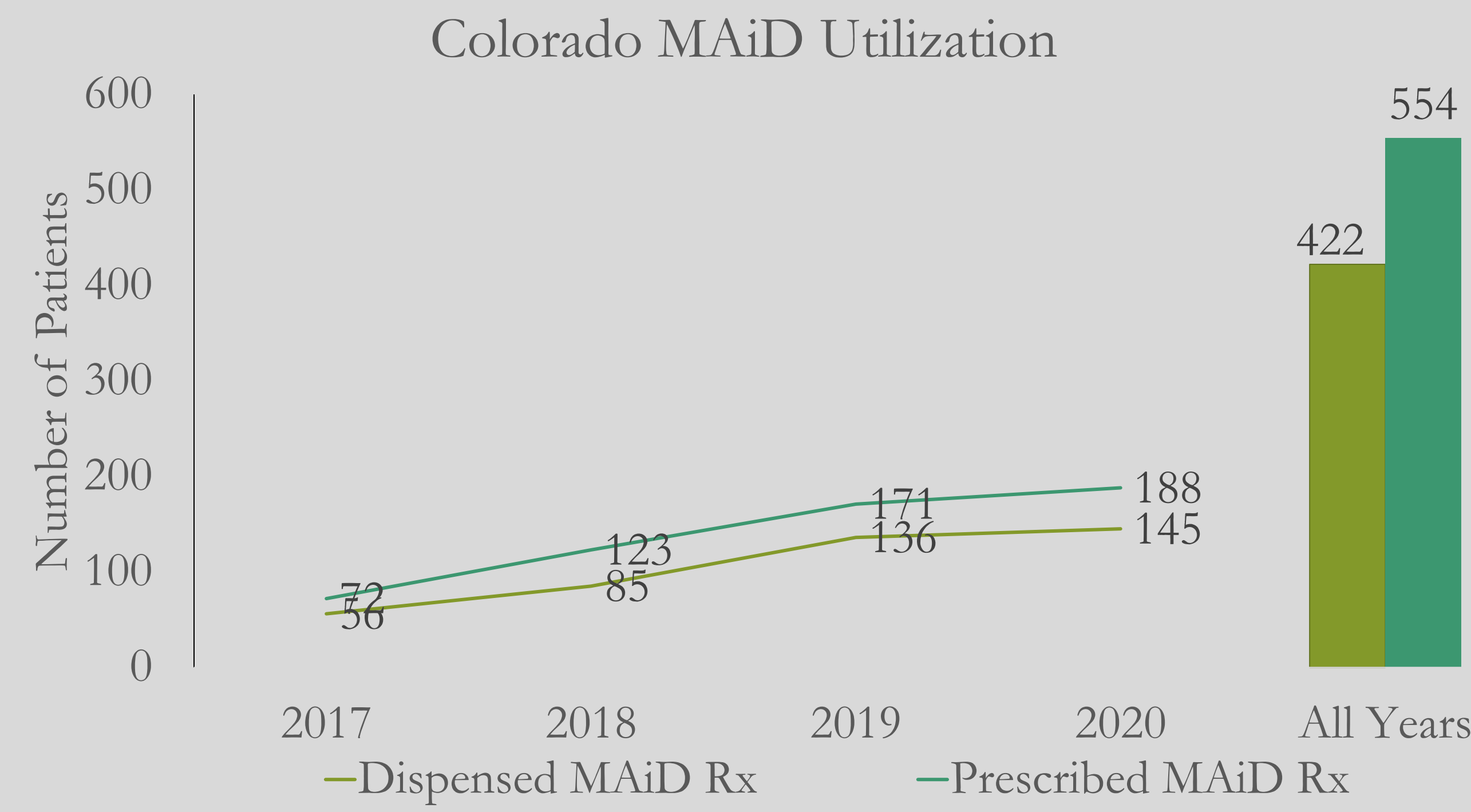


# Understanding experiences and perspectives of Medical Aid in Dying providers in Colorado

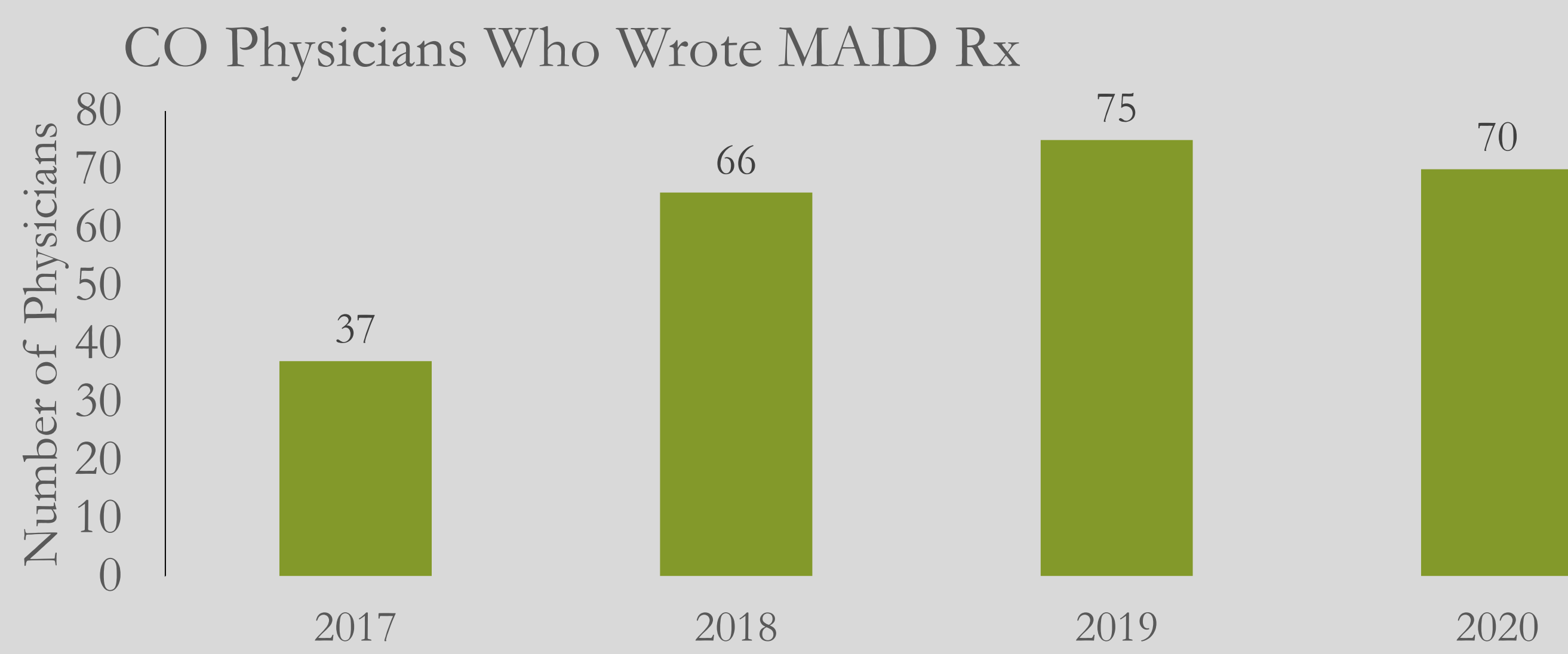
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## Introduction

- Medical Aid in Dying (MAiD) occurs when a physician provides a competent, terminally ill patient with a prescription for a lethal dose of medications



- Colorado legalized MAiD in 2017, with the following requirements:
  - Patient must be an 18+ Colorado resident
  - Must have terminal illness with prognosis of 6 months or less to live
  - Must be capable of MAiD drug self administration
  - An attending physician must write the prescription with a consulting physician's sign off on patient competence and capability
- An average of 70 physicians write MAiD prescriptions yearly



