

Public Opinion on the Value of Emergency Physicians

August 2021



Methodology: These results are the product of a series of polls conducted by Morning Consult on behalf of the American College of Emergency Physicians between June 23-July 7, 2021, among a sample of 2200 adults. The interviews were conducted online, and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of adults based on gender, educational attainment, age, race, and region. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.



KEY FINDINGS

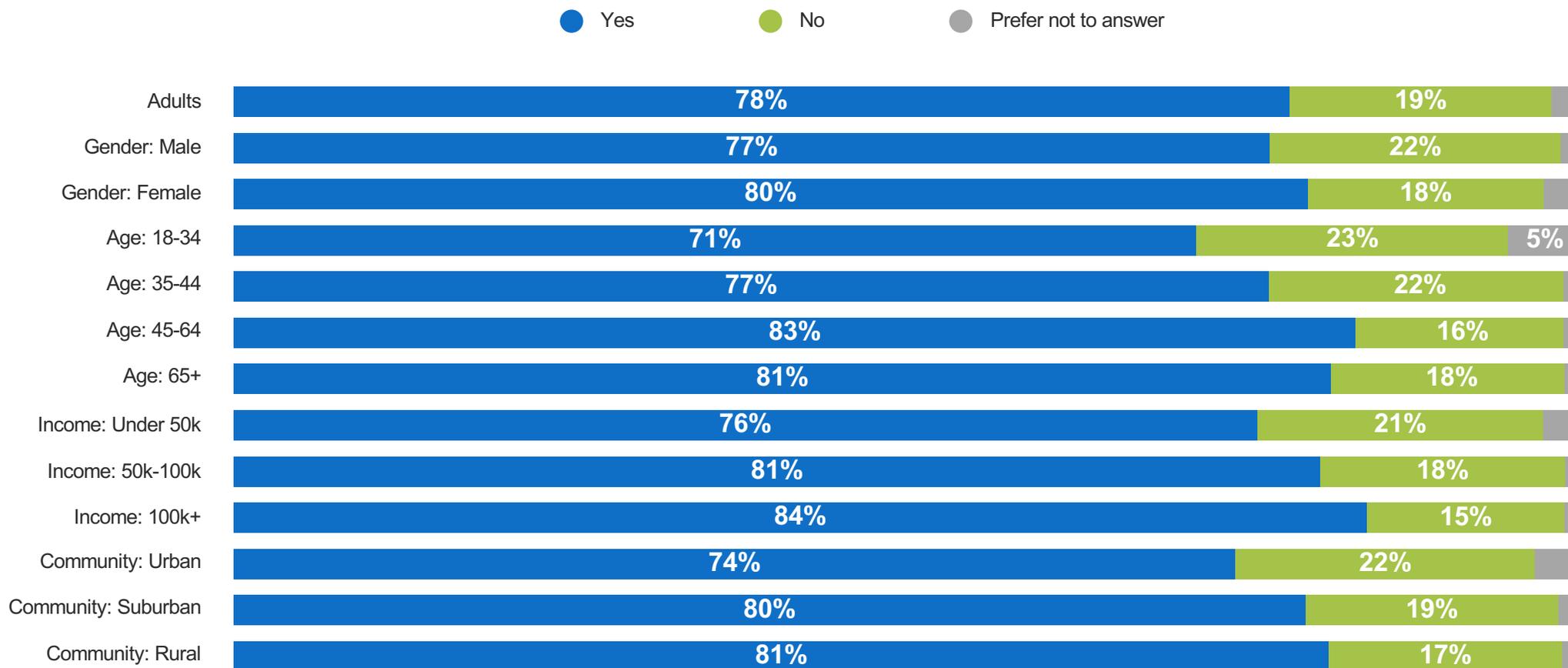
1. When considering going to the emergency department, **nearly half of adults are very concerned with their insurance provider refusing to cover them**, the most intense concern second only to cost.
2. More than half of adults sought immediate medical care at an emergency department (ED) because **urgent care was unavailable, or they were referred to the ED by a medical provider**. Another four in ten chose the emergency department because their injury or ailment appeared too severe.
3. Adults consider **24/7 access to the ED as one of the most important services** communities can provide, and they consider it the responsibility of government to provide that service more so than any other entity (private or nonprofit).
4. Nearly 80 percent of adults report that they **most trust a physician to lead their medical care while in the ED**, compared to a nurse, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner.
5. Patients use a variety of subjective and unreliable methods to determine if they're interacting with a physician. Younger adults are more likely to assume they're interacting with a physician by noticing **if they're wearing a stethoscope, the color of their scrubs, and how they interact with other health care professionals**.

Deciding to Seek Care

DECIDING TO SEEK CARE

Nearly four in five adults (78 percent) report they have personally received or someone in their household has received medical care at an emergency department.

Have you or someone in your household ever received medical care at an emergency department?

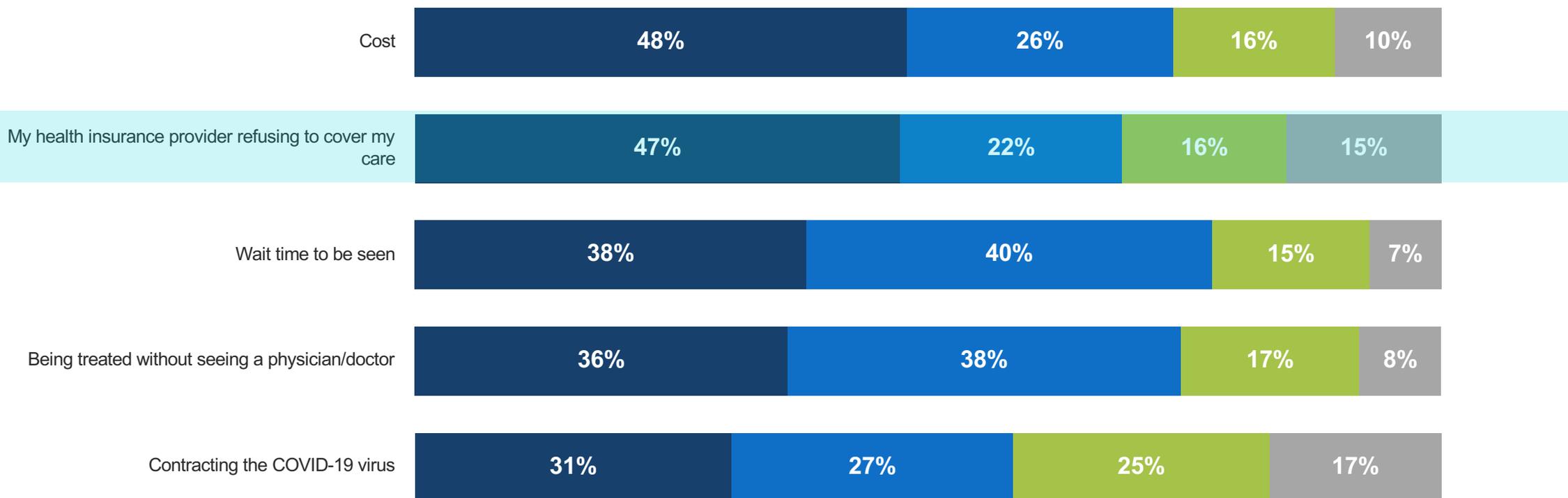


DECIDING TO SEEK CARE

When considering going to the emergency department, nearly half of adults (47 percent) are *very concerned* with their insurance provider refusing to cover them, the most intense concern second only to cost.

