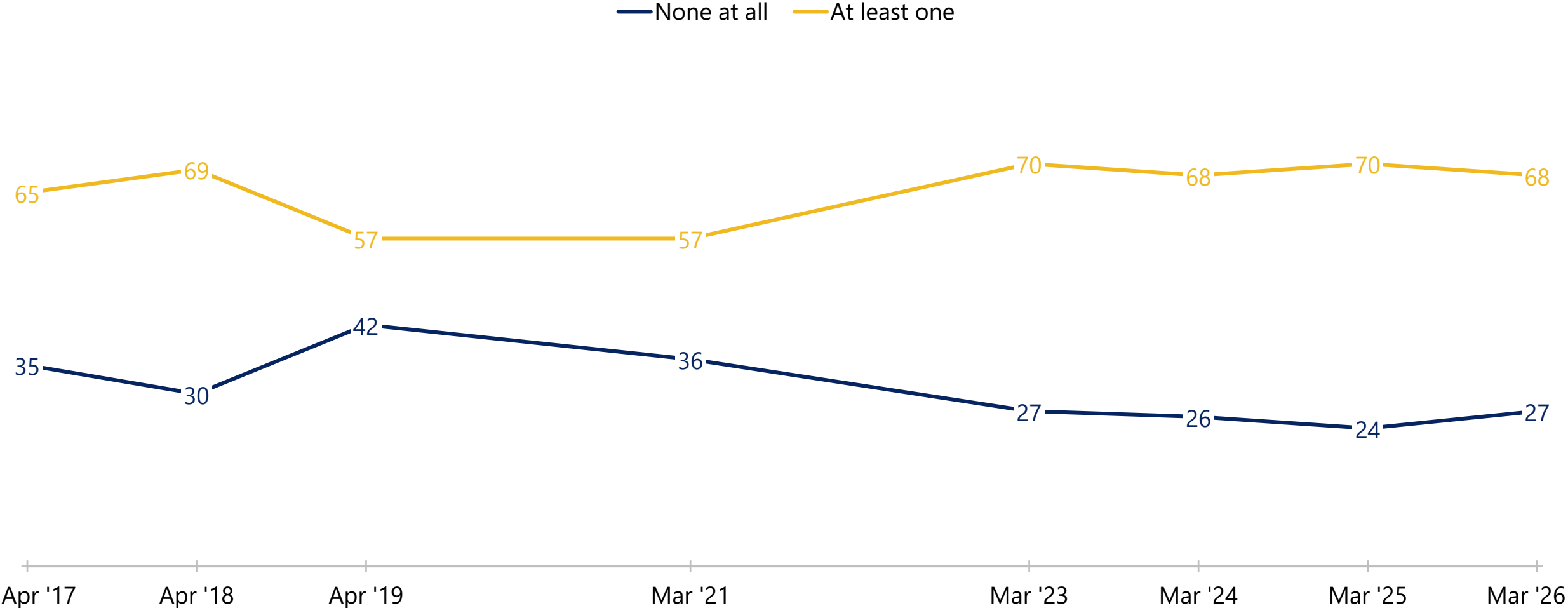
Q53. How many instances of workplace violence or abuse did you personally encounter in the past two years?



Personal Experiences of Violence/Abuse Remains High



Q53. How many instances of workplace violence or abuse did you personally encounter in the past two years?

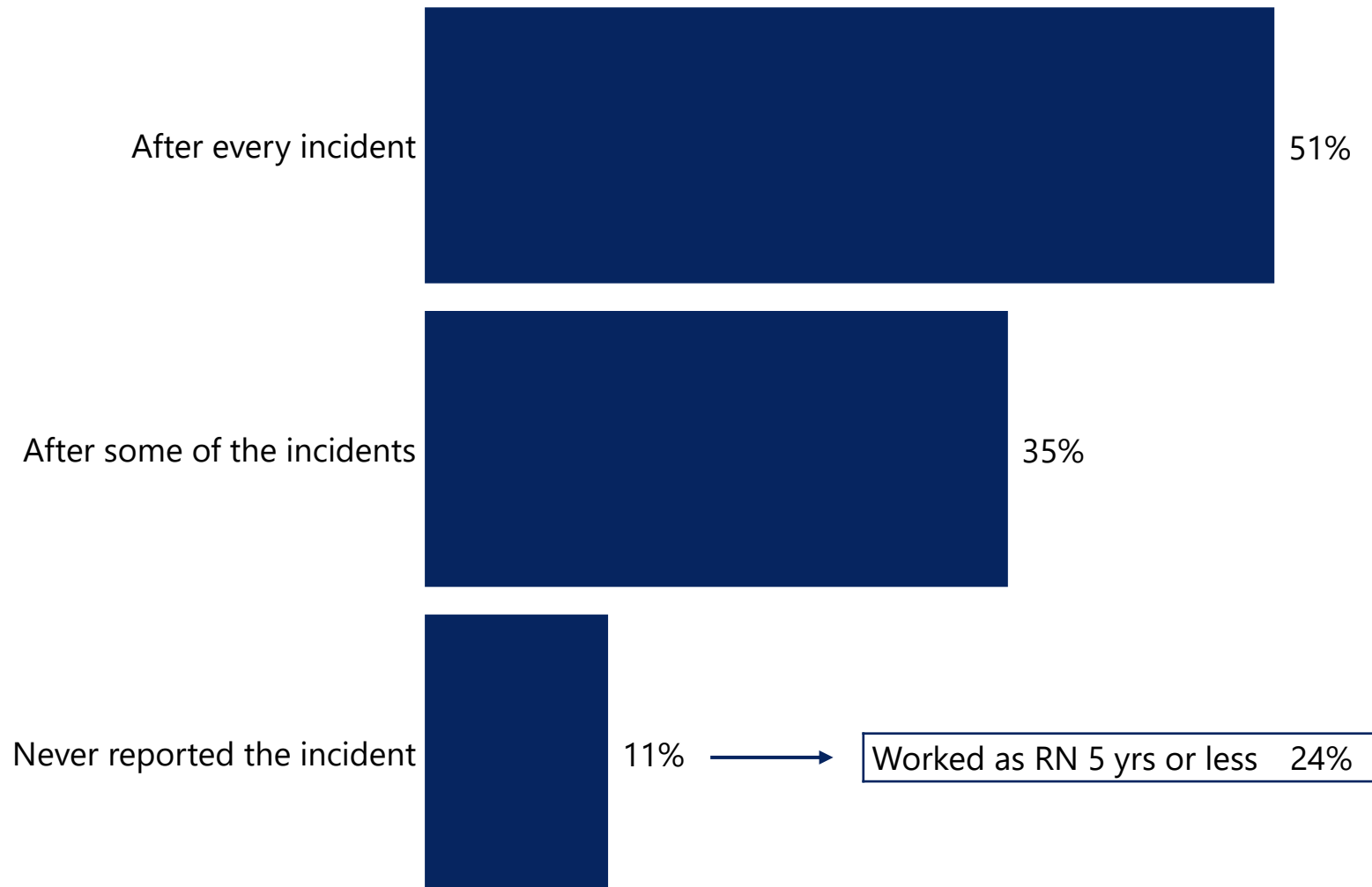


Most Who Encounter Violence or Abuse Report It



Q54. After you experienced workplace violence or abuse, how often did you report the incident to your management?

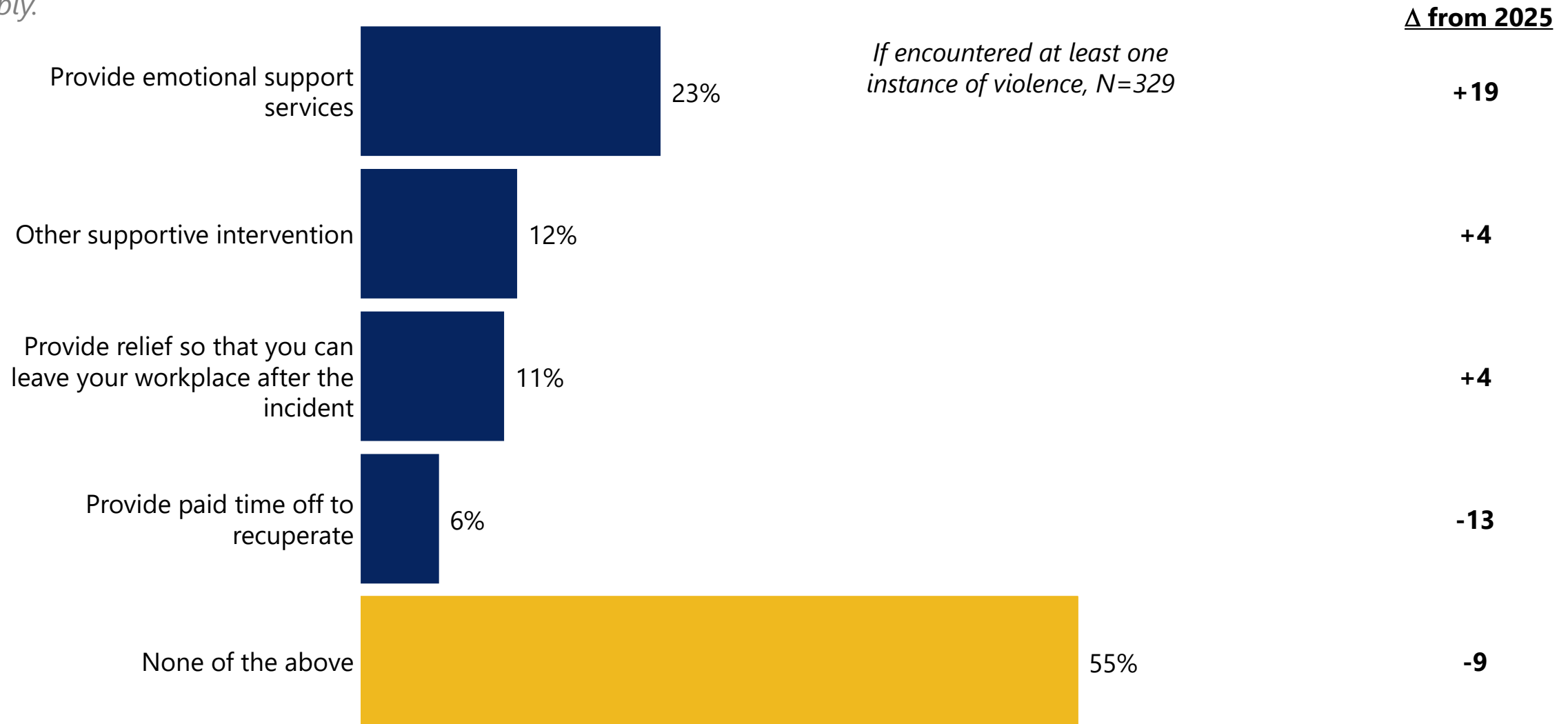
If encountered at least one instance of violence, N=329



