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Overview

- An estimated 155% increase in wait times reported in the past two decades in Canada (1).
- The System Coordinated Access (SCA) Program is a Ministry of Health funded program, initiated to support the development and adoption of an electronic referral (eReferral) solution in five Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) across Ontario as a response to the growing wait times for services and specialists' care in our province.

The program aims to:

- enhance communication between healthcare providers (HCPs),
- track patient referrals through a secure electronic platform,
- inform patients throughout the referral process through automated email notifications, and
- decrease wait times to access healthcare specialists and services.

The Waterloo Wellington LHIN (WWLHIN) was the first to go live with the eReferral solution for Orthopedic, Diabetes Education Program and Diagnostic Imaging referrals starting August 2017.

Objectives

This pilot study was conducted to collect feedback from the Ocean eReferral solution early adopters (users) and patients in the WWLHIN

- To assess users' overall satisfaction with the quality and functionality of the system and its effect on work productivity,
- To identify users' opinions on the potential benefits and barriers of using the system, and
- To explore patients' opinions of the electronic referral and notification system.

Methods

Study Design

- This study employed a descriptive design

Population

- 17 early adopter users (HCPs, and Central Intake staff) in the WWLHIN
- 104 patients who received email notifications of their booked appointment through the solution

User Survey Details

- Online survey from December 21, 2017 to January 11, 2018
- Survey designed on the Ocean eReferral solution and Survey Monkey
- Invitations were sent to 45 physicians registered with Ocean and administrator/receptionist and four Central Intake staff
- Two reminder emails were sent

General Information	Implementation, Training and Support	Quality and Productivity	Opinion and Perception of Benefits
4 Questions	5 Questions	4 Questions	7 Questions

Patient Survey Details

- Ongoing online survey beginning August 14, 2017
- Embedded within the solution and is sent to the patients within the email confirming their referral