How concerned, if at all, would you be with each of the following if you were to seek care from an emergency department?

● Very concerned
 ● Somewhat concerned
 ● Not too concerned
 ● Not concerned at all



DECIDING TO SEEK CARE

Adults, across demographics, indicate the most intense concerns of seeking care at an emergency room are the cost and their insurance provider refusing to cover them.

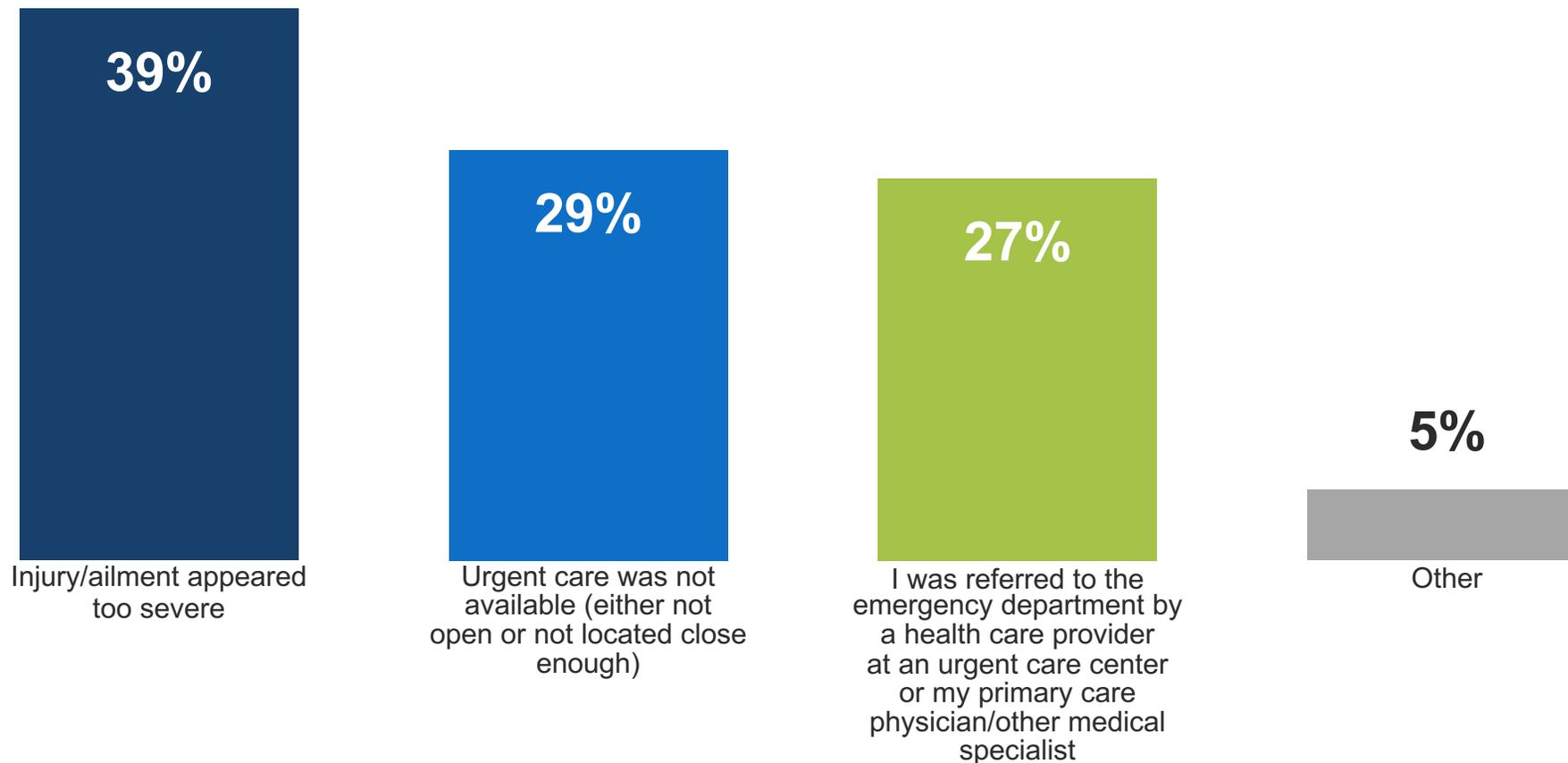
How concerned, if at all, would you be with each of the following if you were to seek care from an emergency department?

Demographic <i>% Very Concerned</i>	Cost*	My health insurance provider refusing to cover my care*	Wait time to be seen	Being treated without seeing a physician/ doctor	Contracting the COVID- 19 virus
Adults	48%	47%	38%	36%	31%
Gender: Male	45%	46%	38%	34%	30%
Gender: Female	50%	49%	38%	38%	31%
Age: 18-34	49%	49%	35%	34%	35%
Age: 35-44	50%	49%	39%	37%	37%
Age: 45-64	51%	46%	39%	36%	26%
Age: 65+	40%	46%	41%	39%	27%
Income: Under 50k	50%	47%	37%	36%	31%
Income: 50k-100k	47%	48%	36%	36%	28%
Income: 100k+	42%	49%	45%	38%	35%
Community: Urban	49%	49%	43%	40%	38%
Community: Suburban	47%	47%	37%	34%	29%
Community: Rural	48%	45%	34%	35%	26%

DECIDING TO SEEK CARE

More than half of adults (56 percent) sought immediate medical care at an emergency department because urgent care was unavailable, or they were referred to the ED by a medical provider. Another four in ten (39 percent) chose the emergency department because their injury or ailment appeared too severe for urgent care.