Minimal Support for those Experiencing Violence/Abuse



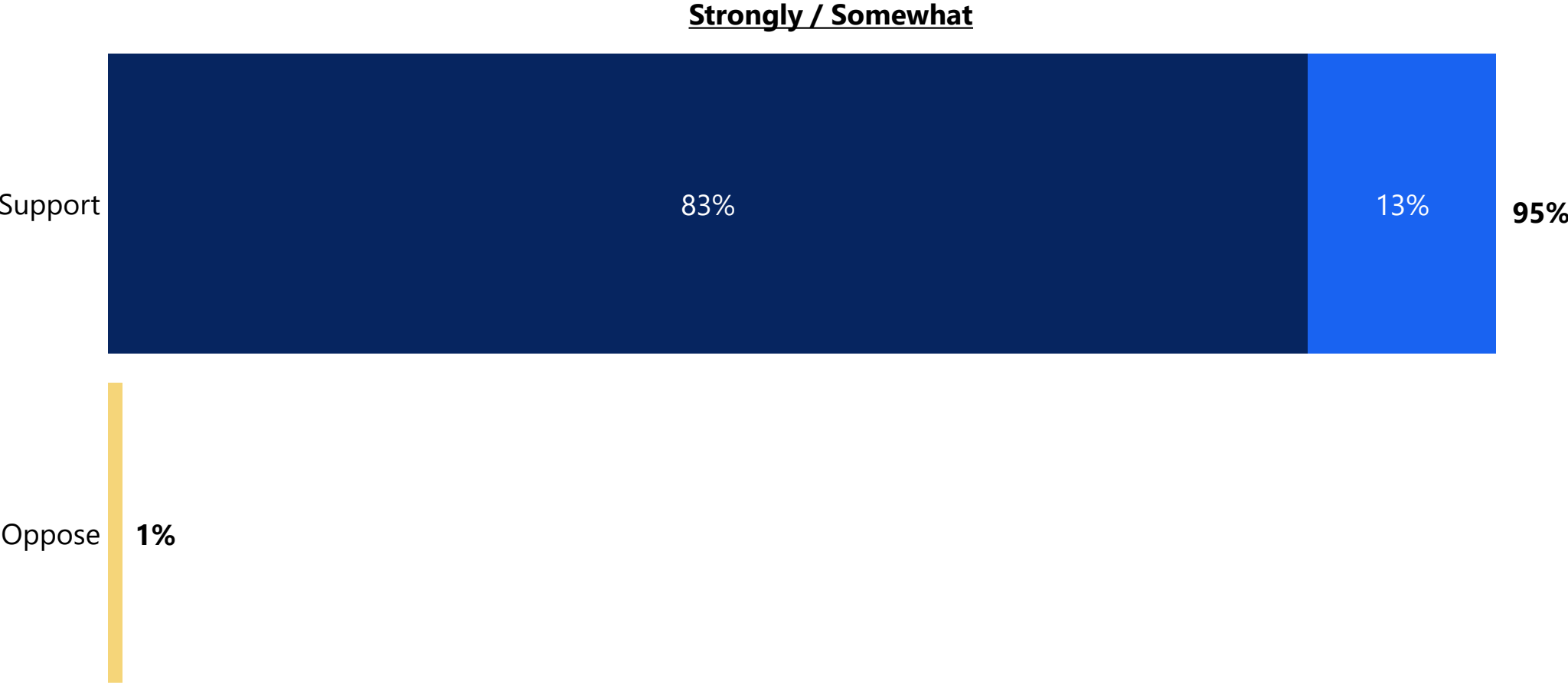
Q55. After you encountered workplace violence or abuse, did your employer take any of the following actions? Please select all that apply.



Immense Support for Workplace Violence Legislation



Q56. The state legislature is considering legislation to help prevent healthcare workplace violence. It requires hospitals to have prevention training and reporting plans, increases penalties for assaulting healthcare workers, and provides paid leave for those injured by workplace violence. Based on this description, do you support or oppose this legislation?



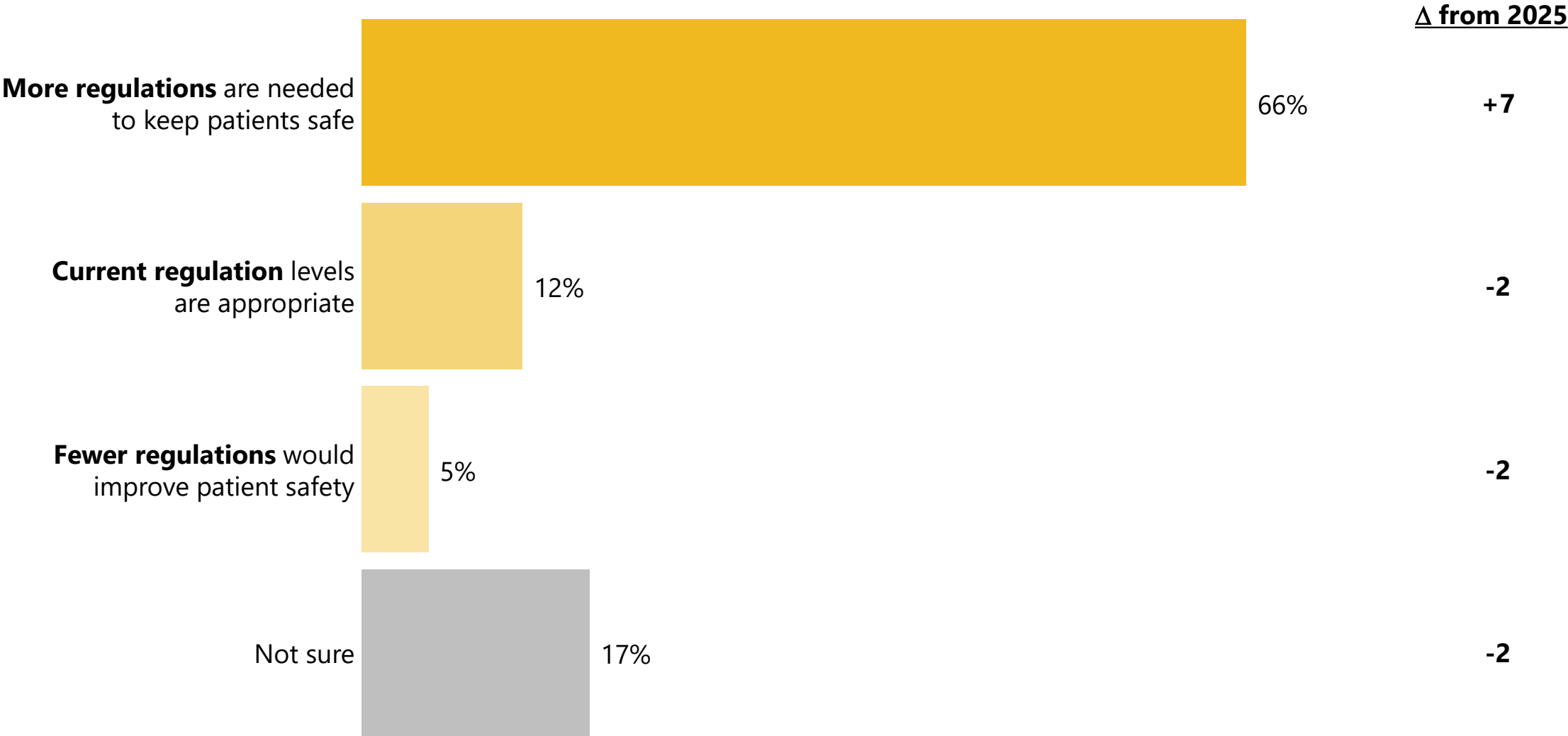
Regulation



Majority say More Hospital Regulations are Needed



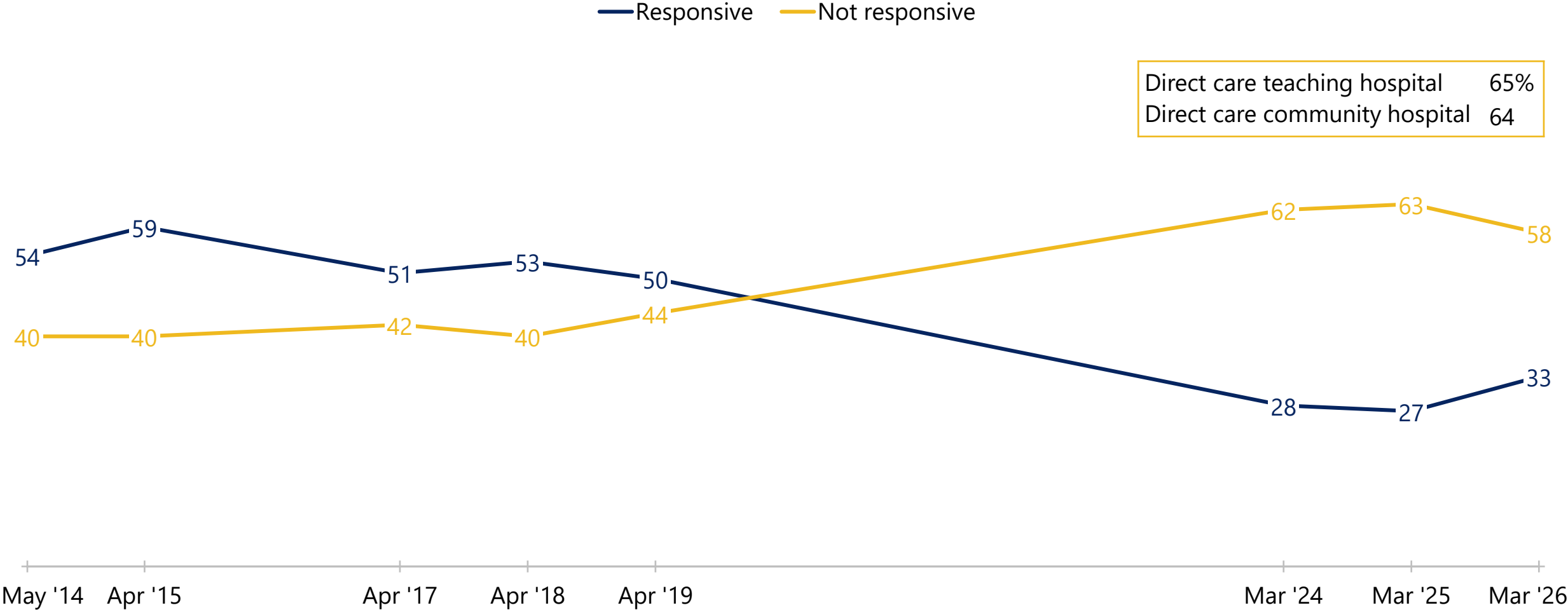
Q61. What's closer to how you feel about the current level of state regulation for hospitals?