Results

User Response

Figure 1. User Responses to Survey Invitations



Patient Response

Figure 2. Patient Responses to Survey Invitations

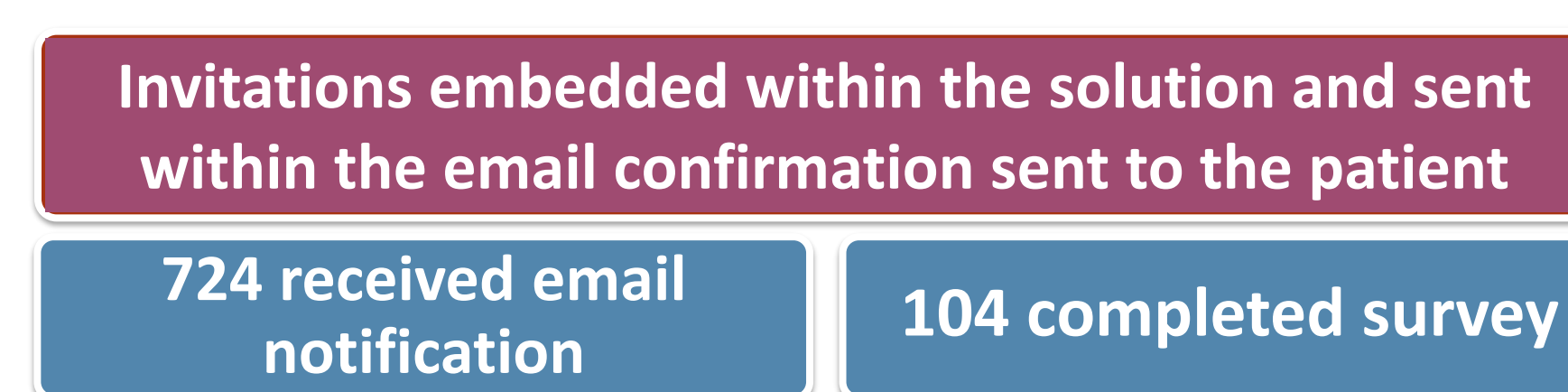