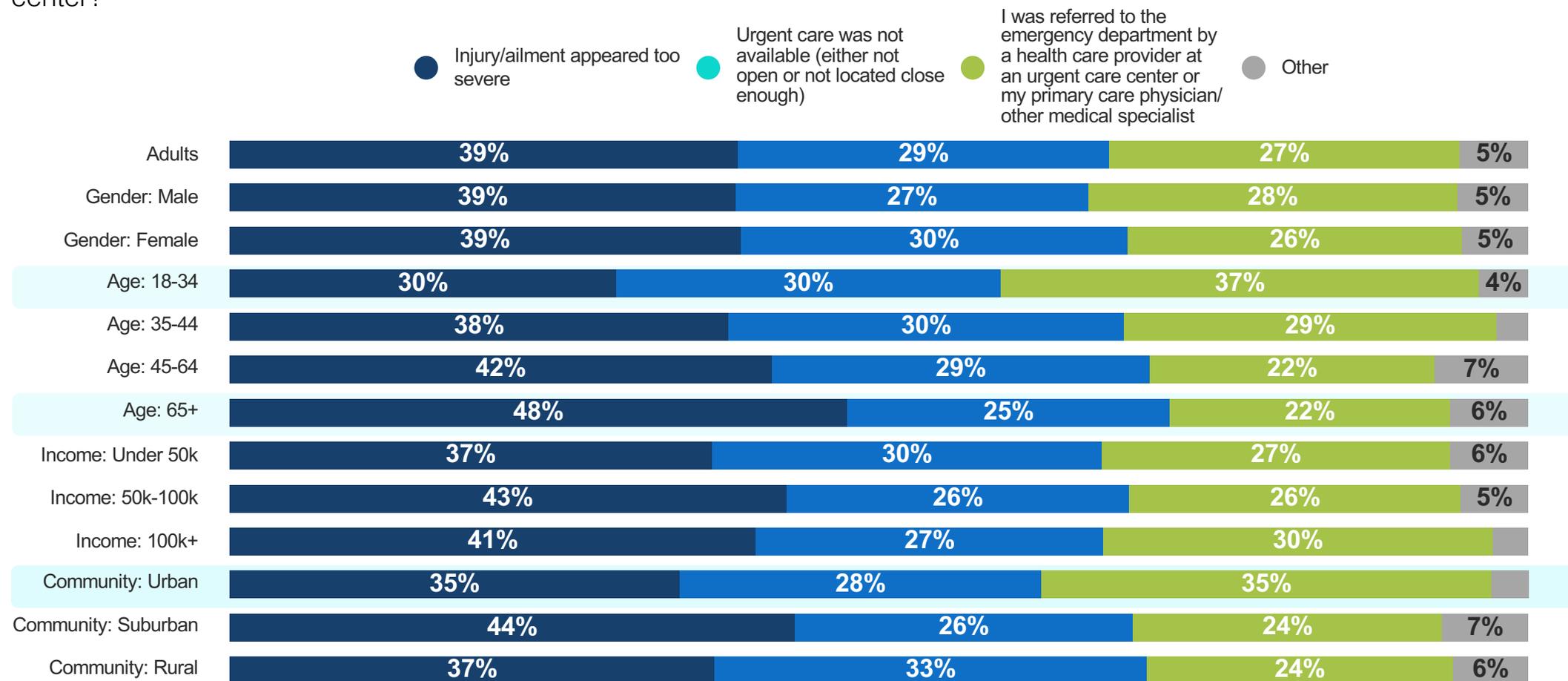
When considering where to go for immediate medical care, why did you choose an emergency department instead of an urgent care center?



DECIDING TO SEEK CARE

Younger adults age 18-34 and urbanites disproportionately report having been referred to the emergency department by a health care provider. Comparably, seniors 65+ disproportionately report having chosen an emergency department because the injury appeared too severe.

When considering where to go for immediate medical care, why did you choose an emergency department instead of an urgent care center?

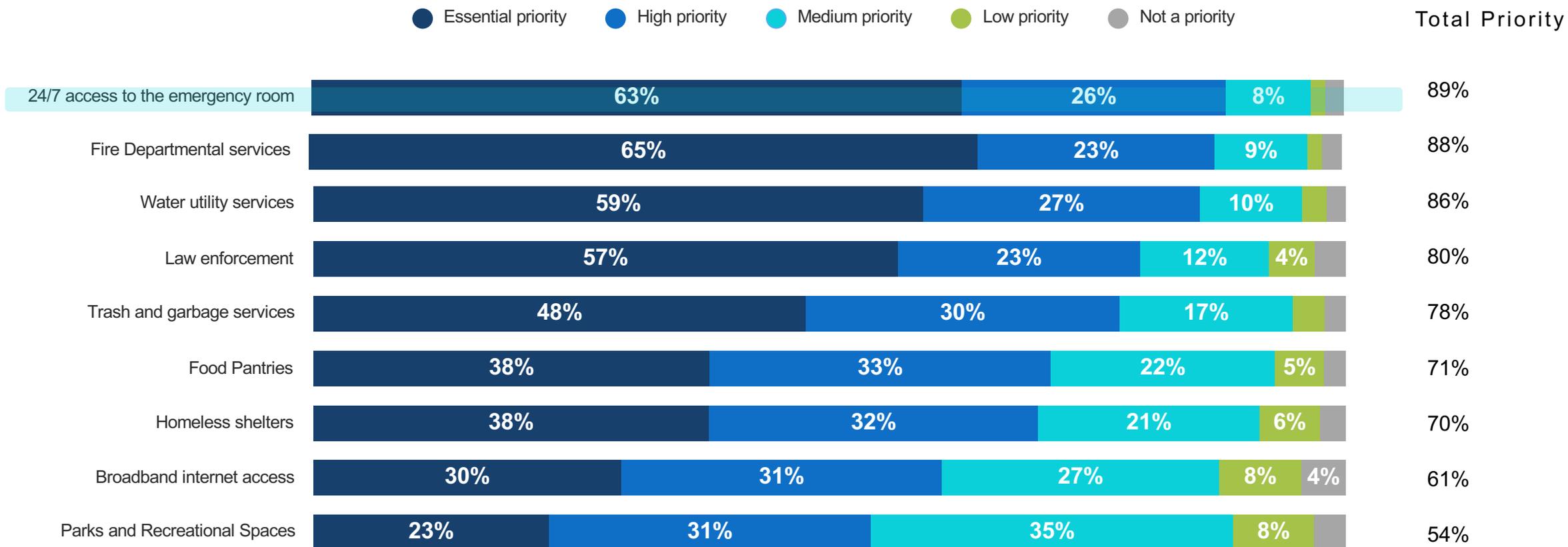


Access to Emergency Care

ACCESS TO EMERGENCY CARE

Nine in ten adults consider *24/7 access to the emergency department as an essential or high priority, the highest of any utility or service that communities provide.*

As you may know, communities often provide utilities and services to their residents. How much of a priority do you feel communities should make the following utilities and services to their citizens?