RNs Say Administrators are Not Responsive to Feedback



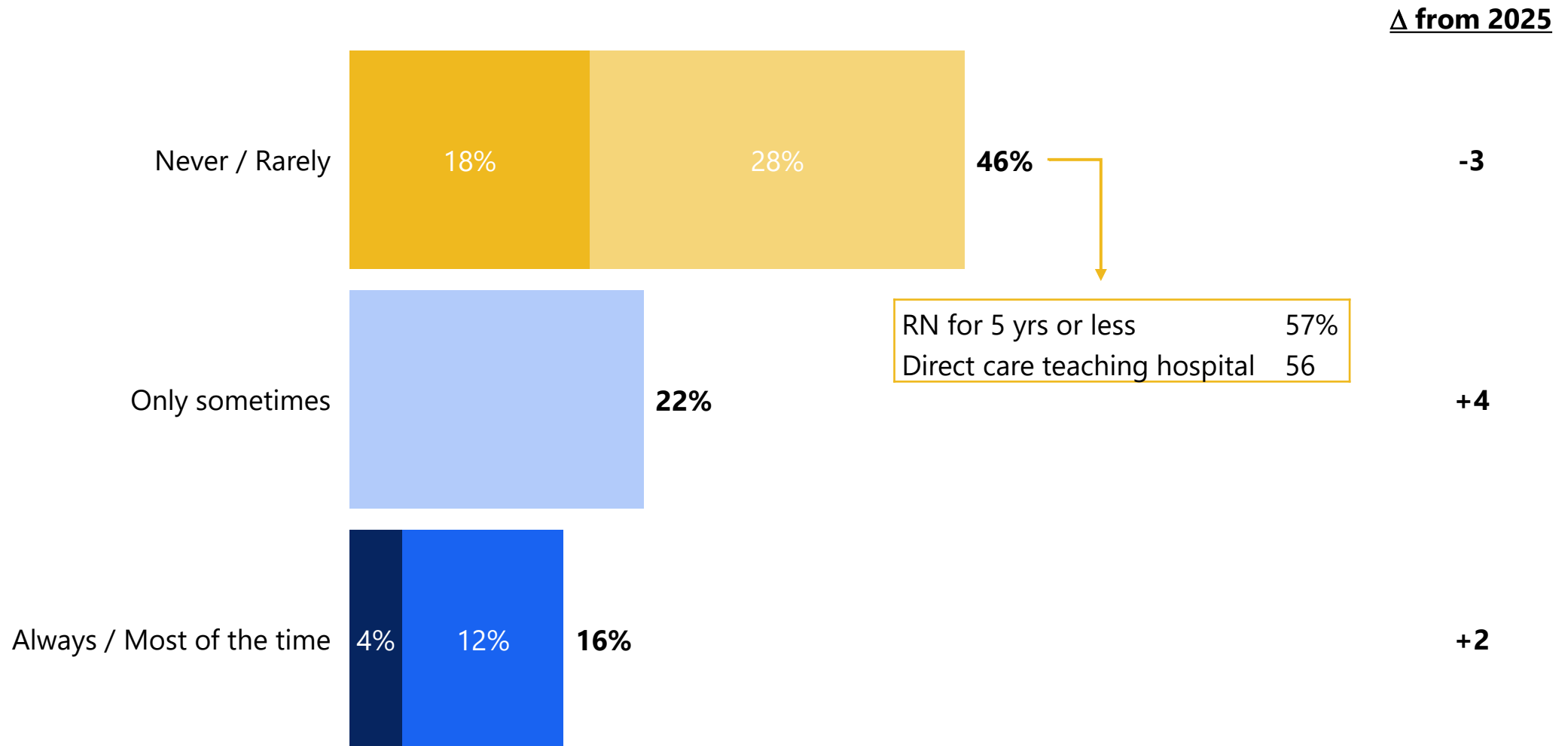
Q62. In general, how responsive are administrators at your hospital to feedback and input from RNs regarding patient loads and nurse staffing levels? Are they:



Unsafe Assignments Are Usually Not Adjusted



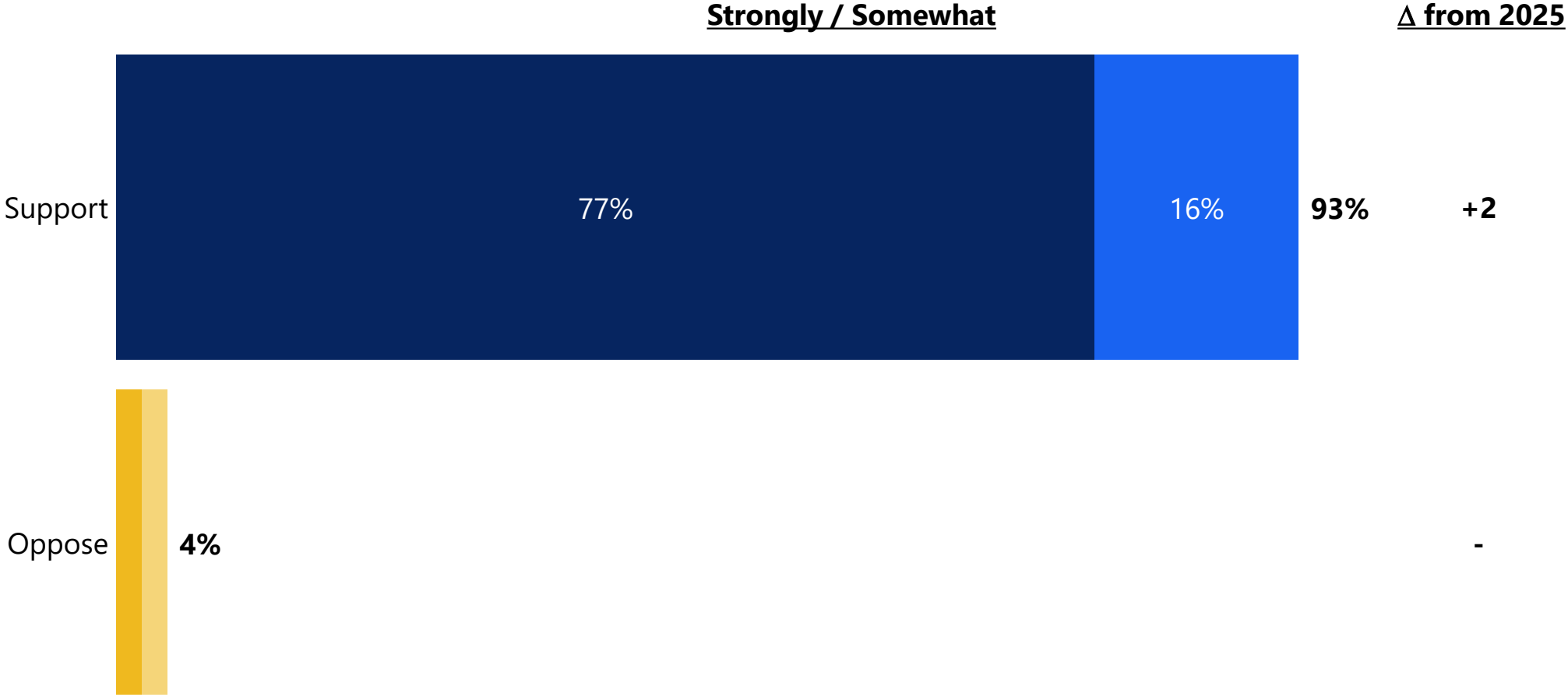
Q63. If and when you have what you believe is an unsafe patient assignment based on the number of patients you care for, or the acuity level, how often does your management adjust your patient assignment to meet your patients' needs?



Strong Support For Safe Staffing Bill



Q64. As you may know, the Massachusetts Legislature is considering a bill that would allow the Massachusetts Nurses Association, along with the Departments of Public Health and Mental Health, 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?



Consistent Increase in Support for Safe Staffing Bill



Q64. As you may know, the Massachusetts Legislature is considering a bill that would allow the Massachusetts Nurses Association, along with the Departments of Public Health and Mental Health, 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?



