

BACKGROUND

- The impact of stigma within mental health care has become much more widely understood.
- Research has shown that misperceptions and stigma of adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are higher, compared to children.
- The impact of stigma on treatment seeking and maintenance among adult patients with ADHD is still highly under-investigated.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify perceptions and experiences of stigma among adults with ADHD actively engaged in treatment.
- To provide an anonymous space for adults with ADHD to express feelings and concerns regarding perceived and experienced stigma during the process of ADHD diagnosis, medication acquisition, and treatment.

METHODS

Study Design and Dissemination:

- 16-item Qualtrics survey administered via phone or email

Study Period:

- November 2022 - December 2022

Study Population:

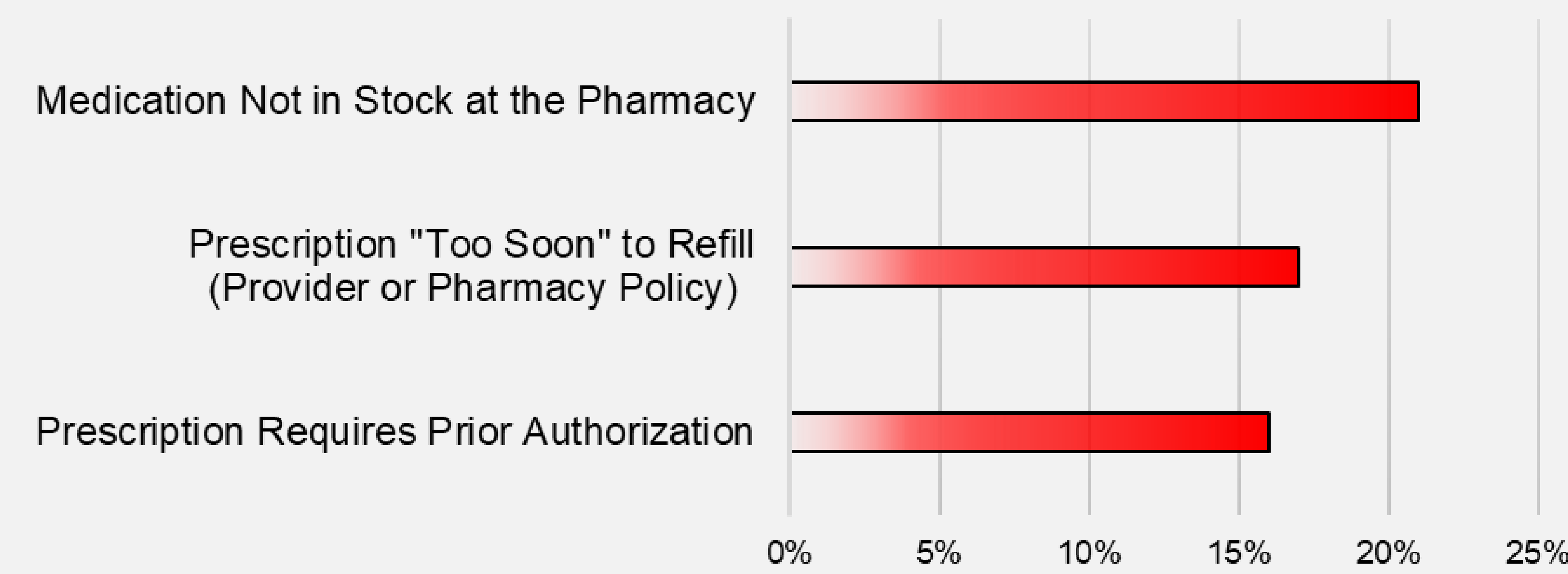
- Patients age 18 – 79 years old, with a diagnosis of ADHD and actively receiving care from a psychiatric provider at a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in St. Louis, Missouri

Sample Survey Questions:

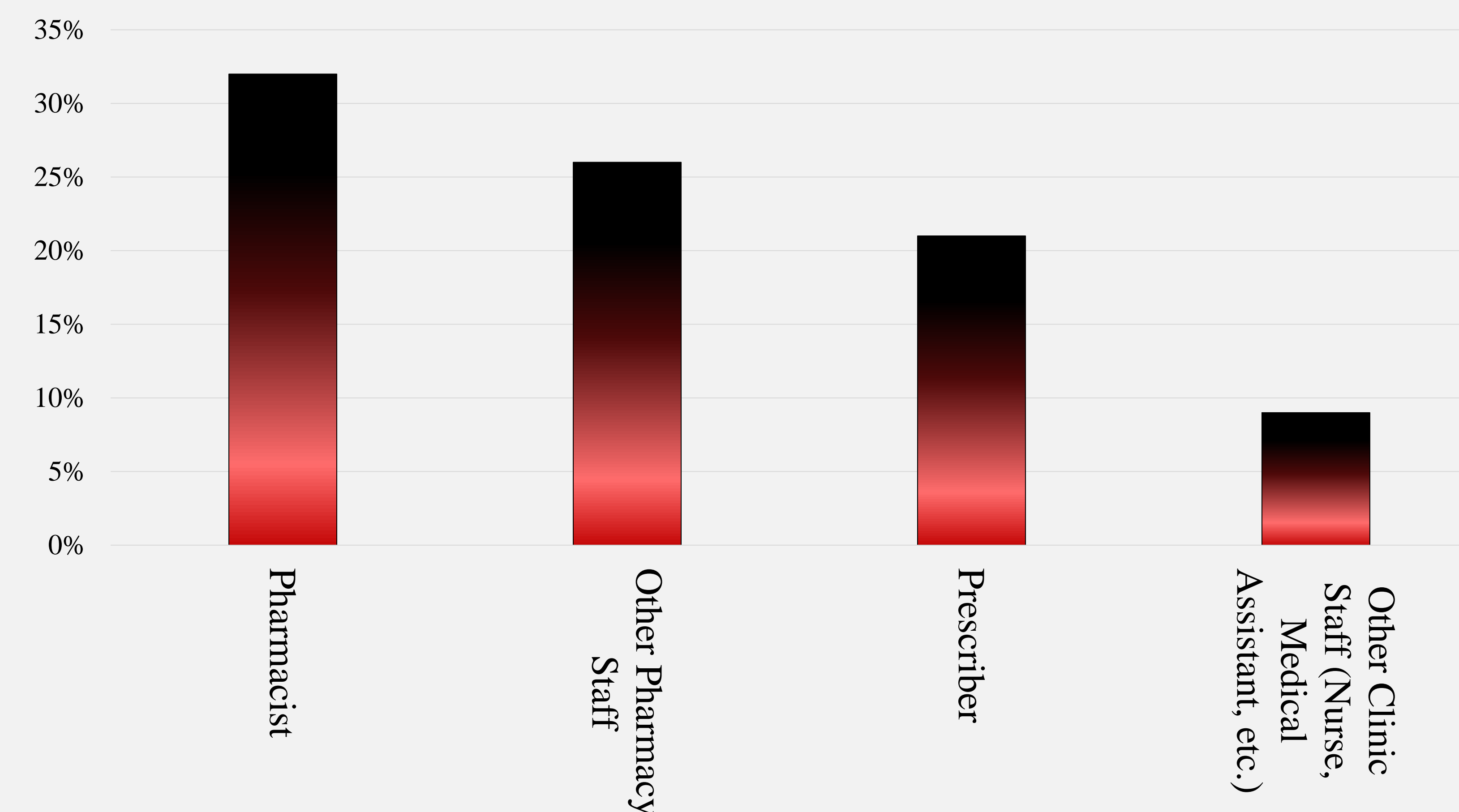
- When seeking initial diagnosis and/or treatment for ADHD, how did you feel about doing so?
- Approximately how long after your initial diagnosis of ADHD did you begin prescription stimulant medication(s)?
- How often are you required to visit or check-in with your prescriber to continue receiving your stimulant prescription(s)?
- What barriers have you experienced related to obtaining your prescription stimulant medication for ADHD?
- Have you felt hesitant to seek prescription stimulant treatment due to stigma (from pharmacy or prescriber office)?
- Have you ever felt a need to change prescribers in order to feel less affected by the stigma regarding obtaining prescription stimulant medication(s)?
- What feelings or comments would you like to express regarding what you think would be helpful for clinicians and/or pharmacies to know when helping patients with prescription stimulant treatment(s) in order for those patients to not feel stigmatized when receiving care?