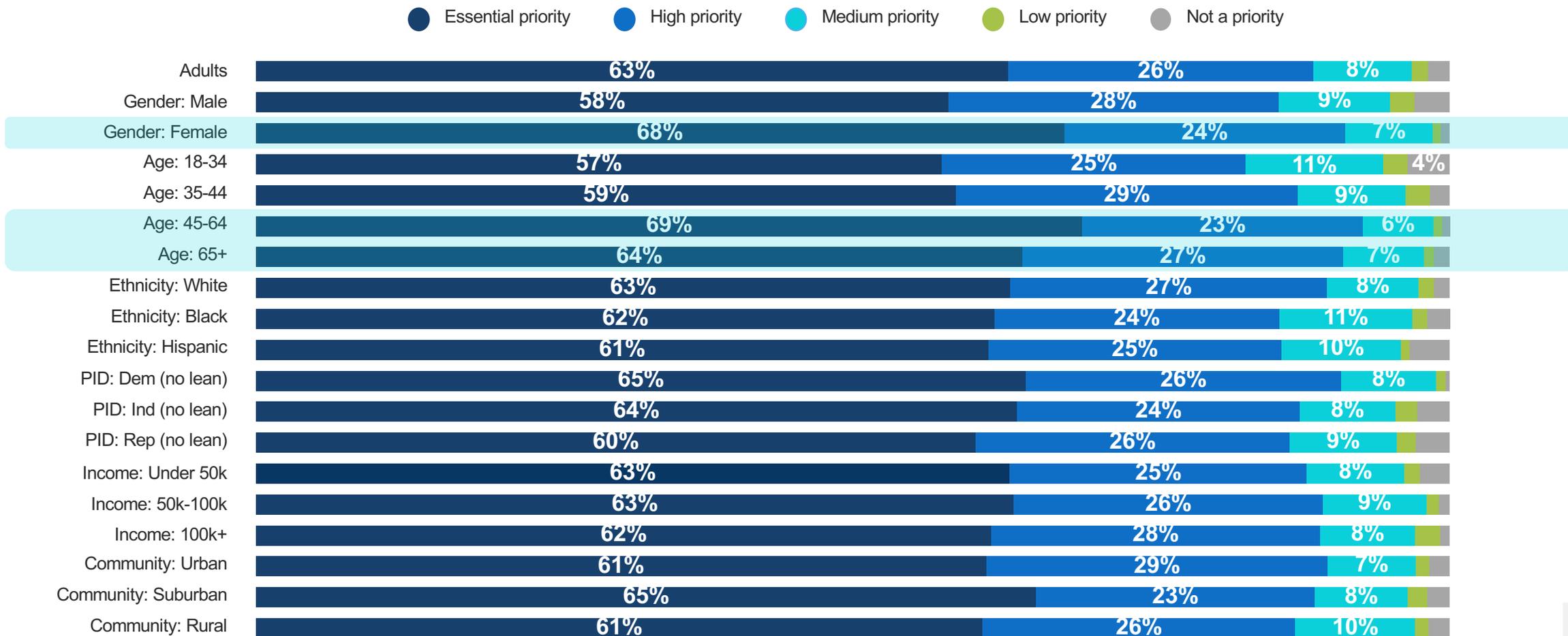


Total Priority = Essential + High Priority

ACCESS TO EMERGENCY CARE

A strong majority of adults across key demographics, particularly among women and older adults feel 24/7 access to the emergency room is an essential priority.

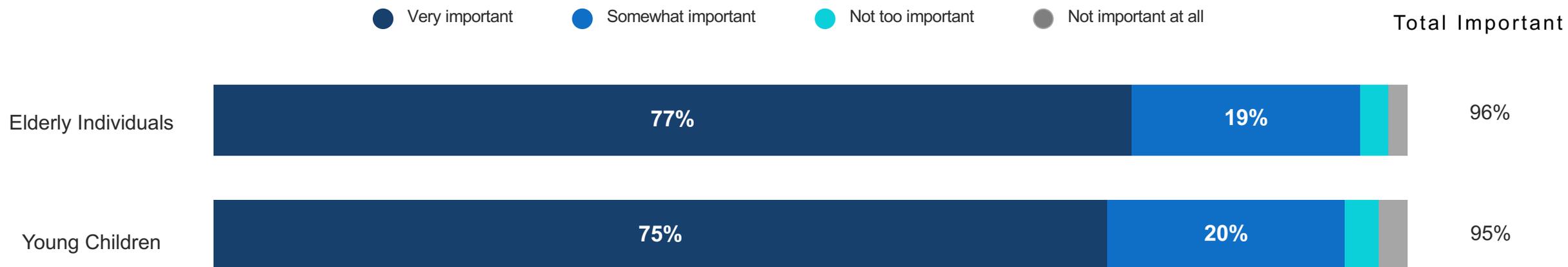
As you may know, communities often provide utilities and services to their residents. How much of a priority do you feel communities should make the following utilities and services to their citizens? *24/7 access to the emergency room*



ACCESS TO EMERGENCY CARE

More than nine in ten adults, across key demographics, believe it is important that *caretakers of young children and elderly individuals* have 24/7 access to a physician.

For caretakers of [elderly individuals]/[young children], how important is it to have 24/7 access to a physician/doctor?

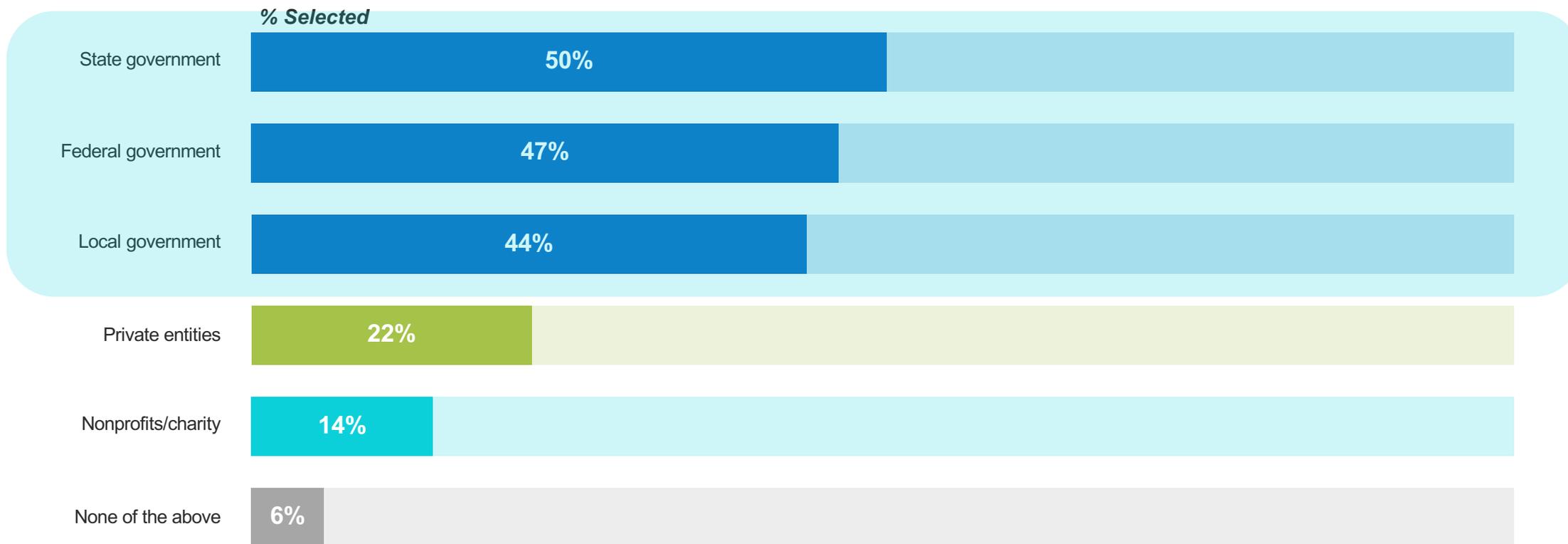


Total Important = Very + Somewhat important

ACCESS TO EMERGENCY CARE

Nearly half of all adults feel that *government, either at the federal, state or local level, is responsible* for ensuring that the community has access to 24/7 medical care led by a doctor; more than double the amount that feel it should be left to private entities or charity.

Which of the following do you feel is responsible to ensure the community has access to 24/7 medical care led by a doctor? Select all that apply.