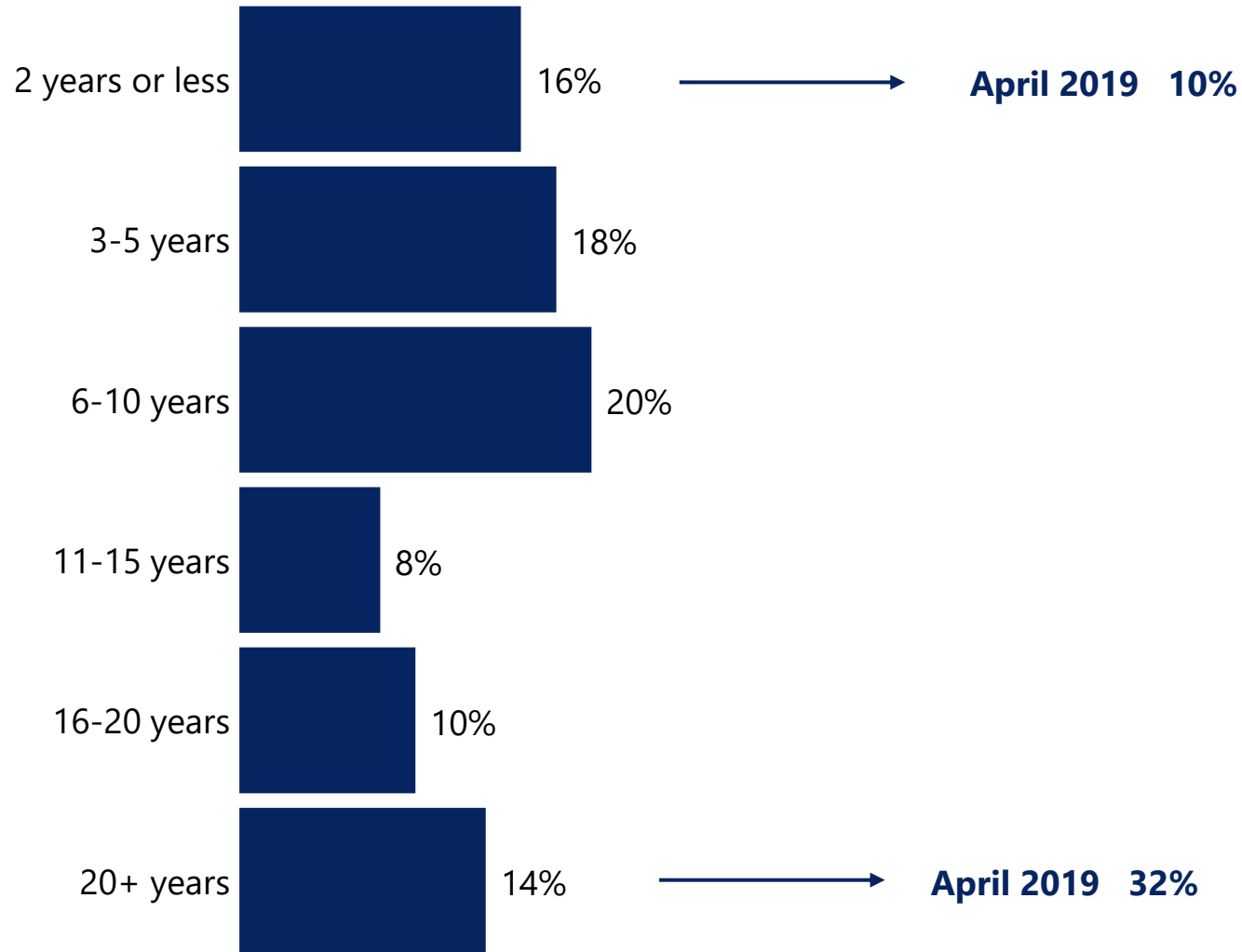
Retention



Just Under A Fifth of RNs Plan to Leave in 2 Years or Less



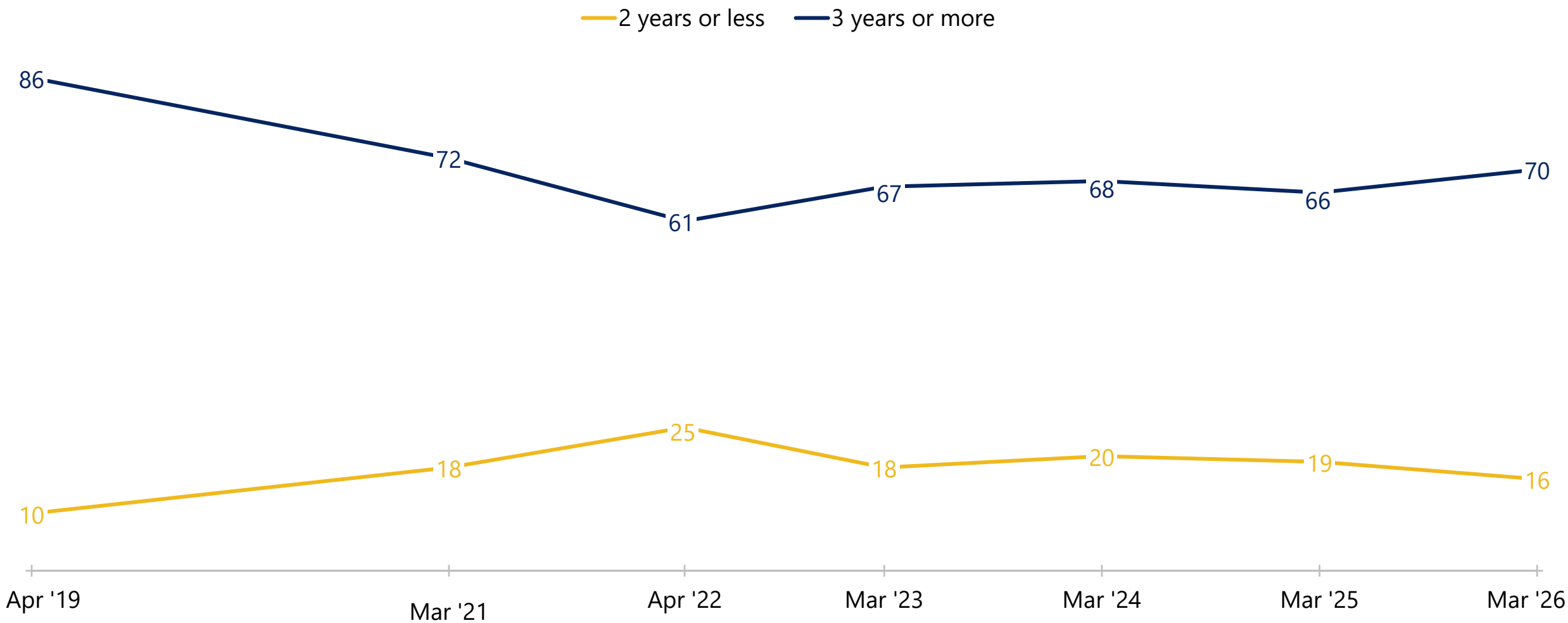
Q44. How many years do you think you will continue working as a nurse?



RN Planned Tenure Consistent with Last Few Years



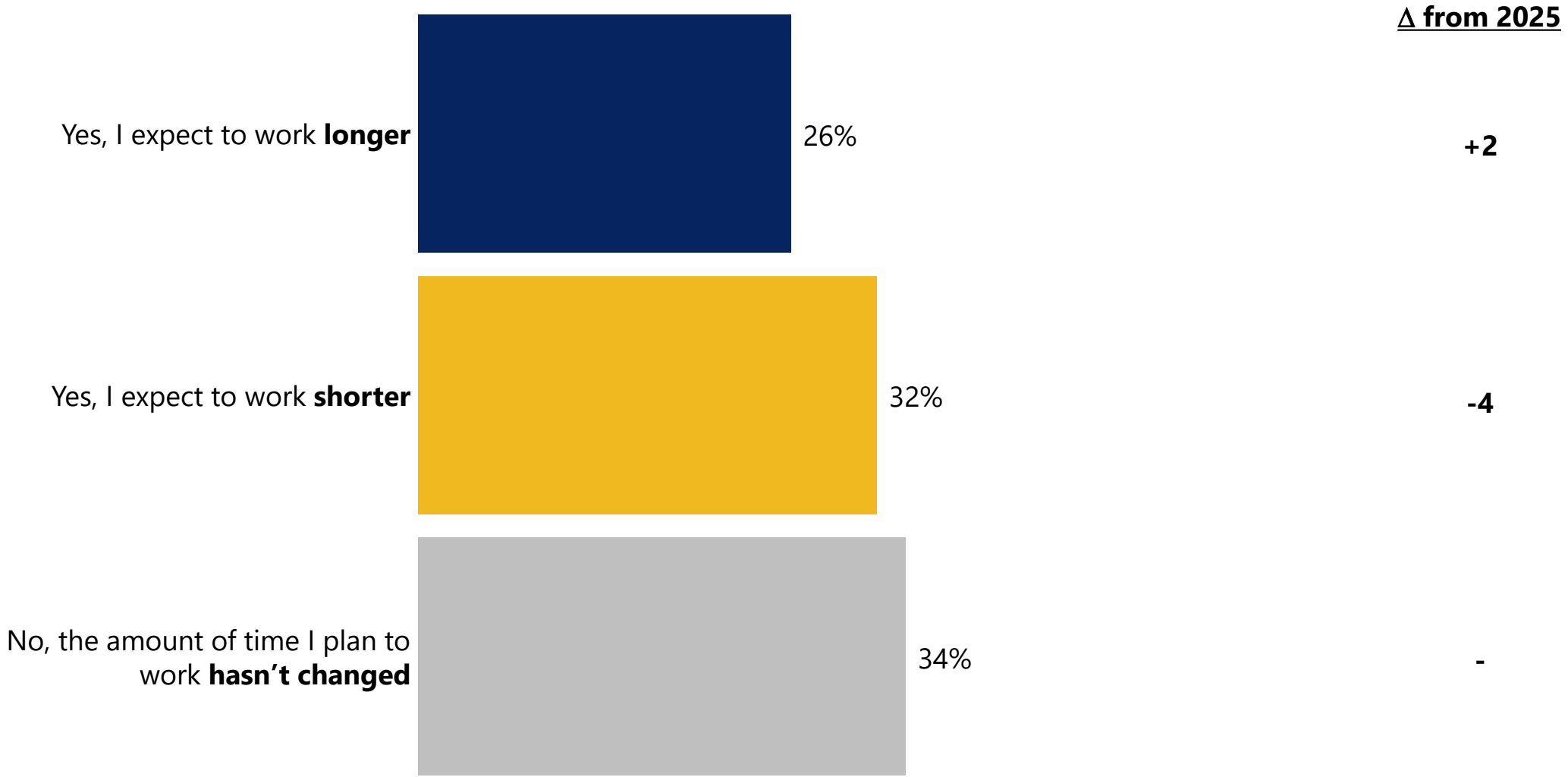
Q44. How many years do you think you will continue working as a nurse?



Over a Third Say They Plan to Work for Less Time



Q45. Has the number of years you expect to work as a nurse changed since you first started your nursing career?



Age / Burnout / Poor Conditions Top Reasons for Leaving



Q47. What is the main reason you are leaving nursing?

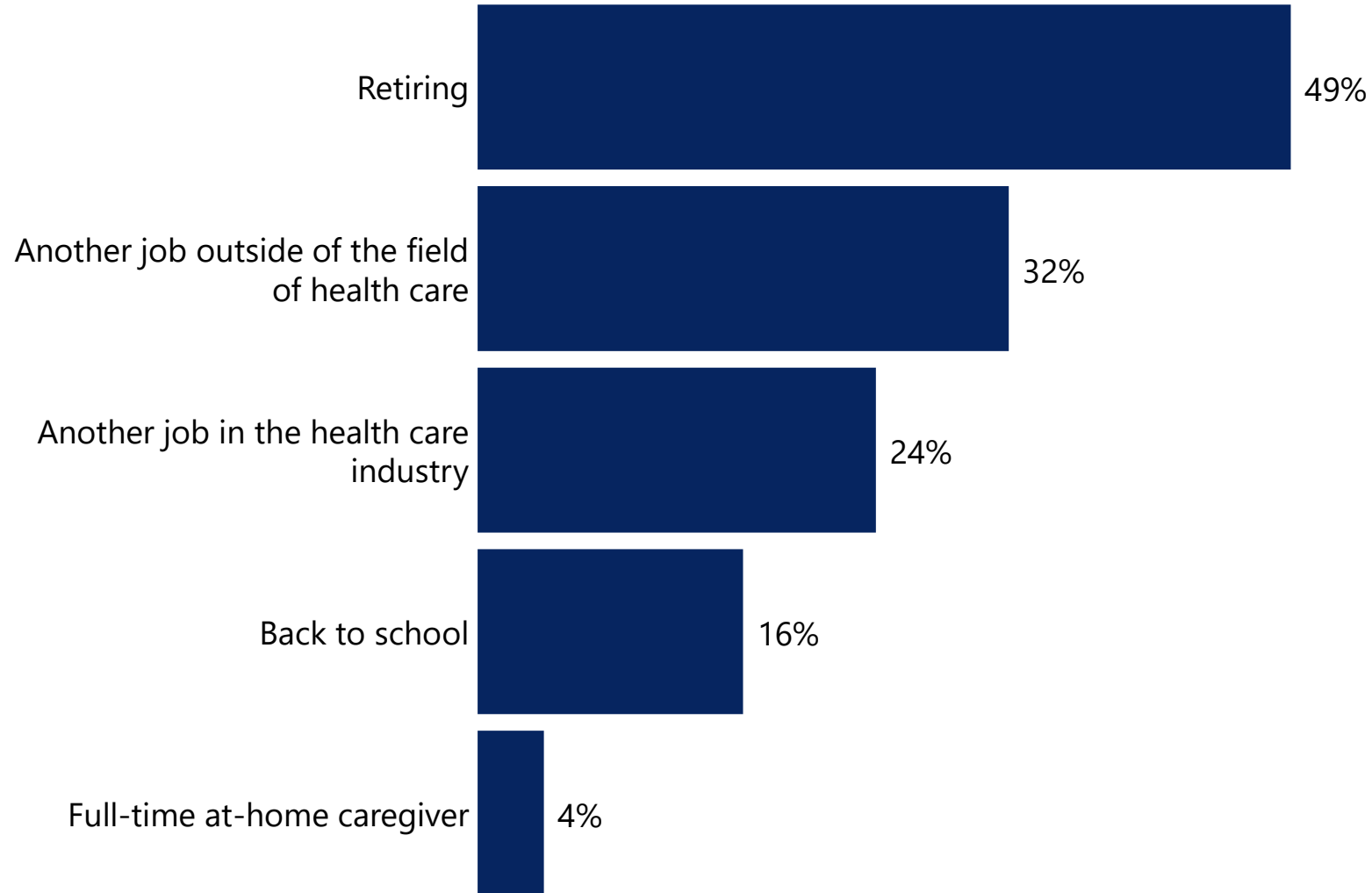
Main Reason Leaving Nursing	
Age / Retiring	35%
Burnout / Exhaustion / Stress	26
Poor working conditions	15
Prevented from providing quality care	15
Overworked / Understaffed	12
Healthcare has changed	9
Lack of support from employer	9
Lack of pay	8
Rude patients / Mistreated by patients	4

Among those leaving nursing in two years or less, N=78

A Third Will Find Job Outside of Healthcare



Q46. Which, if any, of the following describe your plans for after you leave the field of nursing? Please select all that apply.