## Methods and Materials

- Goal:** Employ a novel methodology to identify physicians in CO caring for patients likely to request MAiD and provide the first ever state data on the experiences of these physicians.
- Targeting Method:** Using the Colorado All-Payer Claims Database
  - Identified patients with diseases similar to reported MAiD patients using ICD-10 codes → identified physicians providing outpatient care to these patients → ranked physicians based on their # of patients and other characteristics
- Survey Instrument:** Mailed, anonymous survey of identified CO physicians
  - Developed and pretested with MAiD physicians
  - 4 pages long and took ~5 minutes to complete
  - Survey Measures included: willingness and preparedness and participation in MAiD discussions, consultations, referrals or writing of a MAiD Rx; barriers to MAiD, and services used
- Survey Administration:** Three rounds of surveys sent with \$50 cash incentive between July 2020- Jan 2021
  - $\frac{300 \text{ respondents}}{583 \text{ physicians surveyed}} = 55\% \text{ weighted response rate}$

## Results

Figure 1. Respondents' Preparedness, Willingness and Actual Participation in MAiD activities

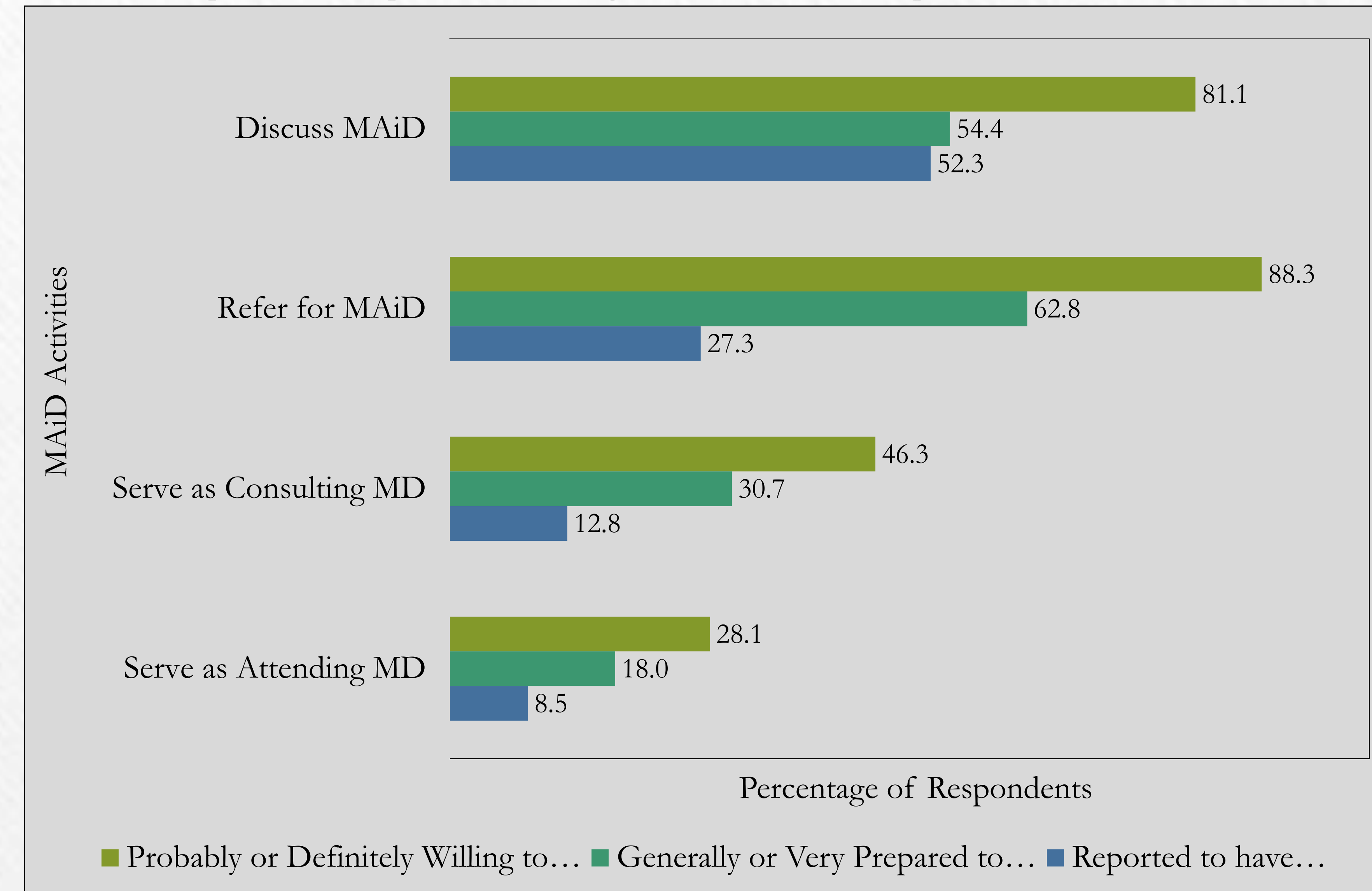
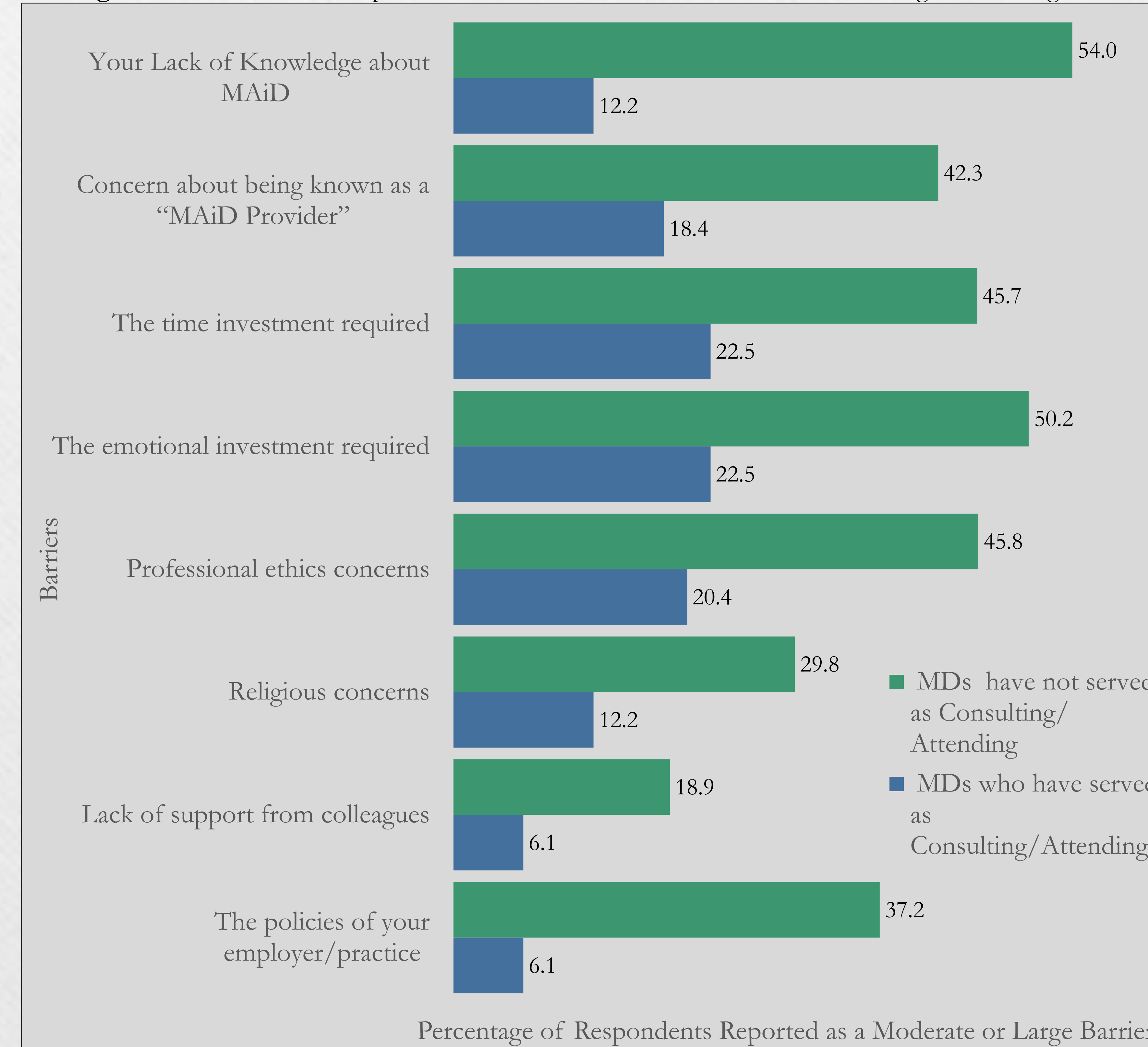


