

# MEDICINE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO INPATIENTS

## Are we doing what patients want?

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### Background

While it is common practice to counsel patients on discharge about new medications, little is known about the information they receive during admission<sup>1,2</sup>. The National Safety and Quality Health Services Standards (NQHSS) in Australia outline strategies to inform patients and carers about medications whilst in hospital, highlighting the necessity of providing verbal and written medicine information<sup>3</sup>.

Although it is known that providing information improves patient knowledge<sup>4</sup>, only 50% to 80% of pharmacists offer written information to patients<sup>5,6</sup>.

There is a lack of evidence regarding the application of these standards, what information patients believe to be beneficial, if patients understand the information provided, and their involvement in medication decision-making. This strongly encourages further investigation.

### Aim

- To explore patients' perception of medicines information provided during their hospital admission at University Hospital Geelong.
- To investigate patients' desired knowledge of inpatient only medicines
- To assess how patients want their medicines information provided
- To identify patients' opinion regarding their involvement in medication decisions

### Methods

A survey, designed using REDcap involving 20 medicine-related questions, was verbally administered across 7 medical and surgical wards. The questionnaire requested information regarding medicines information that had been received and the information patients desire.

#### Inclusion criteria

- Patients of University Hospital Geelong (UHG), 18 years and older, prescribed one or more medications

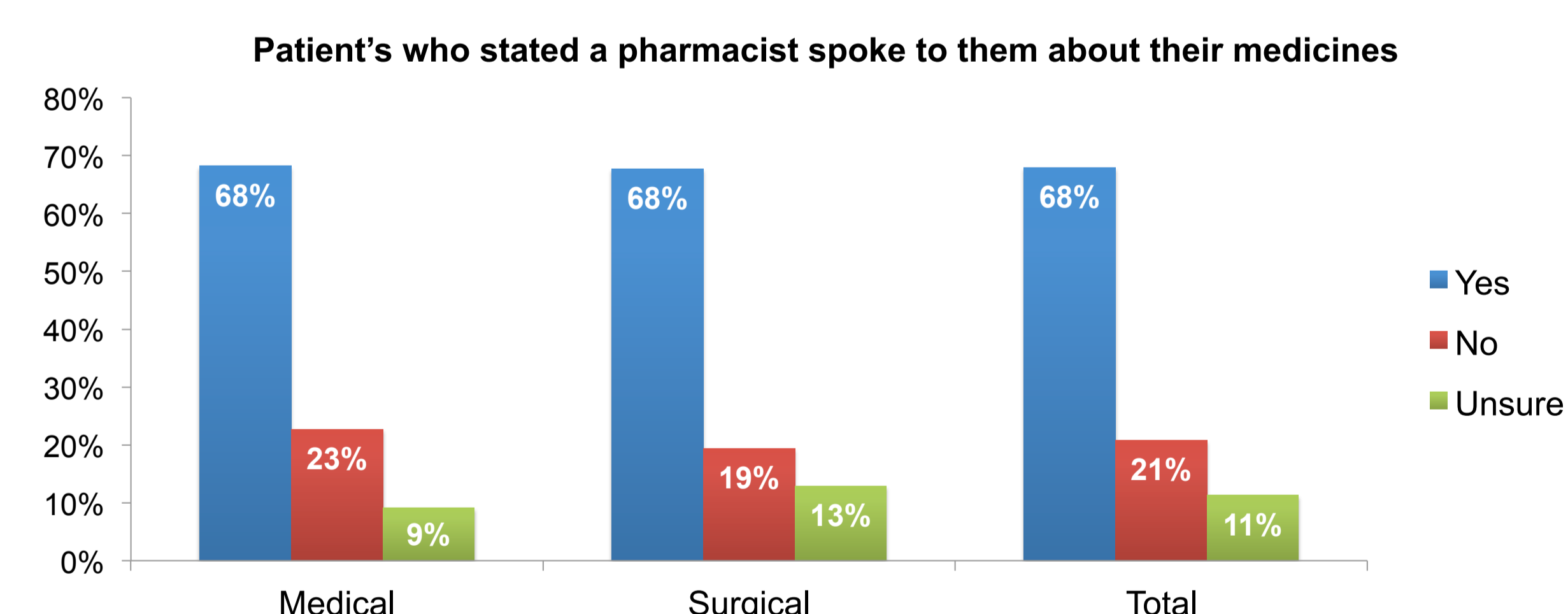
#### Exclusion criteria

- Unable to communicate in English; Cognitive impairment or acute confusion; Did not manage own medications and did not have a carer present; Patients on wards with no pharmacy service