RESULTS

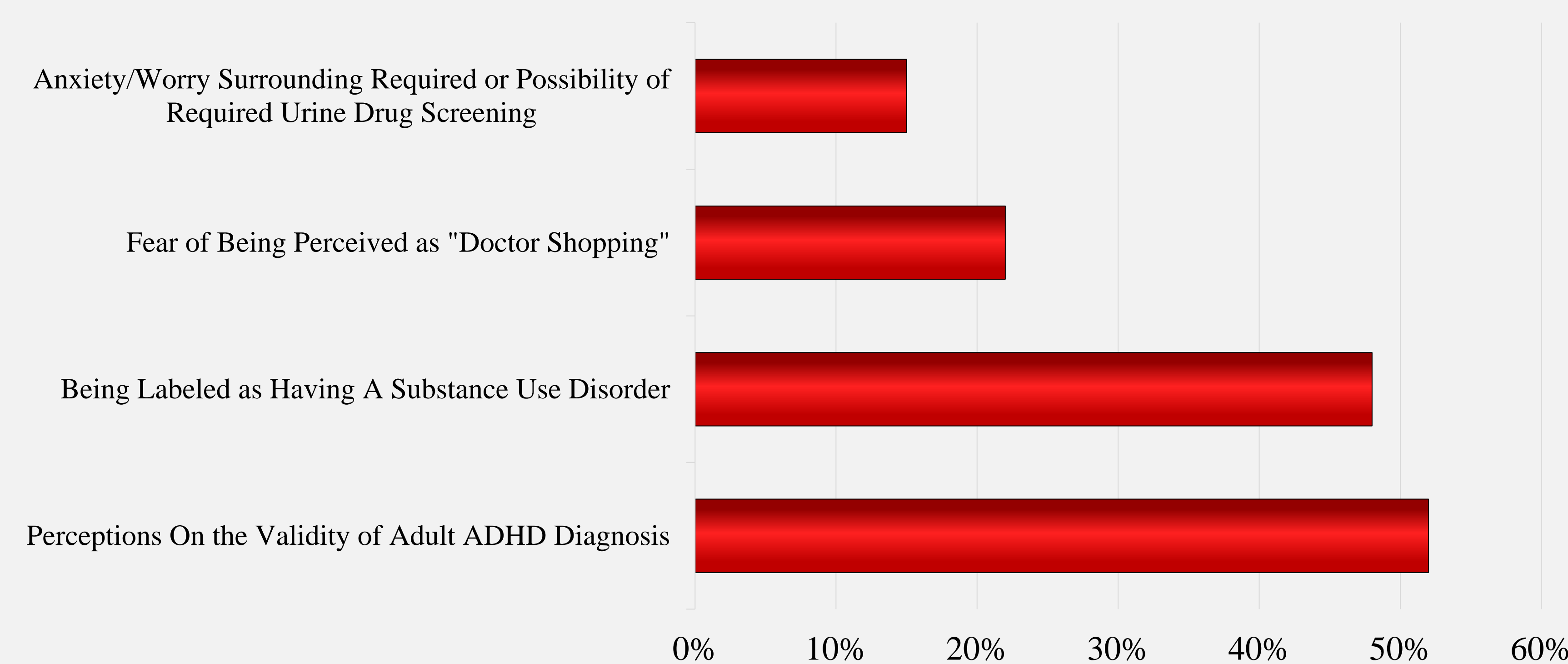
Most Common Reported Barriers to Obtaining Prescription Stimulant ADHD Medications



“I have felt judged or looked down upon for seeking to fill my prescription stimulant for ADHD treatment by:”



Specific Stigmatizing Perceptions/Experiences Creating Hesitancy to Seek Future Treatment



RESULTS

- 27 participants completed the survey.
- 89% were currently being prescribed a stimulant for ADHD.
- Most respondents (70%) indicated a 3-month required prescriber check-in to continue stimulant treatment.
- 32% reported feeling judgment by the pharmacist when filling their stimulant prescription.
- 8 reported stopping their prescription stimulant completely because of the experience of stigma during the course of their treatment.
- 41% reported feeling the need to change their prescribers in order to feel less affected by stigma.

DISCUSSION

- The highest rate of reported stigma was from pharmacist and pharmacy staff when acquiring prescription stimulant treatment.
- Commonly reported barriers to obtaining a prescription stimulant were drug availability, insurance issues, controlled substance refill policies, and pricing/insurance coverage.
- Compassion and understanding from their prescriber were mentioned by many participants as a necessary component of their treatment.
- Limitations**
 - Small patient sample size at one clinic location
 - Surveys conducted on site, which could lead to patients feeling untrusting of confidentiality of their responses

CONCLUSIONS

- Patients with an adult ADHD diagnosis experience stigma from multiple treatment points within the healthcare system.
- Stigma surrounding the process of ADHD diagnosis, medication acquisition, and treatment continues to be a major barrier toward seeking and maintaining stimulant treatment.
- Healthcare providers are encouraged to further explore the lived-experience of adults with ADHD to better understand and ultimately reduce stigmatizing behaviors.

Scan the following QR code to review study participant feedback and comments on reducing stigma within adult ADHD care:



References:

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