Figure 2. Barriers to Participation, Served vs. Not Served as a MAiD Attending/Consulting

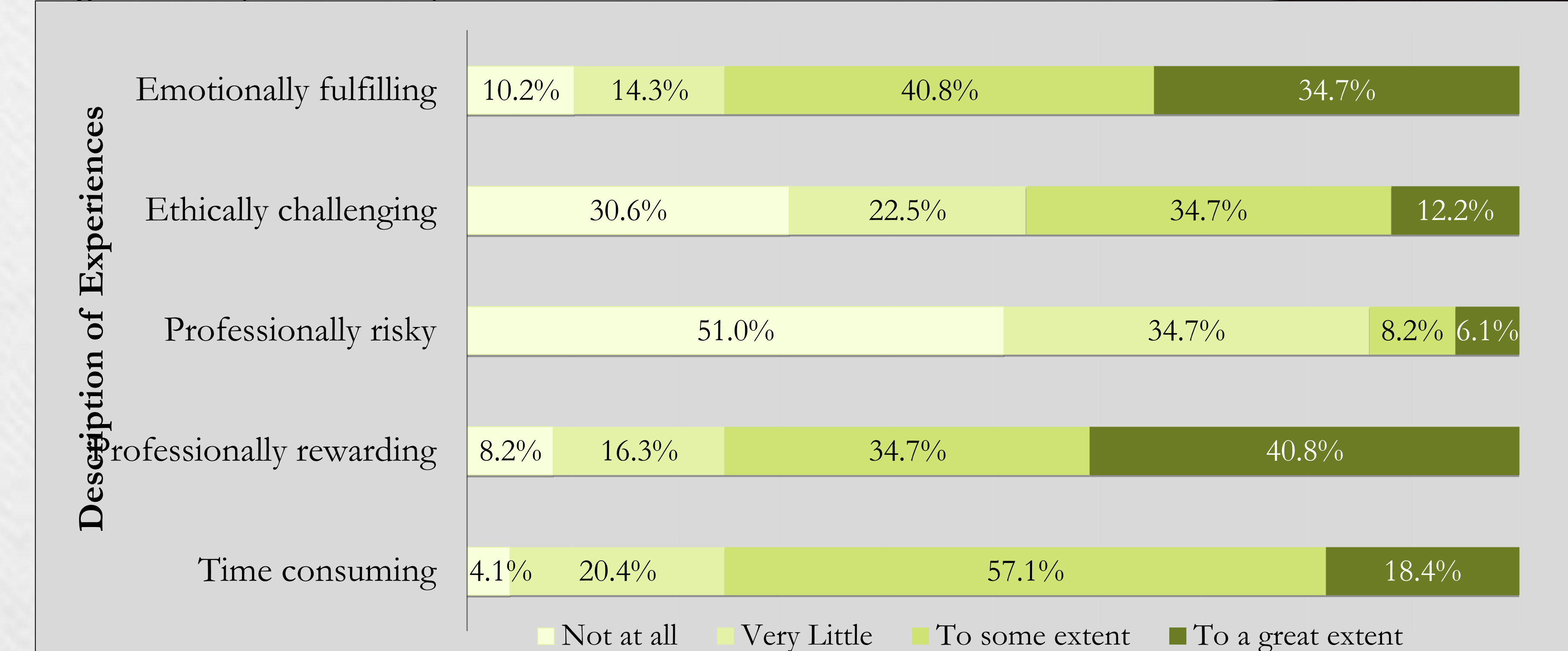


## Results (cont.)

Table 1. Factors Associated With MAiD Activities, Bivariate Results

	Discussed MAiD w/ Pt.	Referred Pt. for MAiD	Served as Consulting MD	Served as Attending MD
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
<b>Gender: (p-value)*</b>	0.69	<b>0.04</b>	0.14	0.51
Female	65 (54.2)	41 (34.2)	20 (16.7)	8 (6.7)
Male	92 (51.1)	41 (22.8)	18 (10.1)	17 (9.6)
<b>Specialty: (p-value)*</b>	0.77	0.12	<b>0.01</b>	0.1
Primary Care	79 (52.3)	36 (23.8)	12 (8.0)	9 (6.0)
Specialty Care	75 (54.7)	45 (32.8)	26 (19.1)	16 (11.8)
<b>Years Practicing Medicine: (p-value)*</b>	<b>0.04</b>	0.35	0.65	0.27
<10 years	20 (38.5)	11 (21.2)	5 (9.6)	2 (3.9)
11+ years	137 (55.2)	71 (28.6)	33 (13.4)	23 (9.4)
<b>Provides Outpatient Care: (p-value)*</b>	0.1	0.1	<b>0.05</b>	0.15
Yes	146 (53.5)	79 (28.9)	38 (14.0)	25 (9.3)
No	9 (36.0)	3 (12.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

Figure 3. Respondents' Experiences with Most Recent MAiD Case



## Discussion & Conclusions

- 8.5% of our sample had participated as a MAiD attending, compared to 0.01% of all CO physicians known to do so
- >80% are willing to discuss MAiD with patients and provide a MAiD referral, though much less are willing or prepared to serve as a consulting or attending