### Results

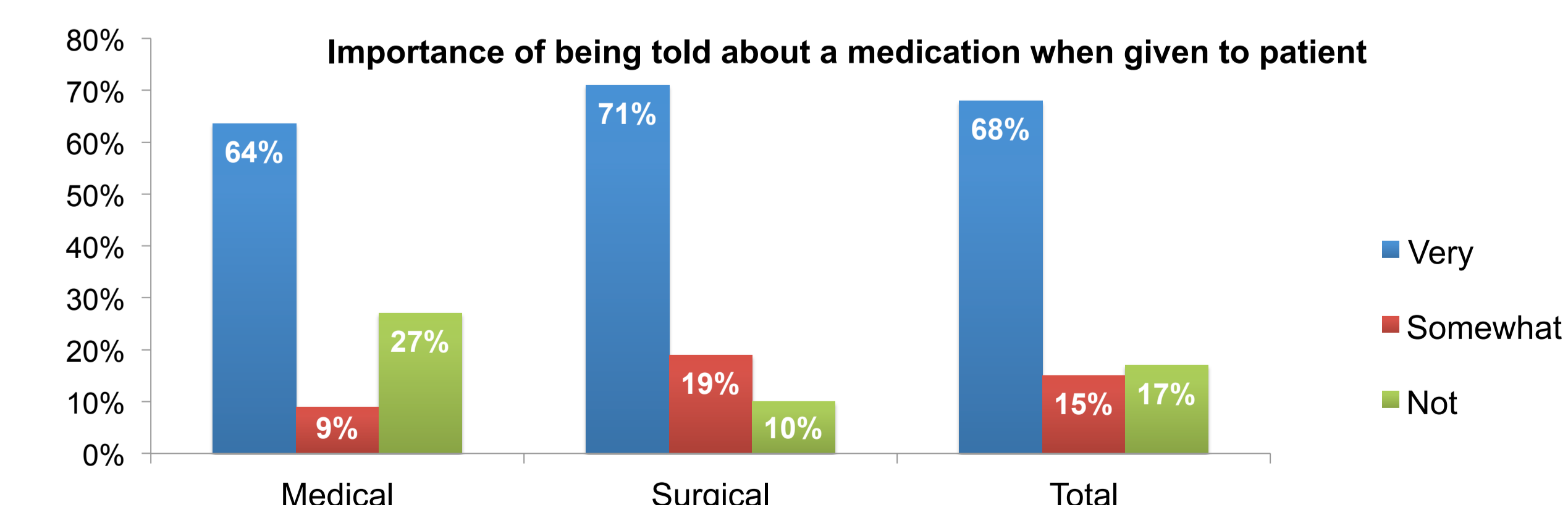
A total of 53 patients participated. 58.4% (31) of patients were located on surgical and 42% (22) on medical wards.

	Medical (n = 22)	Surgical (n = 31)	Total (n = 53)
Age (mean yrs ± std)	65.3 ± 15.6	65.2 ± 15.1	63.7 ± 15.2
Female	45.5%	58.1%	52.8%
Day of Stay at time of interview (median [IQR])	6 [ 4,11.25 ]	6 [ 4,8 ]	6 [ 4,9 ]



Of those patients who stated a pharmacist did not speak to them, 9% reported no health professional spoke to them about their medications and 7.5% could not recall.