Quality of Emergency Care

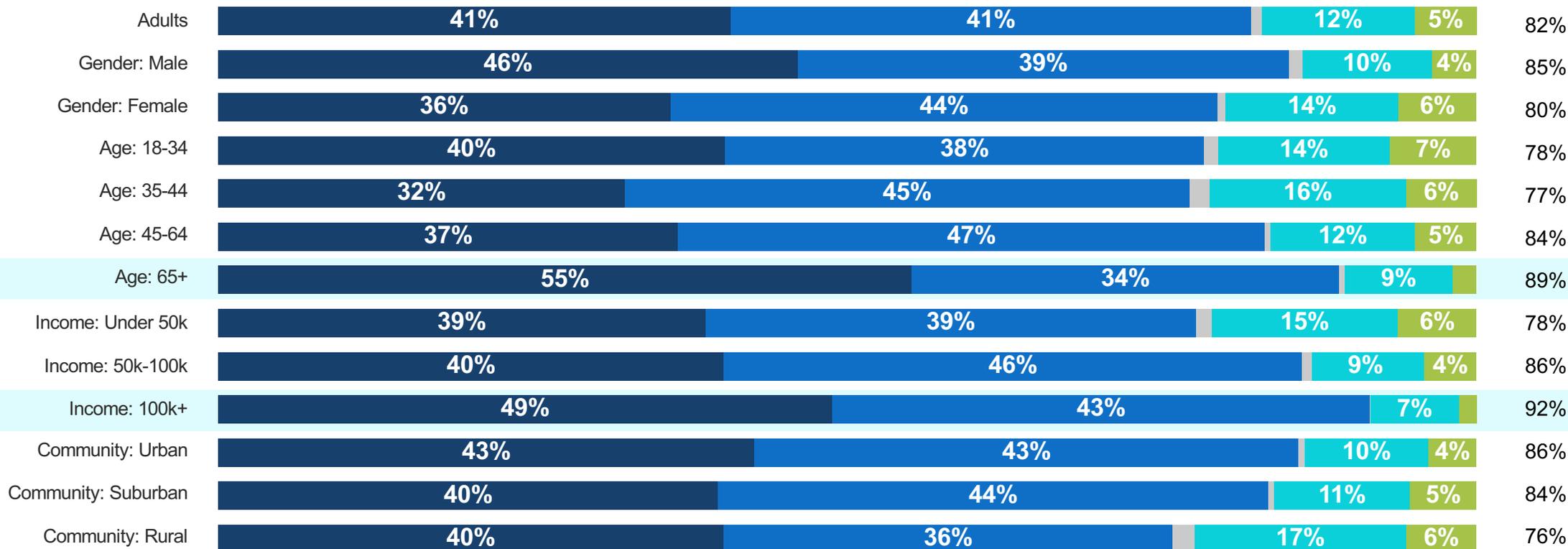
QUALITY OF EMERGENCY CARE

Four in five adults (82 percent) rate the medical care they received positively. Seniors 65+ and higher-income adults disproportionately report the medical care they or someone in the household received was *excellent*.

How would you rate the medical care that you or the person in your household received [while at the emergency department]?

● Excellent ● Good ● Don't know/ No opinion ● Fair ● Poor

Positive Rating

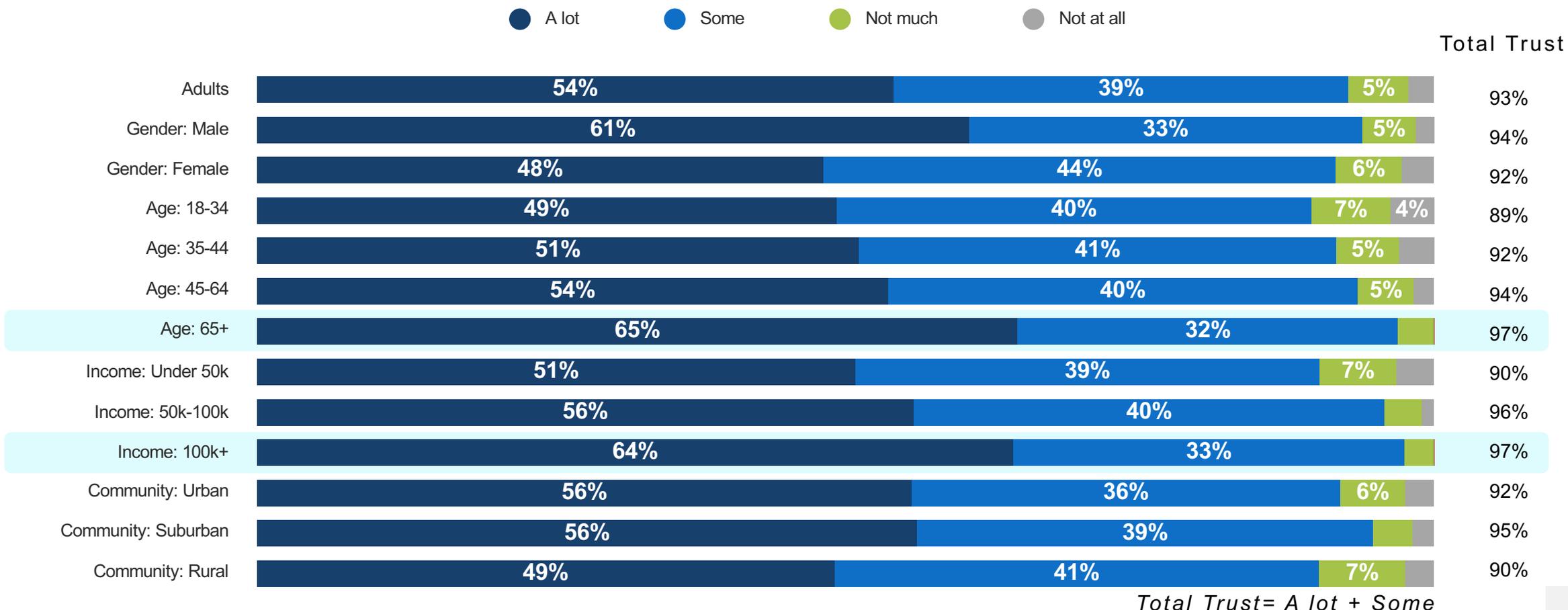


Positive Rating = Excellent + Good

QUALITY OF EMERGENCY CARE

Adults overwhelmingly trust an emergency physician to provide medical care at the emergency department. Intensity in trust is most strongly driven by seniors 65 and older and higher-income adults.