- Nearly half of respondents felt providing MAiD was ethically challenging while most found it emotionally fulfilling and rewarding
- The top three barriers were a lack of knowledge, the emotional investment required and professional ethics concerns while religious concerns and lack of support were the less prominent
- There is a need for further medical education around MAiD
- Limitations
  - Results are only relevant to CO physicians caring for patients with similar disease characteristics to MAiD patients
  - Due to the anonymous nature of the survey, we cannot characterize the results further

## References

- Campbell EG, Kini V, Ressalam J, Bolcic-Jankovic D, Lum HD, Kessler ER, DeCamp M. Physicians' Attitudes and Experiences with Medical Aid in Dying in Colorado: A "Hidden Population" Survey. *JGIM*, Jan 2022.
- Polling on Medical Aid in Dying, Compassion & Choices. Accessed May 17, 2021. <https://compassionandchoices.org/resource/polling-medical-aid-dying/>
- Center for Health and Environmental Data. *Colorado End of Life Options Act-Year Four 2020 Data Summary*. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment; 2021. Accessed May 4, 2021. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zJClmV9bSMIJrE\\_YoDhSeSNh98qsnDq/view?usp=embed\\_facebook](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zJClmV9bSMIJrE_YoDhSeSNh98qsnDq/view?usp=embed_facebook)