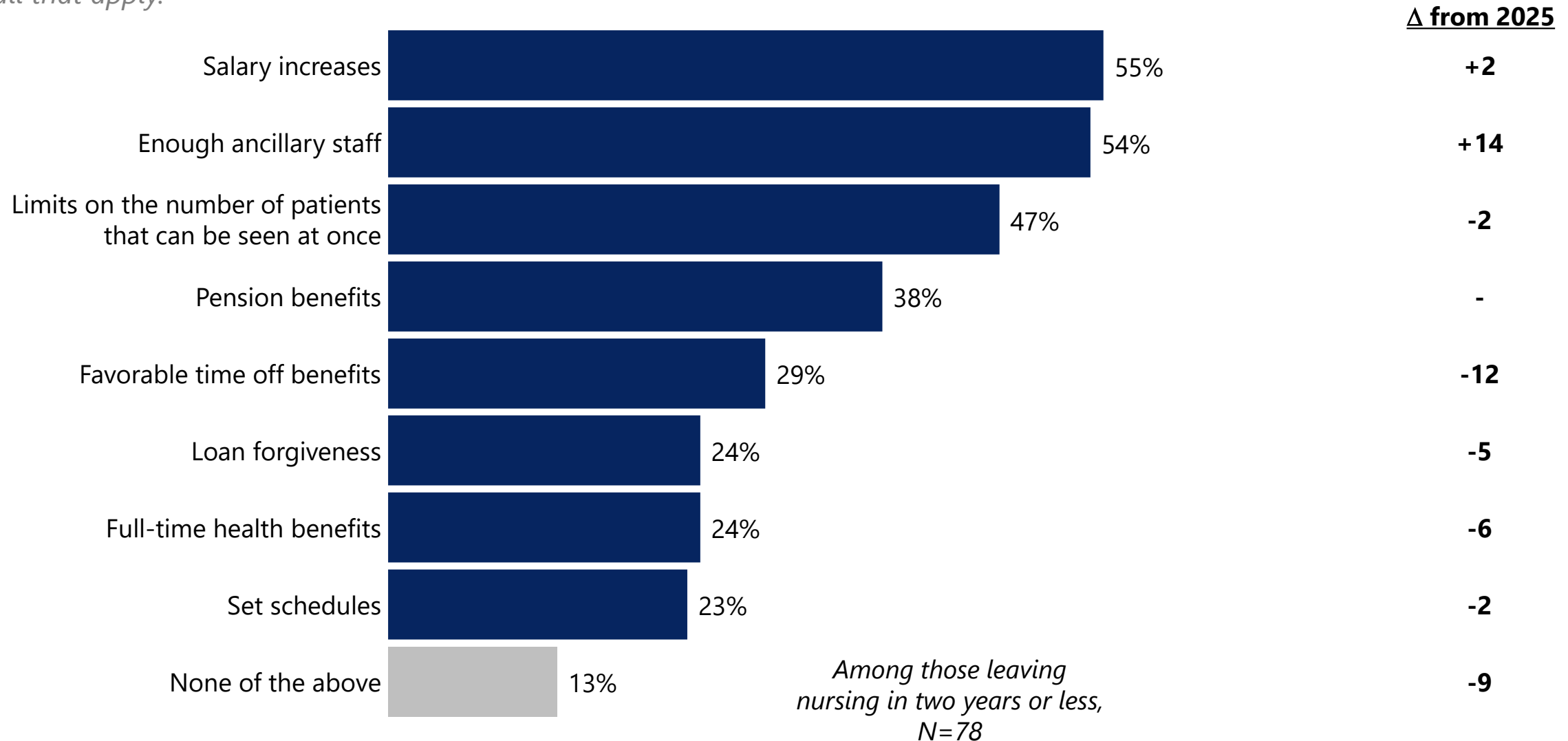


Among those leaving nursing in two years or less, N=78

Patient Limits, Staffing, and Raises Top Benefits to Keep RNs



Q48. If your employer offered the following benefits, which, if any, would persuade you to continue working as a nurse? Please select all that apply.



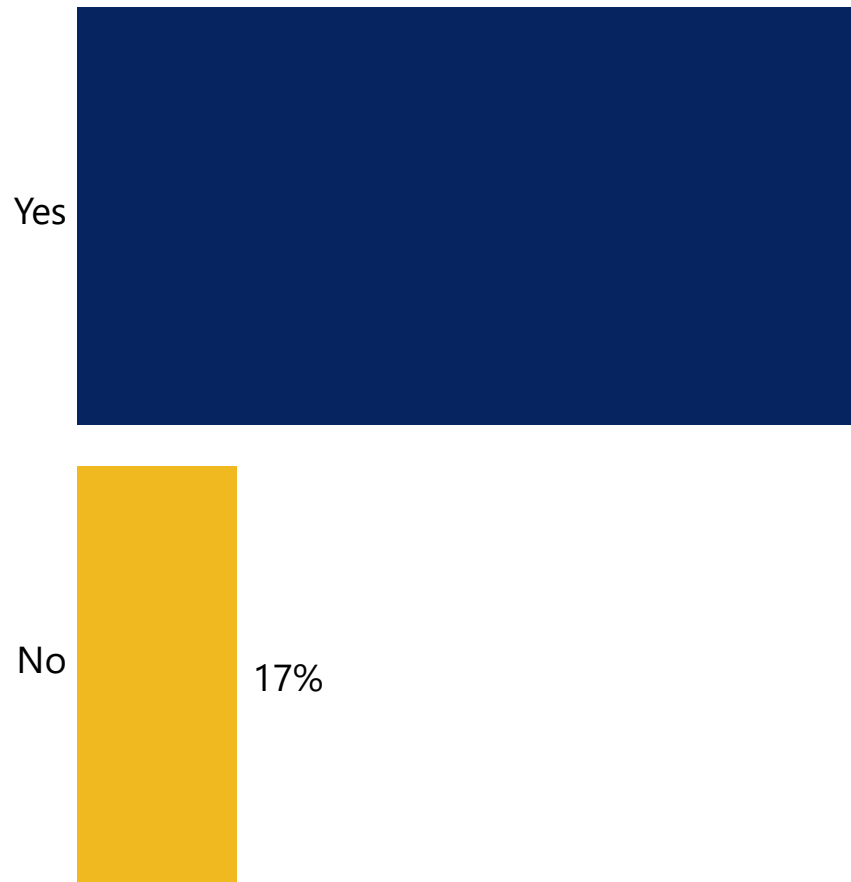
Understaffing Top Reason for Leaving Hospital Bedside



Q49. Have you ever worked in a hospital setting? AND Q50. What is the main reason you stopped working in a hospital?

Previous Work in a Hospital Setting

Among those not working in a hospital, N=176



83%

Reason for No Longer Working in Hospital

[Among those who used to work in a hospital; N=145]

Understaffing / Unsafe staffing / Nurse to patient ratios / Too many patients	24%
Burnout / Exhaustion / Stress	10
Work hours / Overtime / Schedule	10
Did not like it / Needed change	9
Shift to other personal care setting (home care, school nurse)	5
Lay-offs	5
Lack of pay / Benefits	5
Family obligations	5
Lack of respect / Workplace violence	4
Poor management	4
Workplace culture / Toxic culture	4

Union



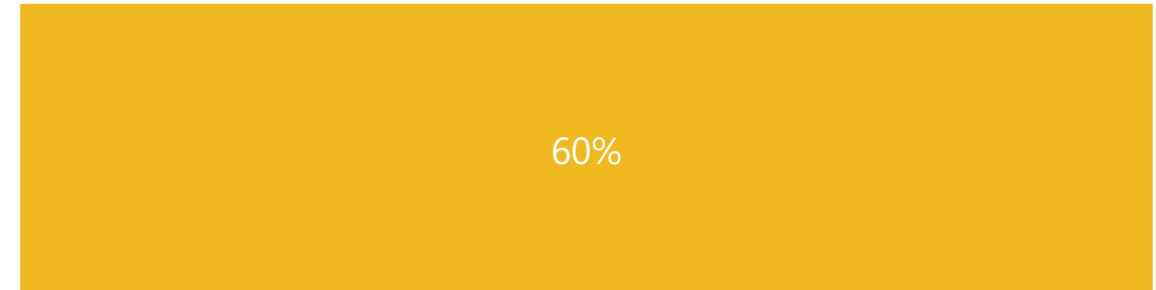
Dissatisfied with Level of Input & Don't Trust Employers



Q57. Overall, how satisfied are you with the influence you have in your [hospital's / organization's] decisions that affect your job and work life?

Satisfied / Dissatisfied

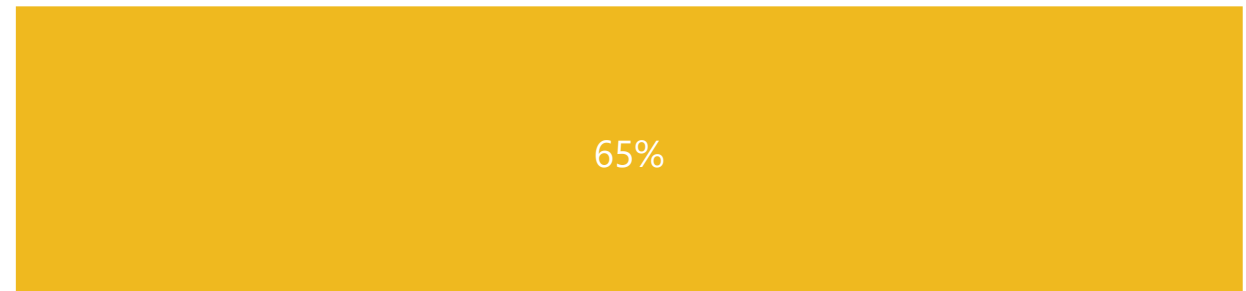
Satisfaction with influence in workplace's decisions that affect job and work life



Q58. In general, how much do you trust your [hospital / organization] to keep its promises to you and other employees?

Trust / Don't Trust

Trust workplace to keep its promises

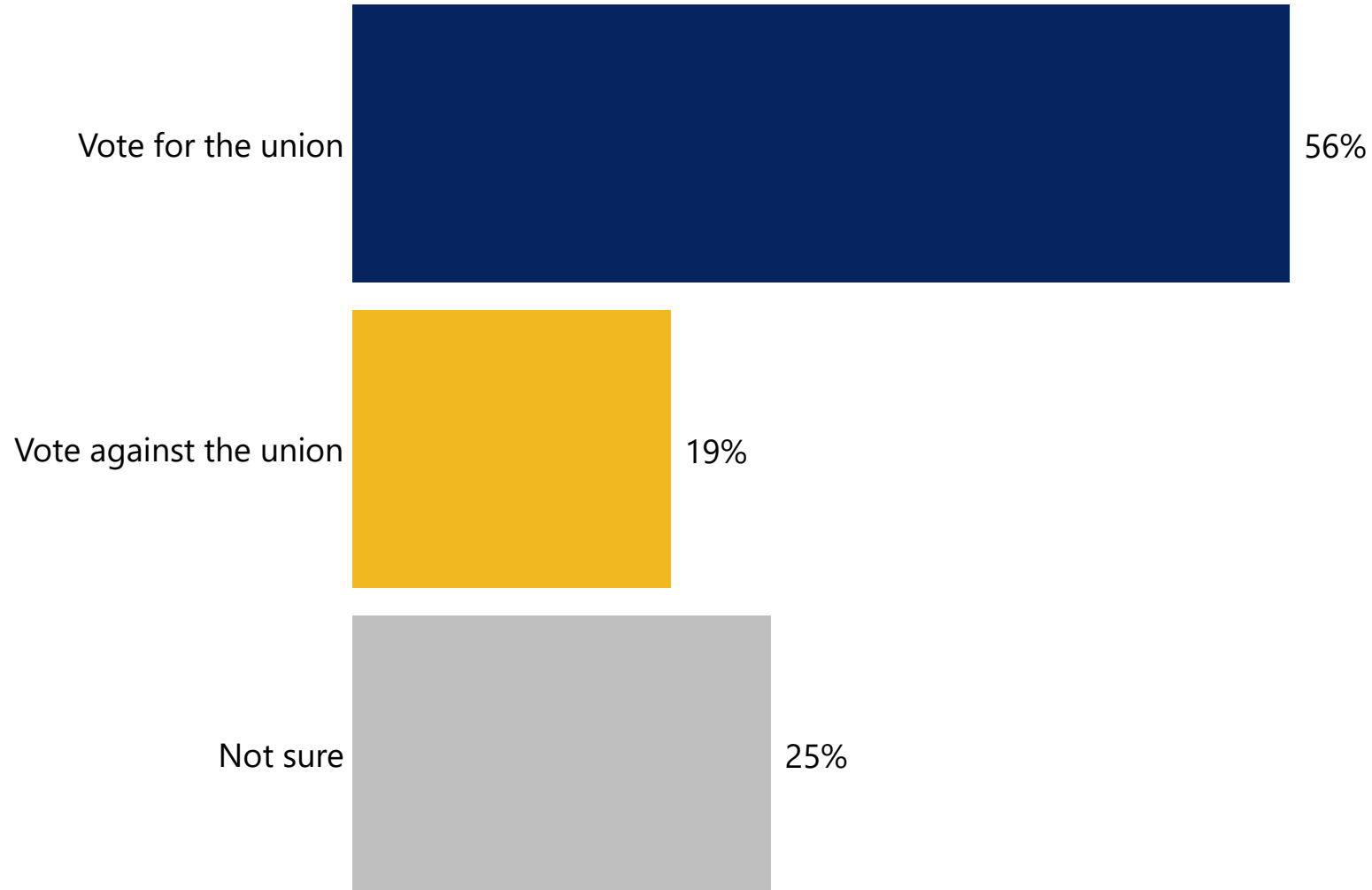


Majority of Non-Union RNs Would Vote to Join



Q60. 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?