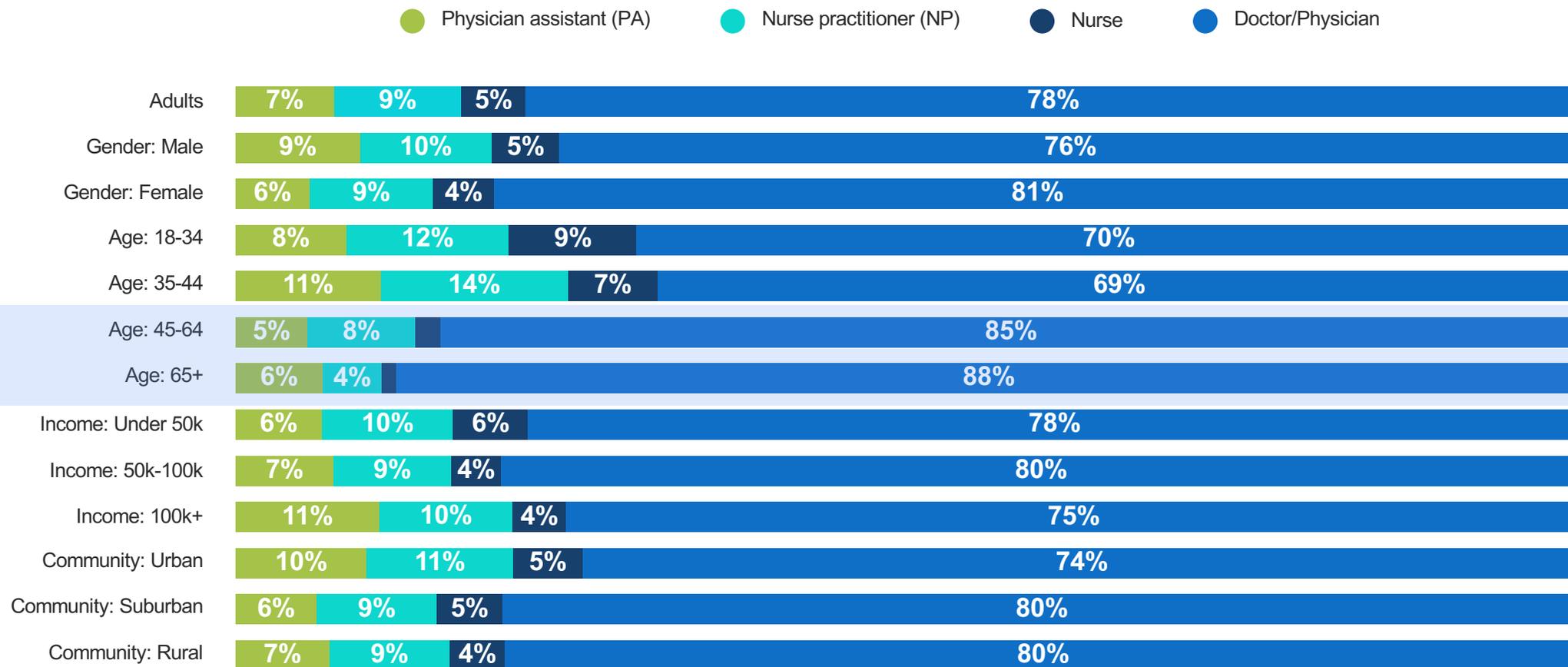
How much do you trust an emergency physician/doctor to provide medical care in the event you went to the emergency department?



QUALITY OF EMERGENCY CARE

Nearly 80 percent of adults, across key demographic groups, report that they *most trust a physician to lead their medical care while in the emergency department* as compared to a physician assistant, nurse practitioner or nurse. Older adults in particular trust a physician to their care.

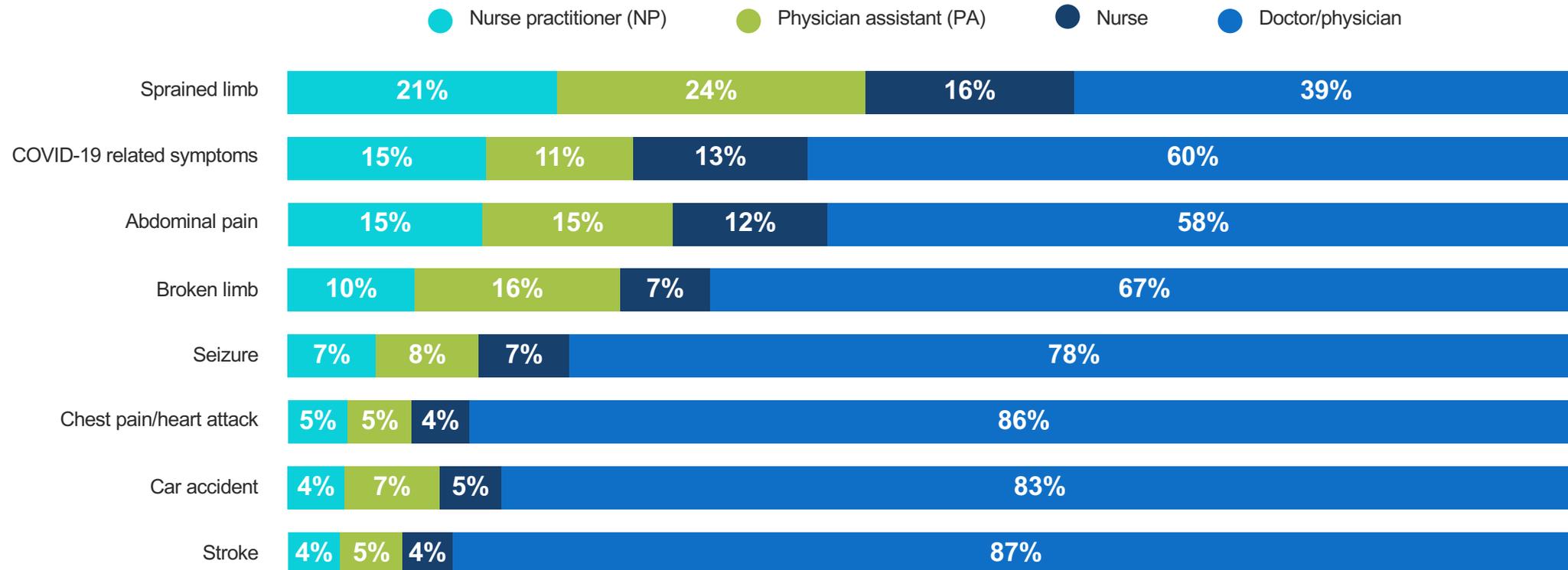
In the event of an emergency, which of the following do you most trust to lead your medical care while in the emergency department?



QUALITY OF EMERGENCY CARE

The majority of adults would *prefer to be treated by a physician as their ailment or injury becomes more severe*, with more than 80 percent preferring a physician if they have chest pains, a car accident or a stroke.

In the event of an emergency which of the following would you prefer to treat you for each of the following conditions in the emergency department?