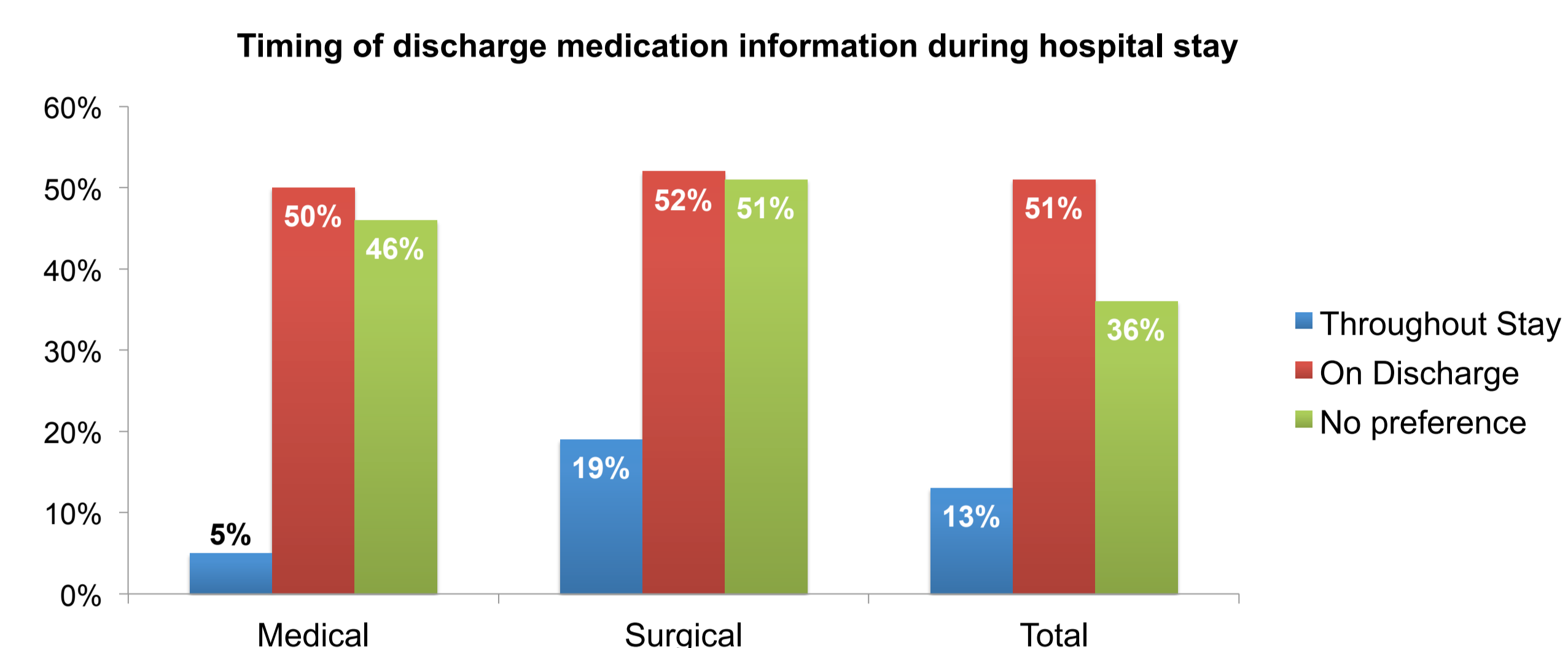
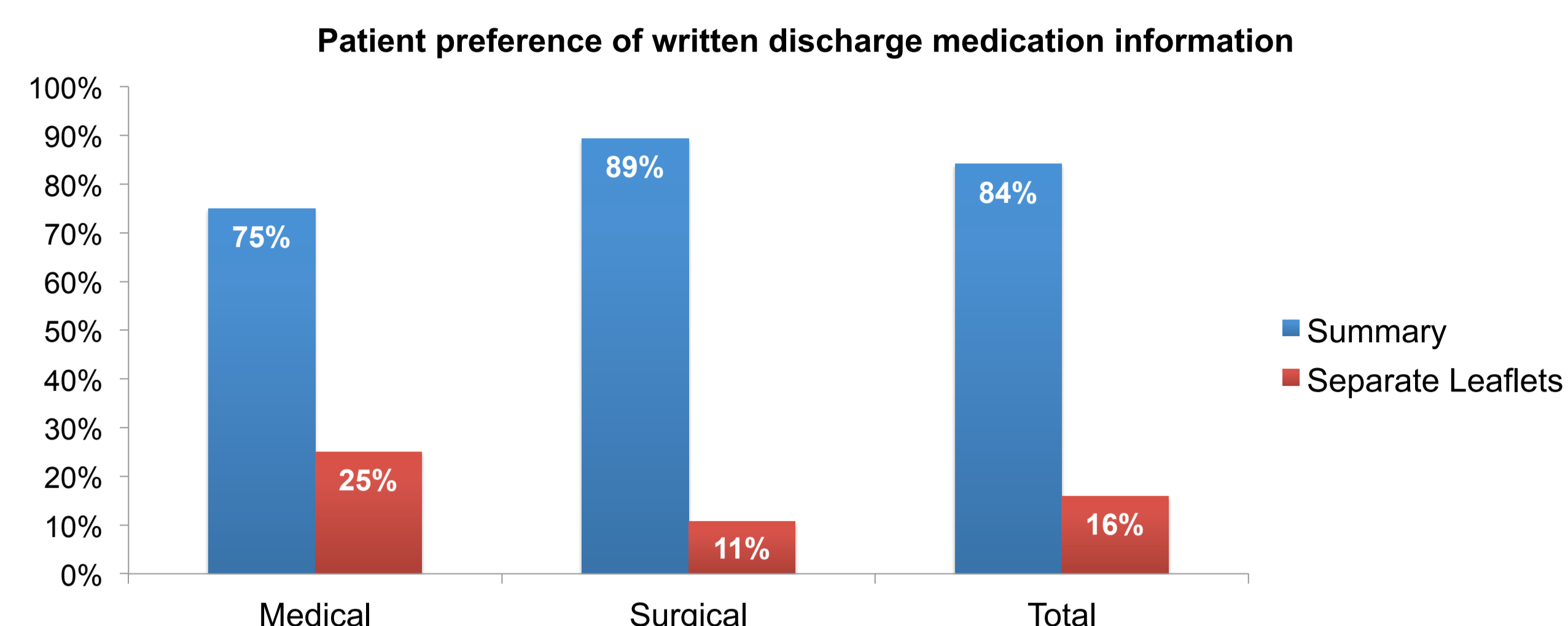
Doctors (45%) & Nurses (42%) discussed newly-initiated medications with patients more often than pharmacists (39%).