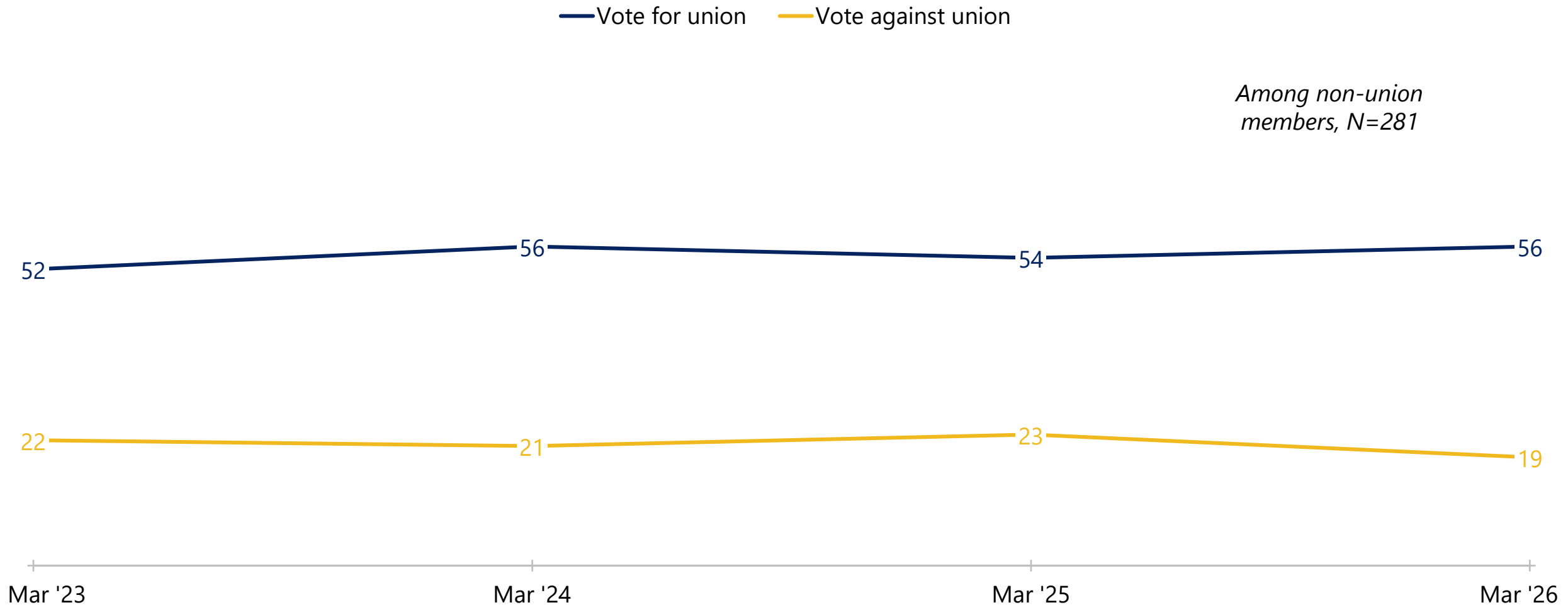
Among non-union members, N=281



Vote for Union Remains Consistent



Q60. 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?



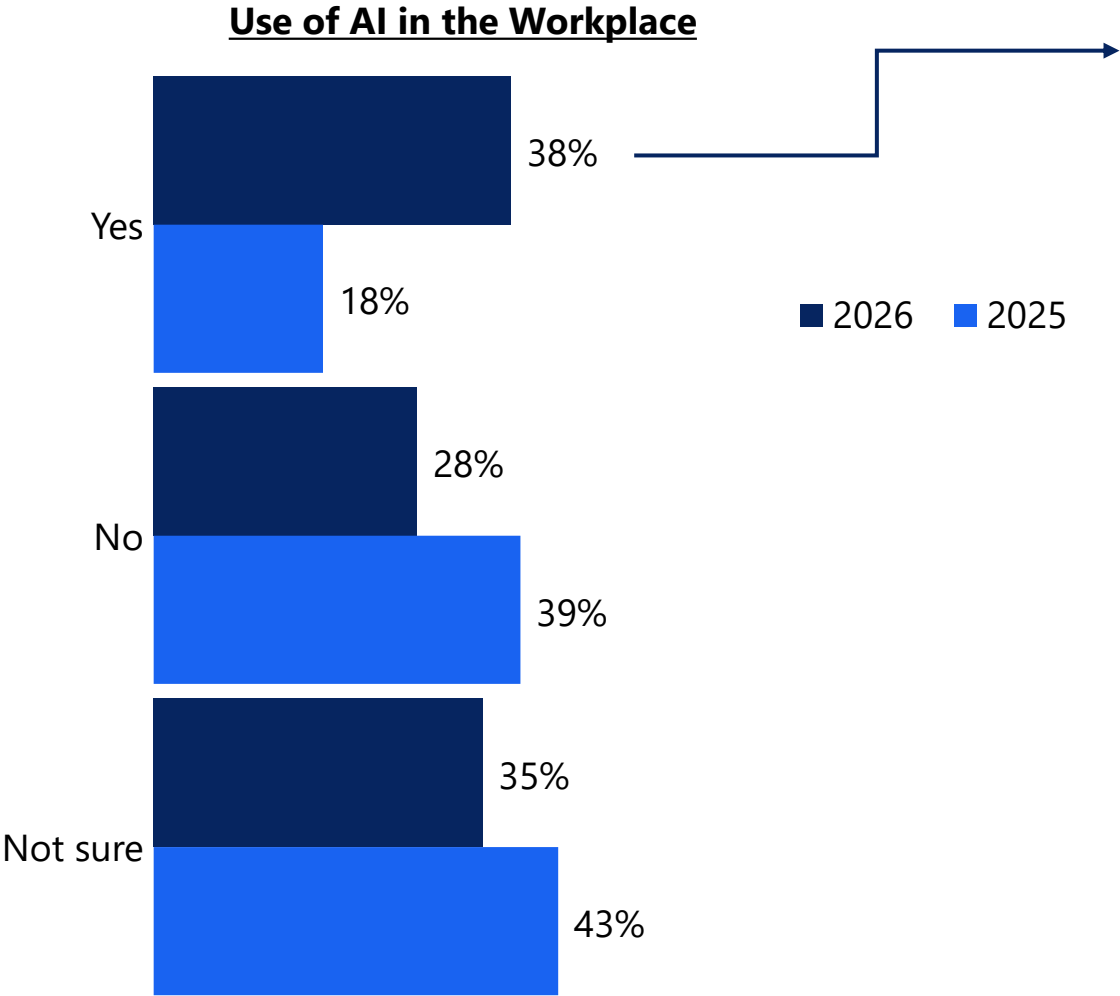
Artificial Intelligence



Documentation Top Use of AI



Q65. To the best of your knowledge, is AI being used in your workplace? AND Q67. In which, if any, of the following ways is AI being used in your workplace?



Ways AI is Used in the Workplace
[Among those who report using AI; N=182]

Documentation / Notes / Scribing / Dictation	62%
Charting	32
Health monitoring	22
Triage	12
Discharge planning	11
Staffing or scheduling	11

Note: Multiple responses accepted, so equals more than 100%. 49

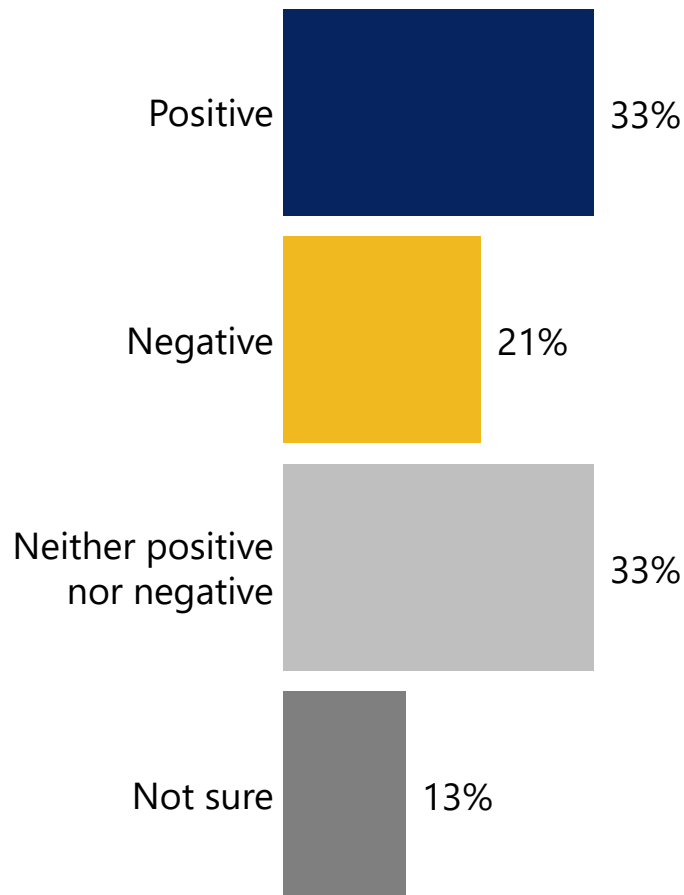
Errors / Inaccurate Information Main Concerns About AI



Q66. Do you think the use of AI in your workplace is generally positive or negative? AND Q70. What, if any, concerns do you have about using AI in your workplace?