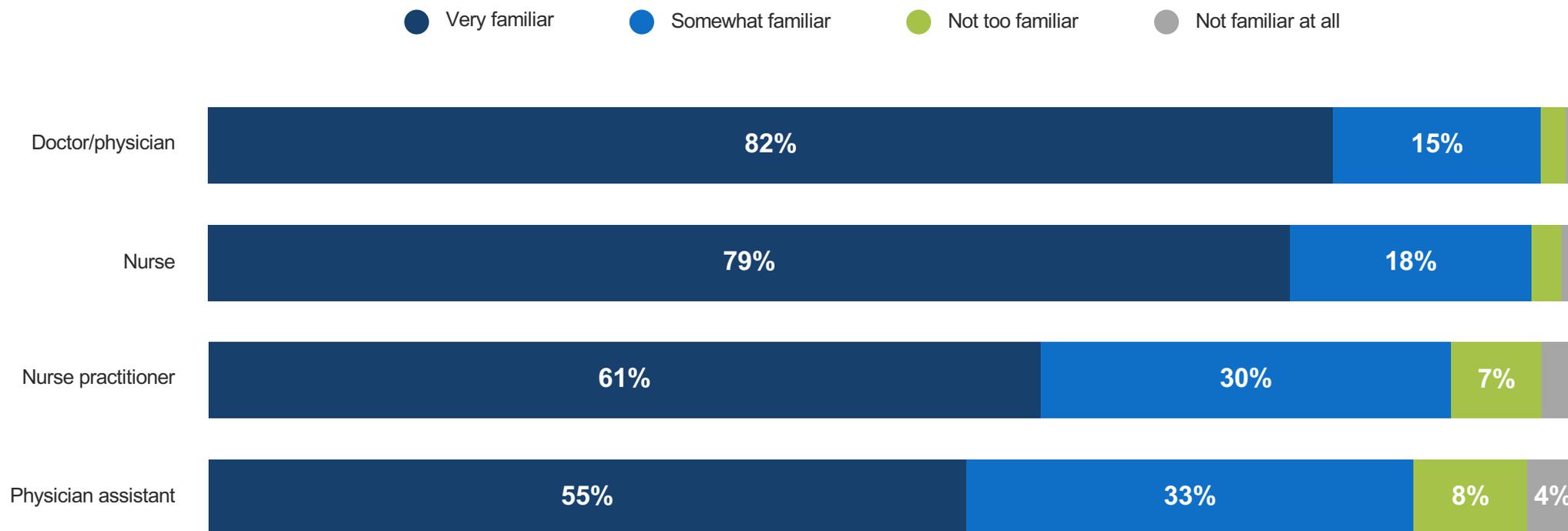


Familiarity with Care Team Roles

FAMILIARITY OF THE CARE TEAM

Adults are most strongly familiar with titles such as *doctor/physician* (82 percent very familiar) and *nurse* (79 percent) as opposed to *nurse practitioner* (61 percent) or *physician assistant* (55 percent).

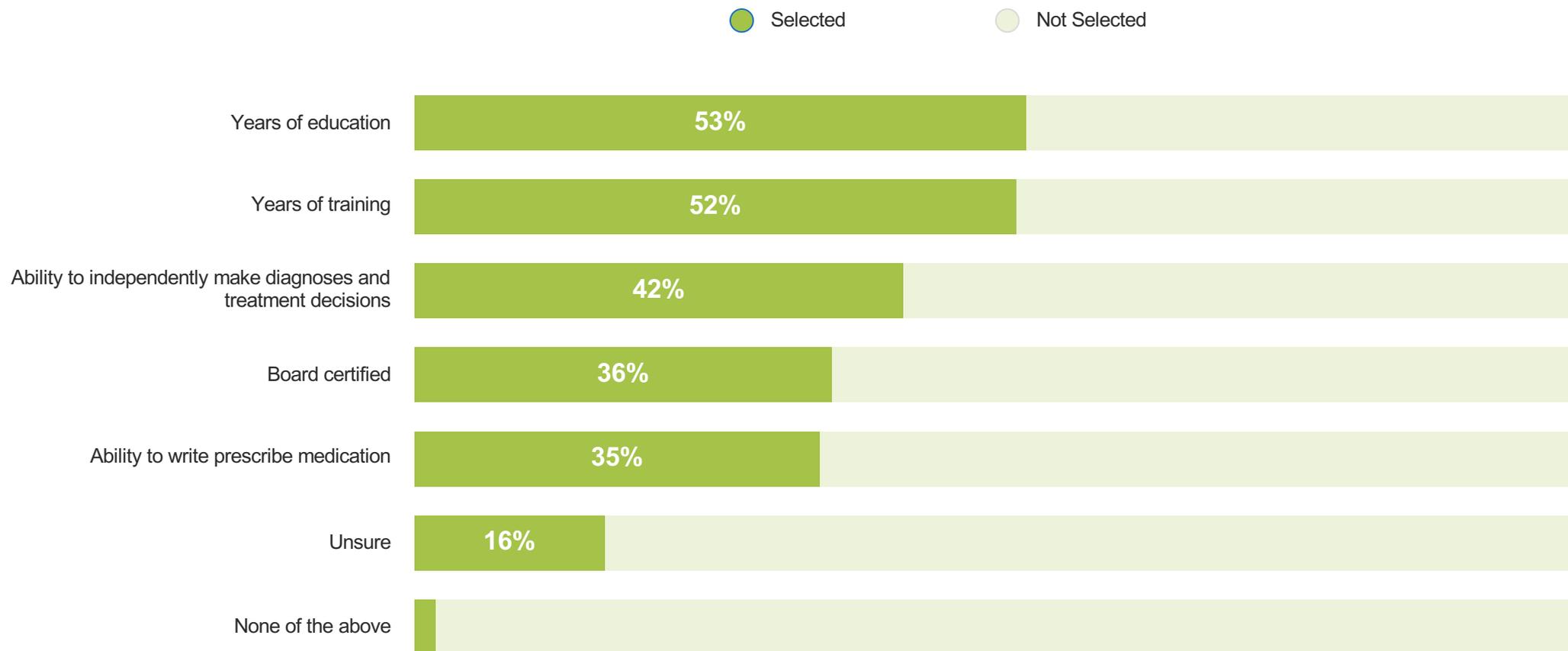
How familiar are you with the following medical titles?



FAMILIARITY OF THE CARE TEAM

Forty-two percent indicate the difference between a physician and PA is the ability to independently make diagnoses and treatment decisions, while a little more than half say it's years of education or training.

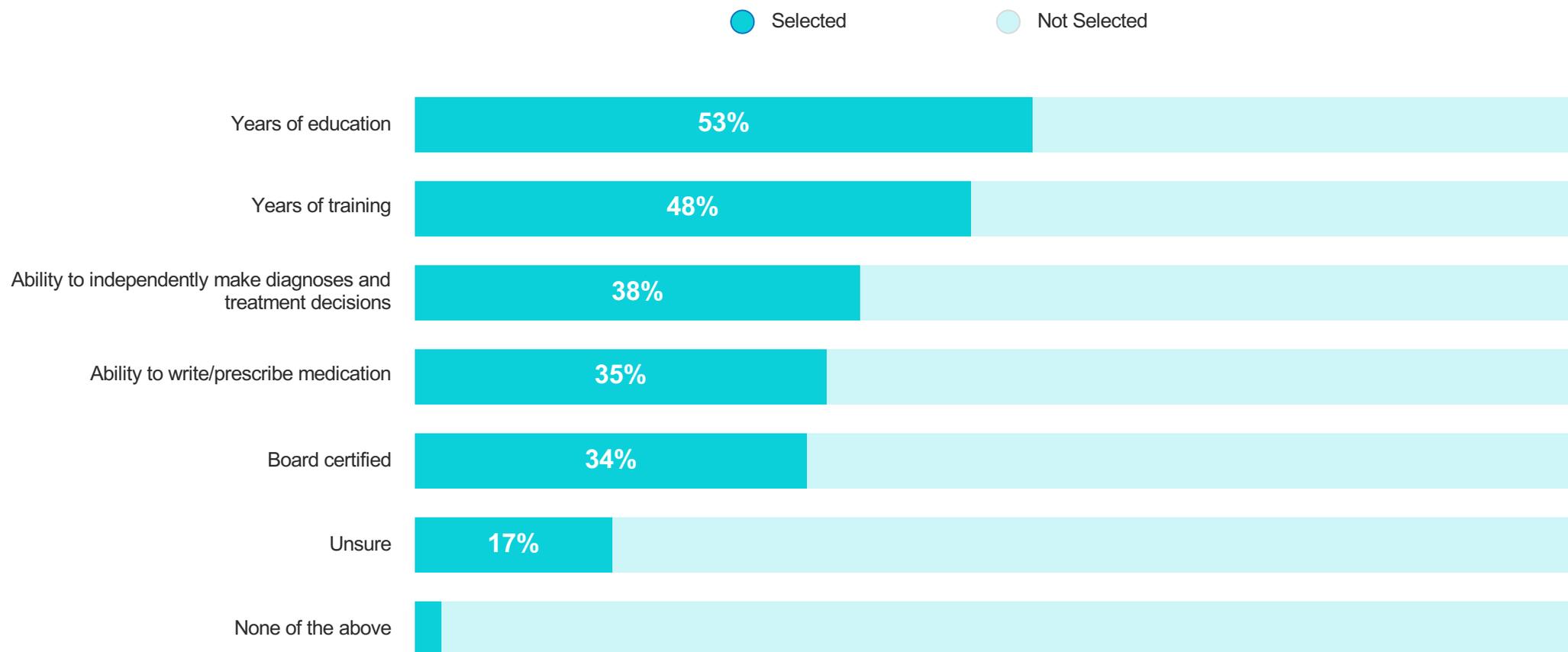
Based on what you know, what is the difference between a physician and a physician assistant (PA)? Select all that apply.