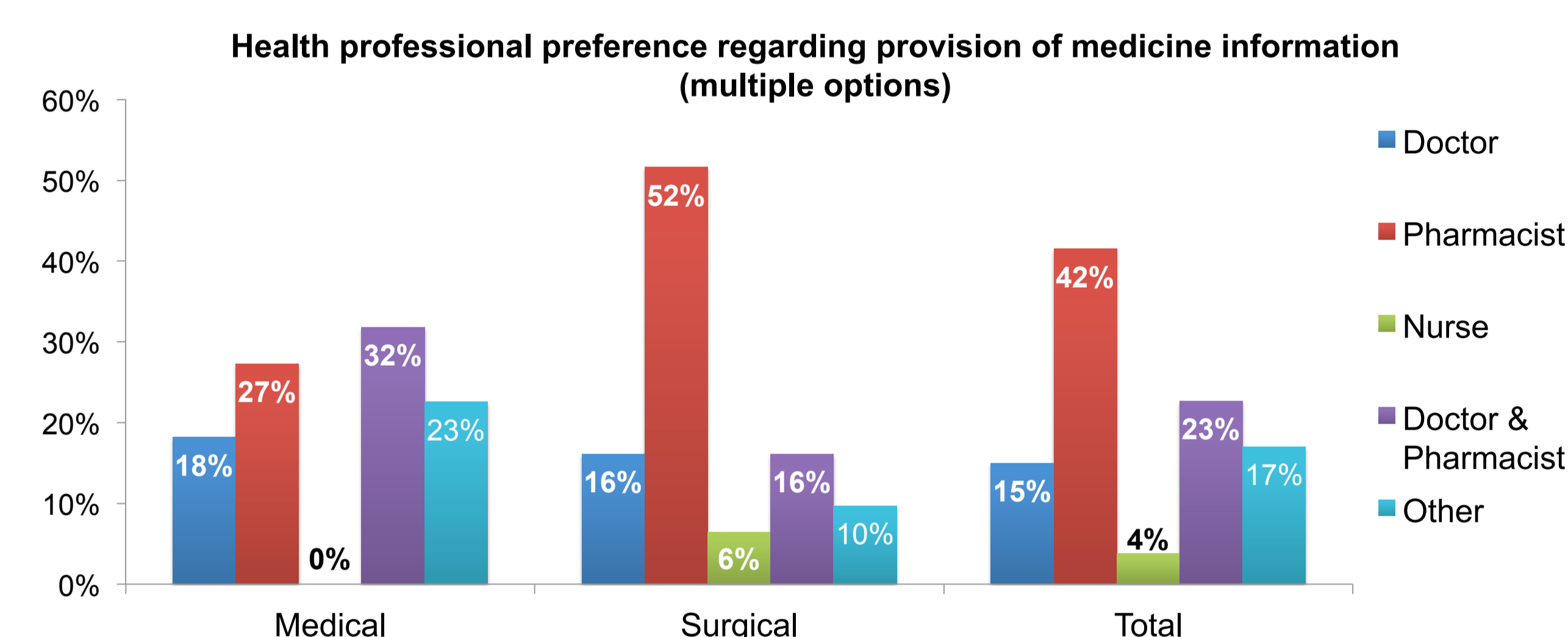
59% of patients stated they did not want to receive extensive information about new medications commenced in hospital that would not be continued on discharge.

### Results

Overall, 48% of patients preferred both written and verbal discharge medicine information.



Only 6% of patients had been given written medicines information at the time of questioning.



Of the 53 participants, 74% chose a pharmacist to be the most appropriate healthcare professional to provide medicine information.

### Discussion

The findings of this study show patients value medicines information, especially at time of administration and on discharge. Patients prefer medication summaries rather than lengthy leaflets. More than 90% of patients were spoken to by a health professional about their own medications.

The study highlighted that more than half of patients reported seeing a pharmacist, which is comparable to 77% in a similar study<sup>7</sup>.

#### Limitations

Small sample size, qualitative design and timing of questionnaire during hospital stay are limitations of this study. The study design did not allow investigation into medicines information provision and readmission rates, however this may be a future focus. There was also no assessment of actual provision of information from health professionals to patients, hence, the data is based on patient perception and recollection.

### Conclusion

There remains some variation between preference of medicines information received as a hospital patient. Patients preferred written summaries of medications on discharge, which is consistent with our current practice. The outcome of this study will inform current practices and promote pharmacist education to achieve a more effective technique when providing patient's with medication information.

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