Perception of AI in the Workplace

Among those who report using AI; N=182



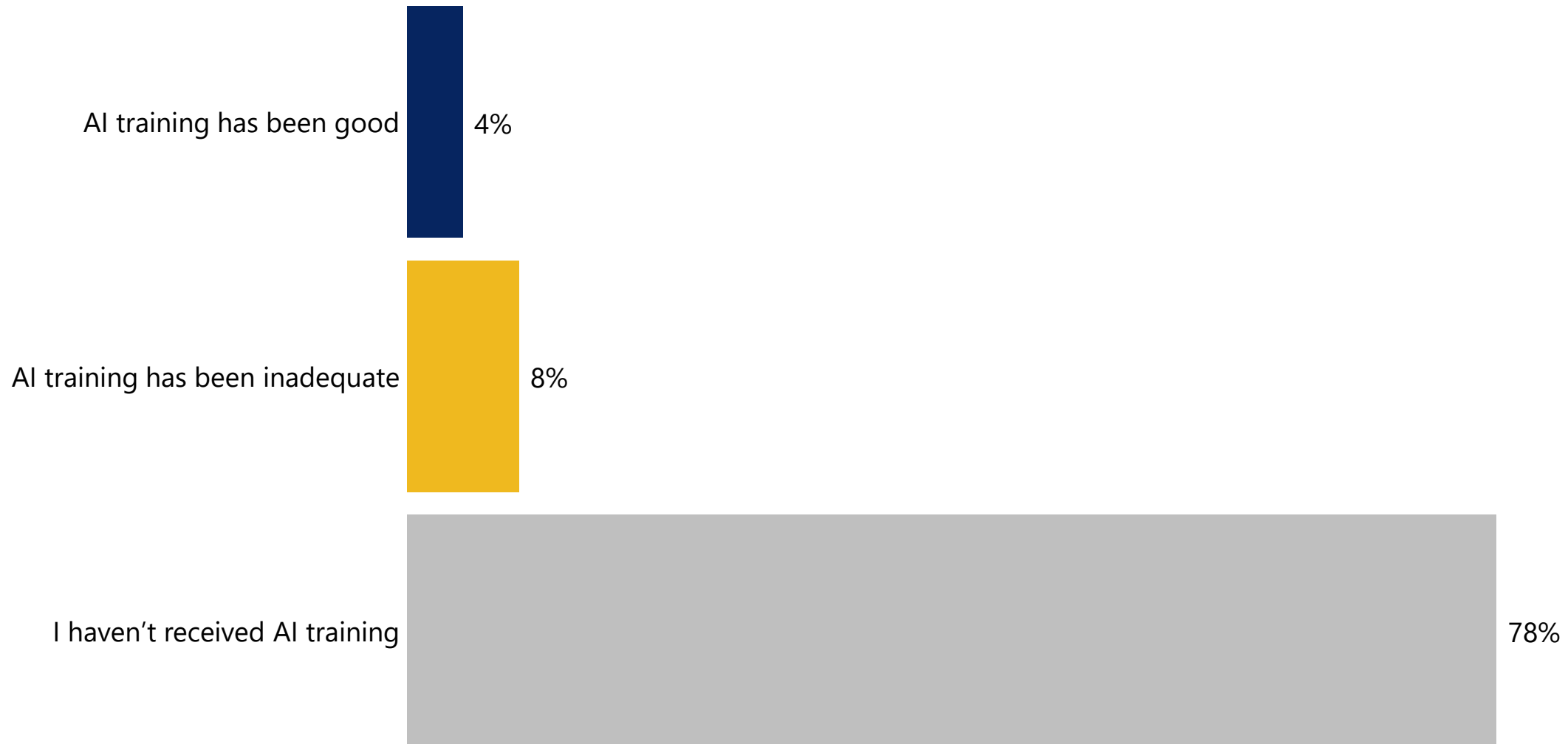
Concerns About AI in the Workplace

Risk or errors / Inaccuracy / Bad data / Wrong info	21%
Don't know enough about uses of AI / Needs more info	10
Data privacy and security	8
Over-reliance on technology / Loss of critical thinking	8
Loss of human touch / Interaction	5
Job replacement / Impact on roles	5
Impact on patient safety / Malfunctions	3
Liability / Accountability / Legal concerns	3
Reduced quality of care	2



Most Have Not Received AI Training

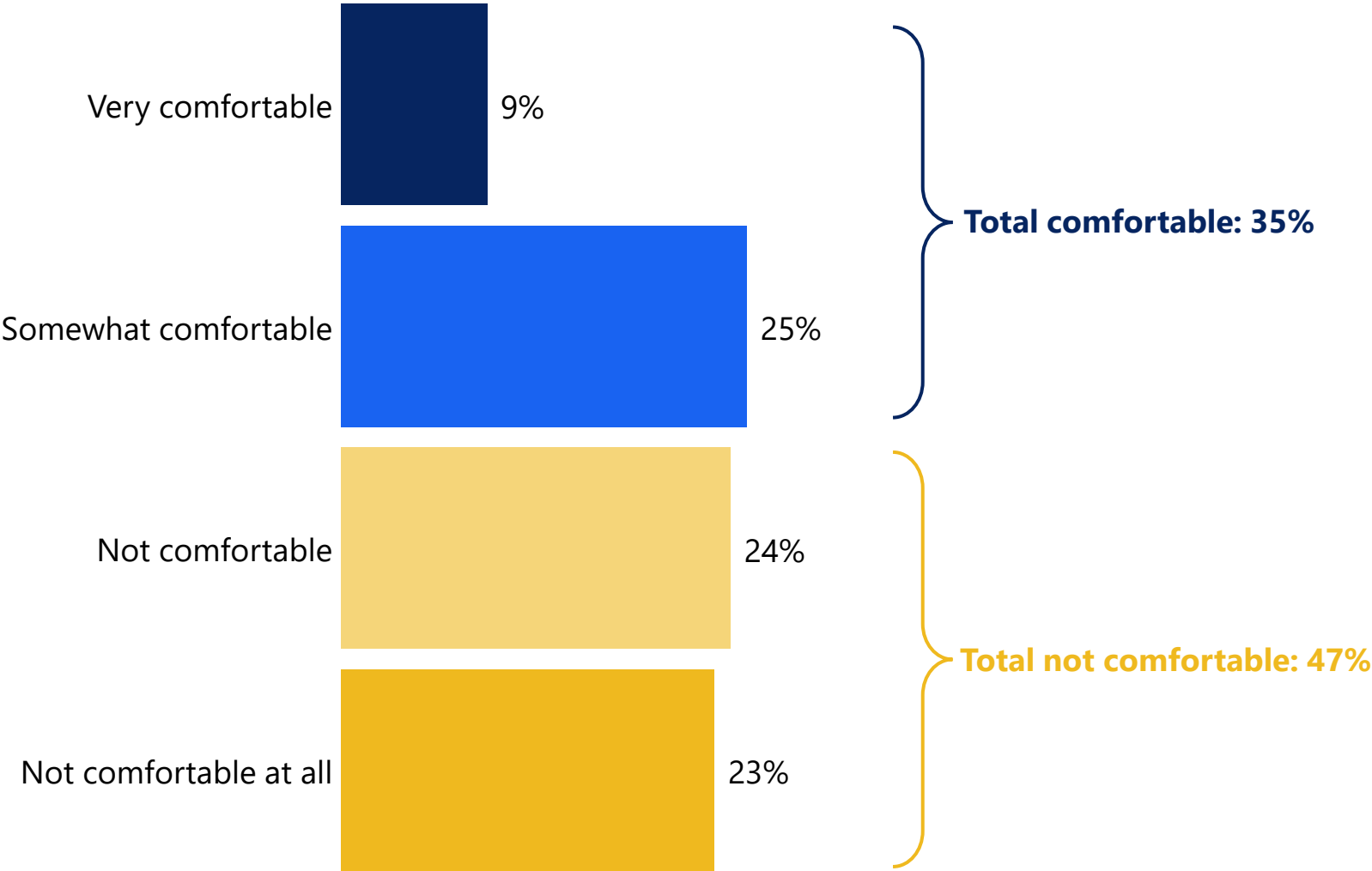
Q68. How would you describe the training you have received on using AI in the workplace?



Few are Very Comfortable using AI in the Workplace



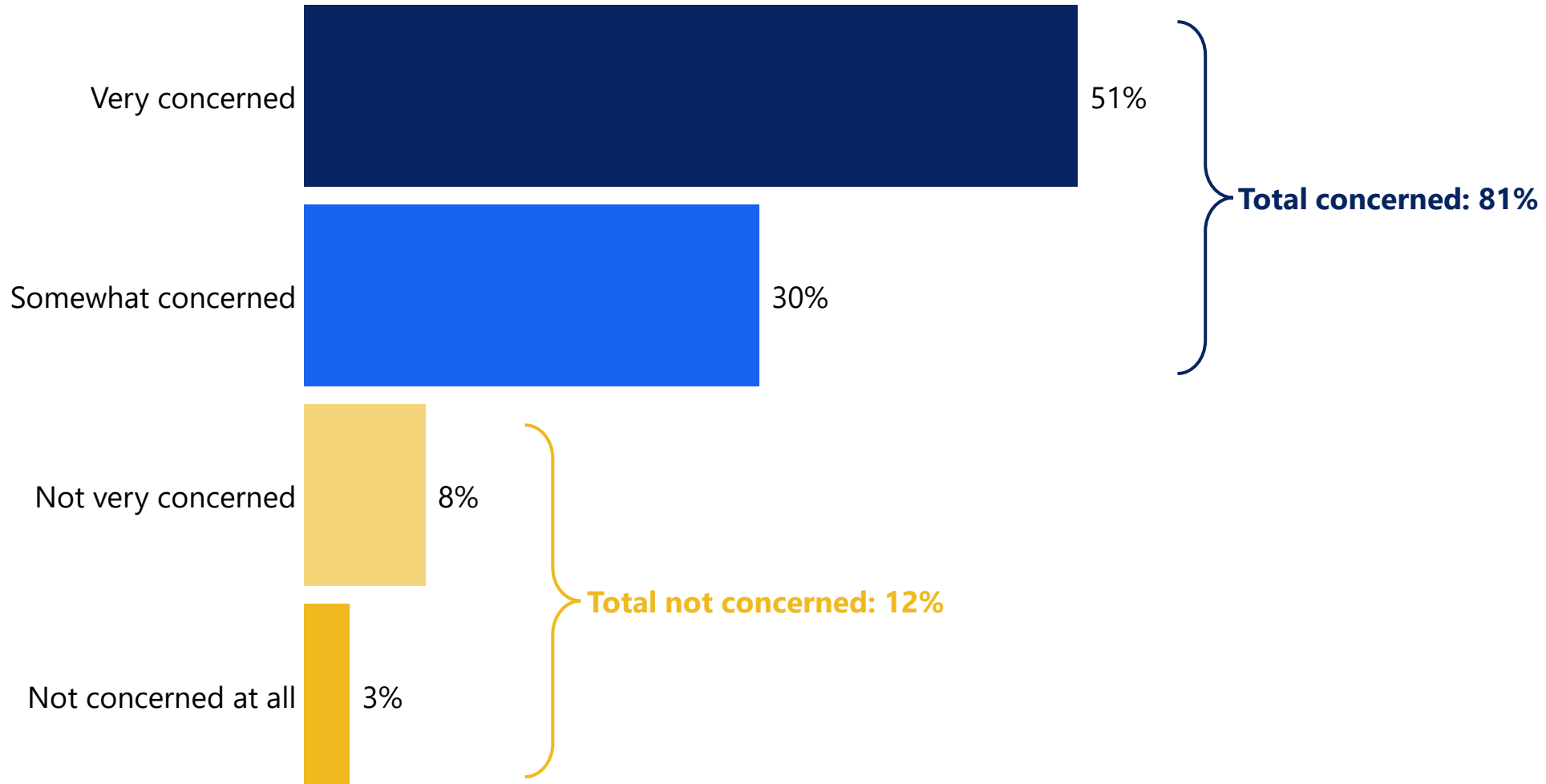
Q69. How comfortable do, or would, you feel using AI in the workplace?



Majority Concerned about Liability Risks from AI Use



Q71. How concerned are you that using AI in the workplace could create liability risks for nurses, such as nurses being held accountable for AI-generated advice that harms a patient?