FAMILIARITY OF THE CARE TEAM

Similarly, nearly forty percent think a NP can independently make treatment decisions (38 percent) and 35 percent believe they can prescribe medication.

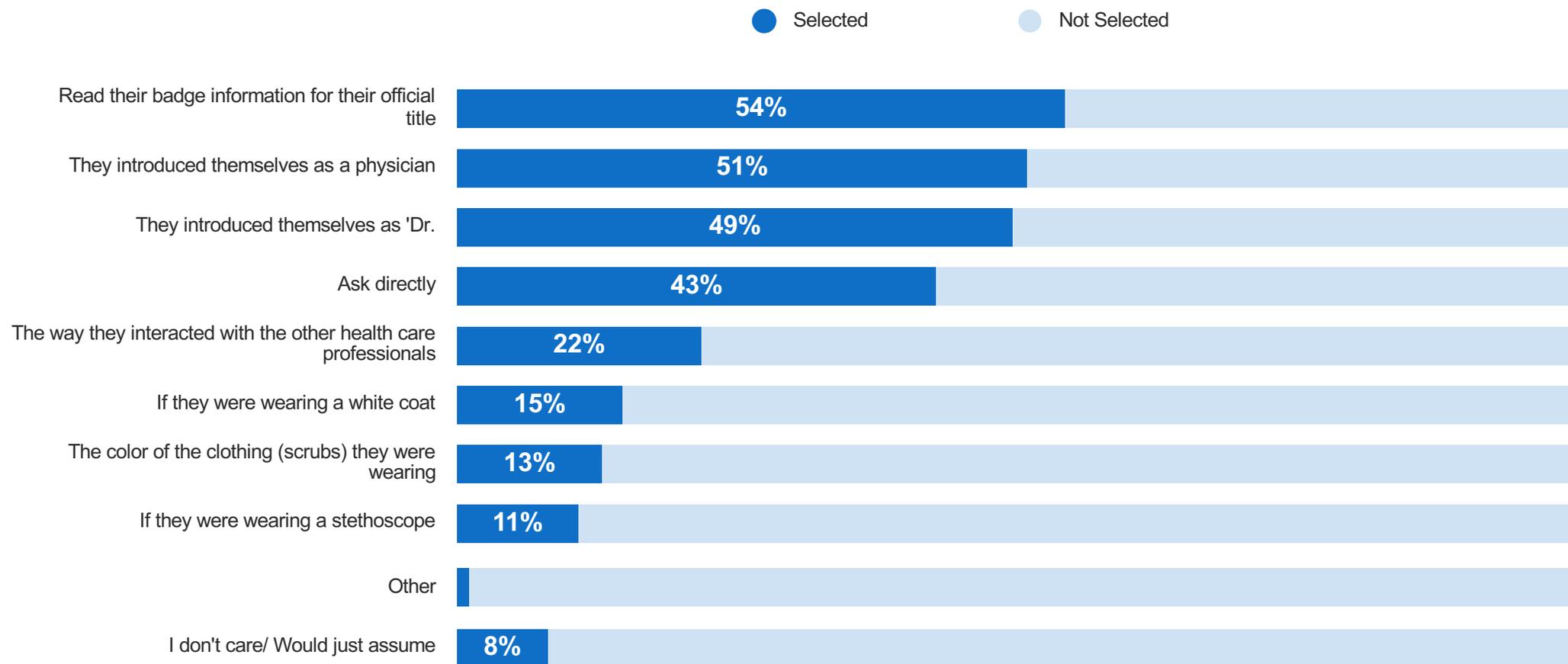
Based on what you know, what is the difference between a physician and a nurse practitioner (NP)? Select all that apply.



FAMILIARITY OF THE CARE TEAM

Patients use a variety of methods to determine if they're interacting with a physician. Adults are more likely to read the badge information rather than ask the person directly.

If you were being treated in the ER, how would you know if the health care professional you're interacting with is a physician? Please select all that apply.



FAMILIARITY OF THE CARE TEAM

Twenty percent of younger adults (18-34) would use the scrub color while a quarter of younger adults would use the way a health professional interacted with their colleagues as a way to determine if they are a physician.

If you were being treated in the ER, how would you know if the health care professional you're interacting with is a physician? Please select all that apply.

% Selected	Gender		Age				Race/ Ethnicity			Income			Community Type			
	Adults	Male	Female	18-34	35-44	45-64	65+	White	Black	Hispanic	Under 50k	50k-100k	100k+	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Read their badge information for their official title	54%	47%	61%	46%	52%	58%	61%	56%	43%	47%	48%	65%	58%	48%	58%	54%
They introduced themselves as a physician	51%	47%	54%	45%	42%	54%	60%	51%	46%	44%	48%	57%	51%	42%	56%	52%
They introduced themselves as 'Dr.'	49%	46%	53%	34%	45%	57%	62%	51%	47%	38%	47%	53%	51%	42%	53%	51%
Ask directly	43%	43%	42%	37%	42%	43%	50%	44%	40%	36%	42%	44%	43%	39%	46%	41%
The way they interacted with the other health care professionals	22%	22%	21%	24%	25%	19%	20%	22%	21%	26%	22%	22%	20%	25%	21%	19%
If they were wearing a white coat	15%	14%	15%	19%	21%	12%	8%	15%	19%	11%	15%	14%	14%	18%	14%	13%
The color of the clothing (scrubs) they were wearing	13%	14%	11%	20%	16%	9%	6%	13%	14%	14%	14%	11%	11%	16%	12%	10%
If they were wearing a stethoscope	11%	12%	9%	15%	14%	8%	7%	10%	12%	11%	12%	9%	10%	14%	9%	10%
I don't care/ Would just assume	8%	8%	9%	11%	8%	6%	7%	8%	6%	11%	9%	6%	7%	10%	7%	7%