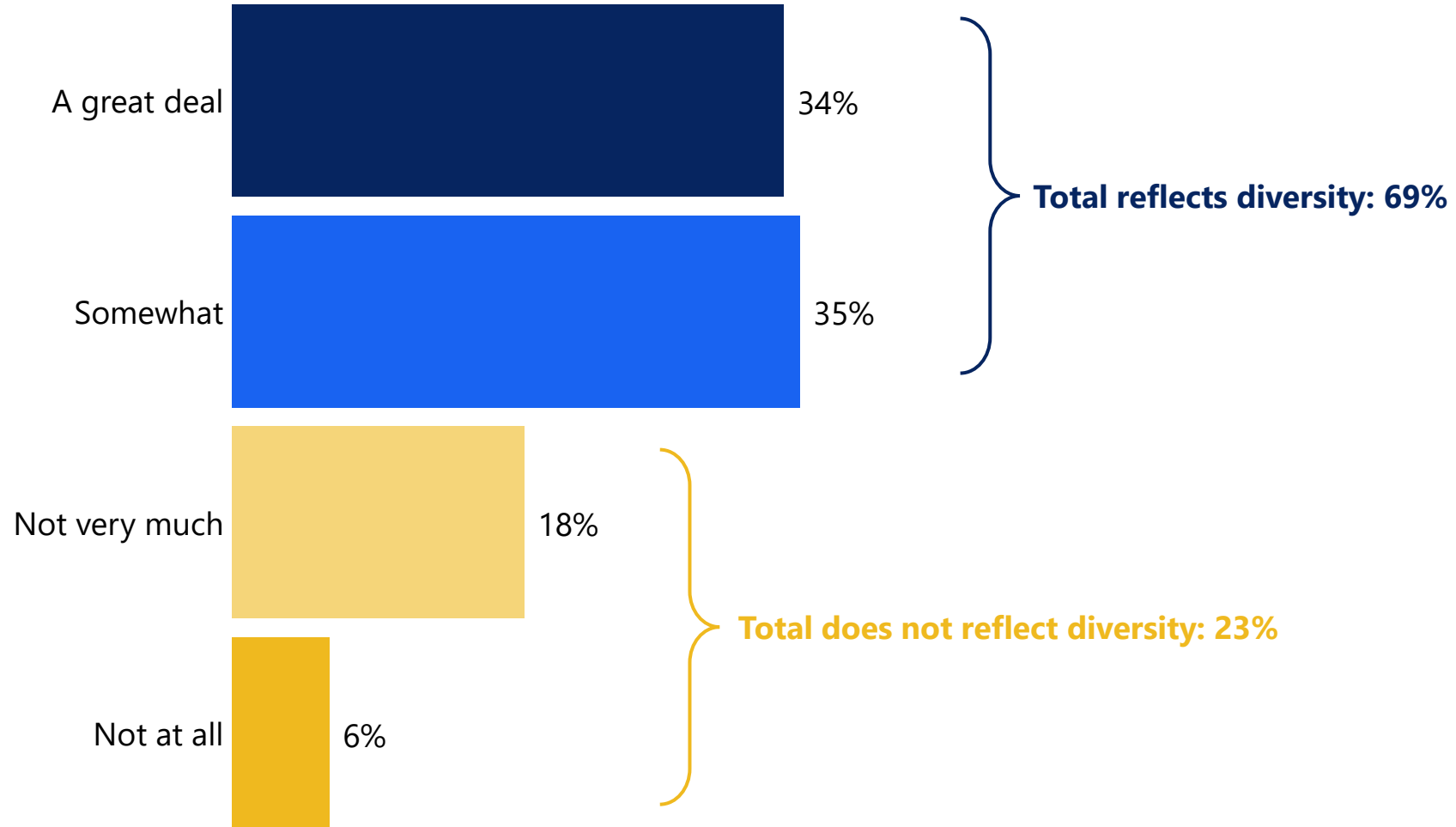
DEI



Most Think Workplace Reflects Community Diversity



Q72. How much, if at all, does the makeup of the nursing workforce at your workplace reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the community in which it exists and the patients served?



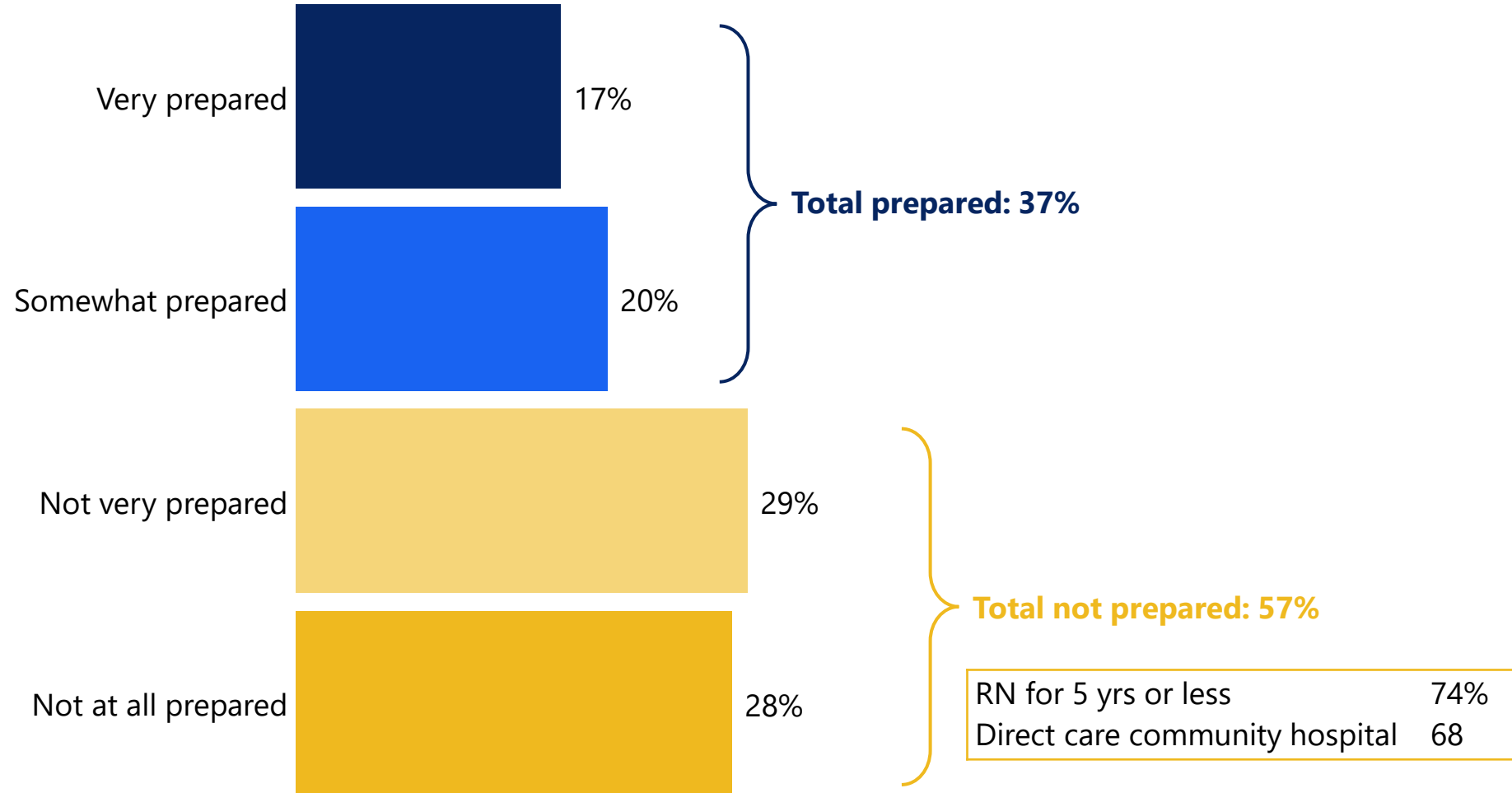
Immigration



Most Do Not Feel Prepared to Respond to ICE



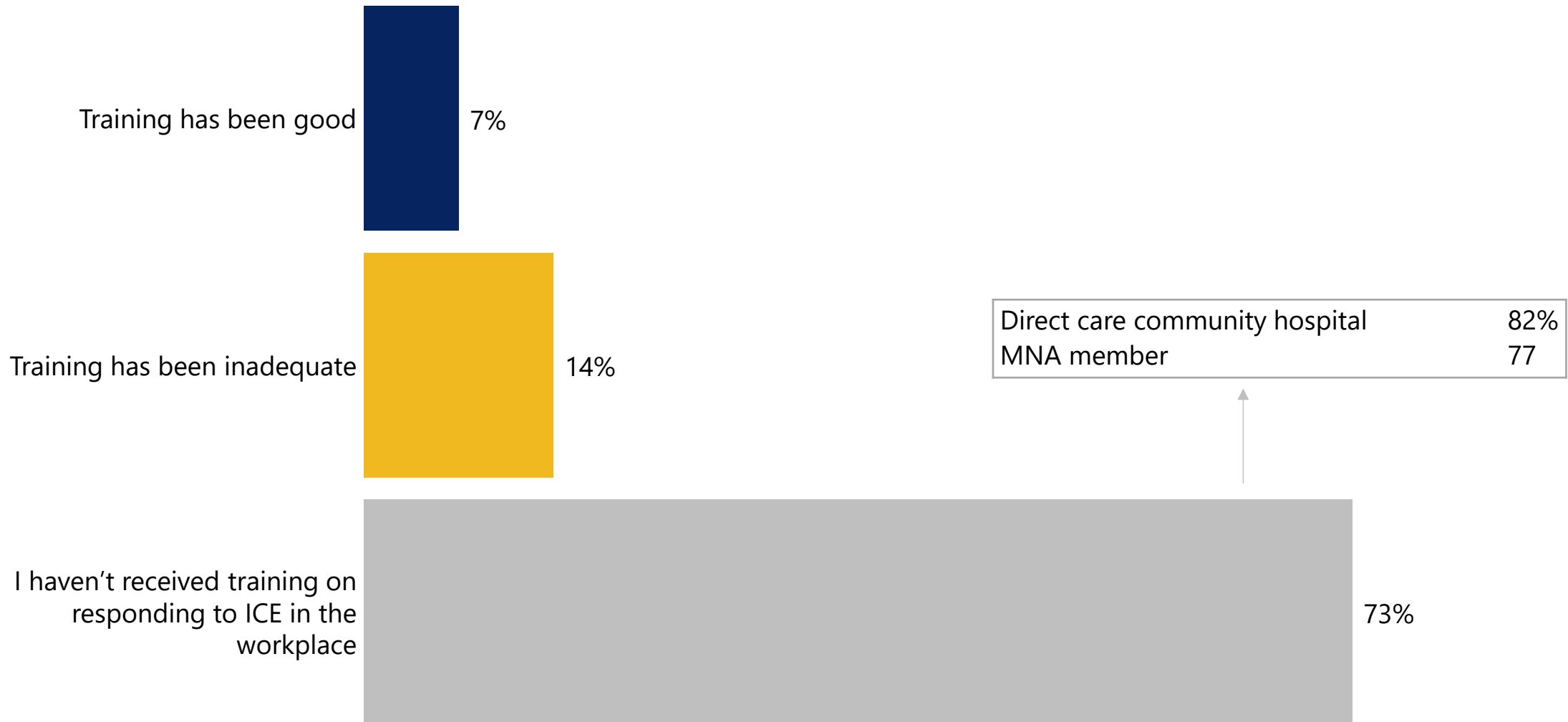
Q73. If Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents, also known as ICE, came to your workplace, how prepared to respond correctly do you feel you would be?





Few Received Good Training for ICE Response

Q74. How would you describe the training you have received on responding to ICE in the workplace?





BEACON
R E S E A R C H

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

Chris Anderson

6 Beacon Street, Suite 510
Boston, MA 02108

Chris@BeaconResearch.com

Sarah Tower-Richardi

6 Beacon Street, Suite 510
Boston, MA 02108

Sarah@BeaconResearch.com