Figure 3. User Overall Satisfaction

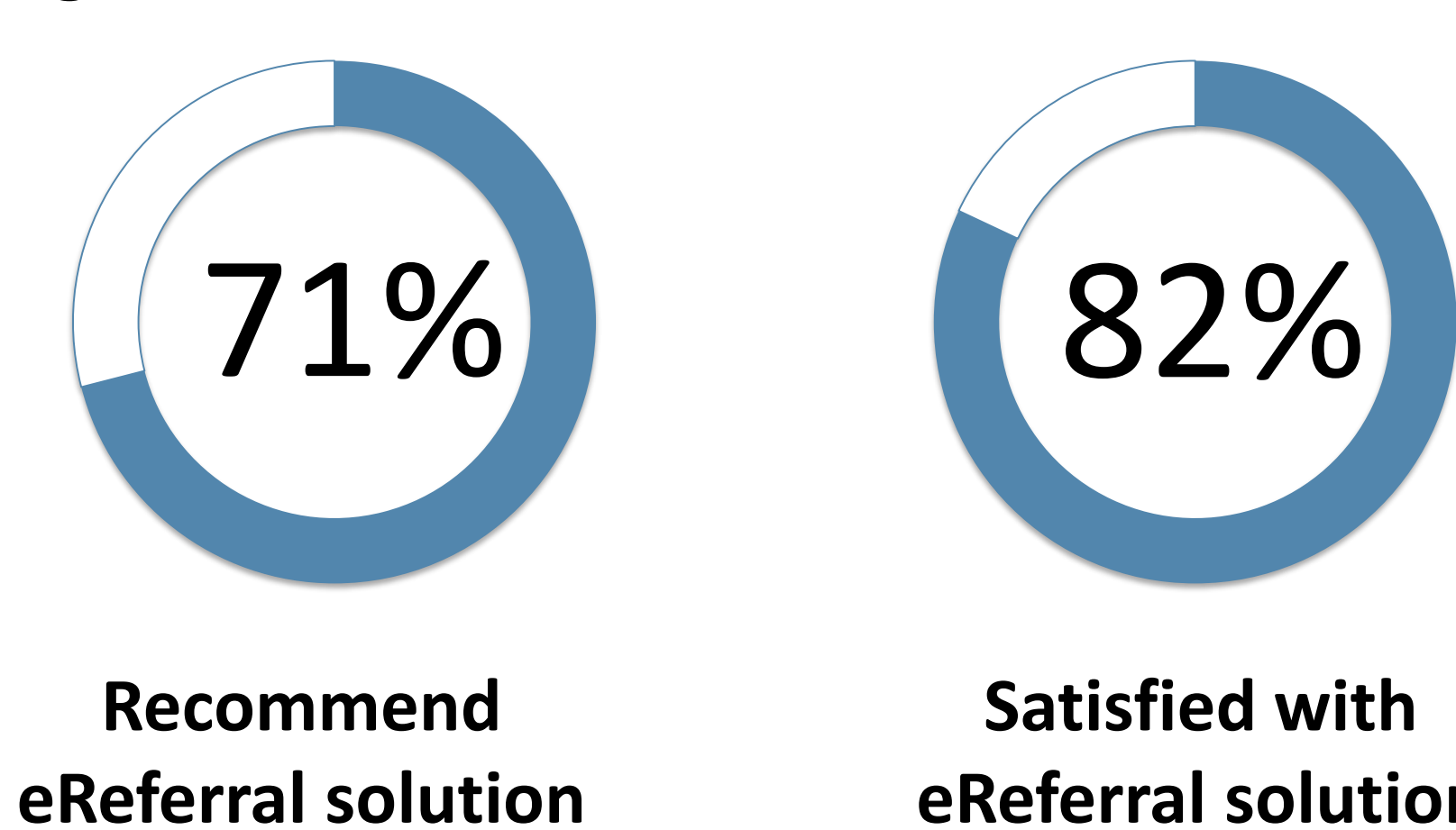
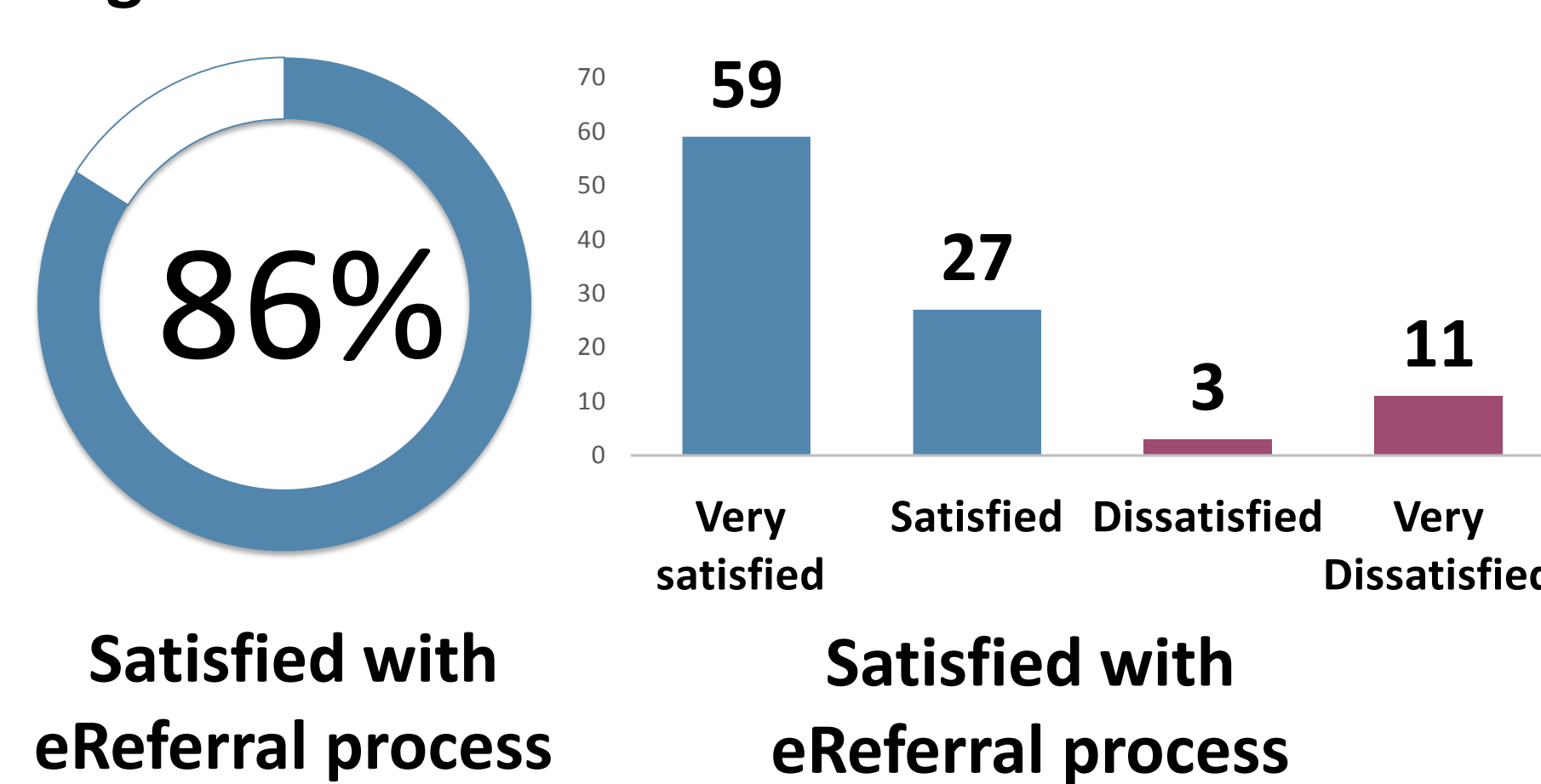
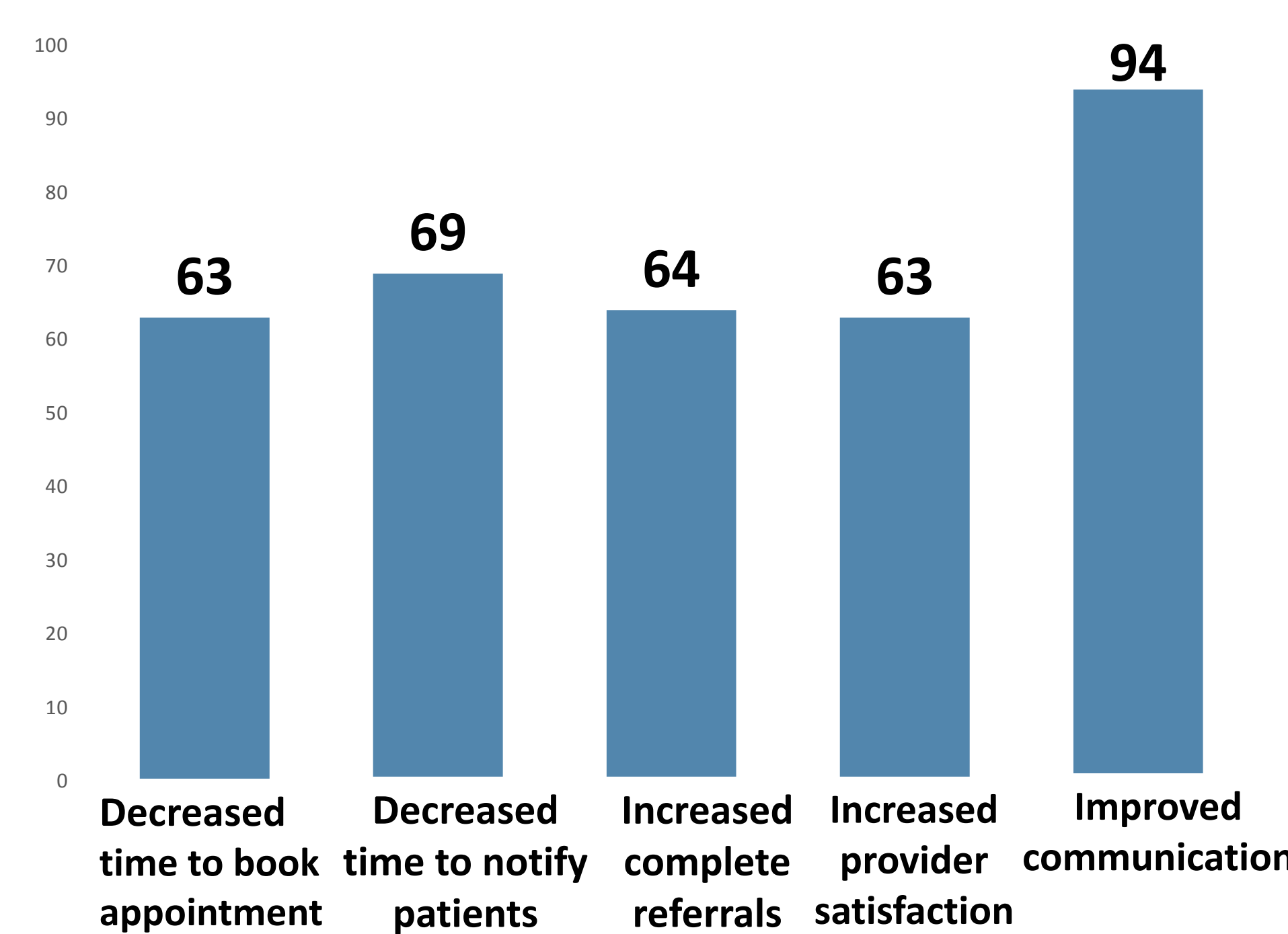


Figure 4. Patient Overall Satisfaction



Users' Opinions

Figure 5. Users' Level of Agreement of Potential Benefits of the Solution



Patients' Opinions

Figure 6. Patients' Level of Agreement with the eReferral Process

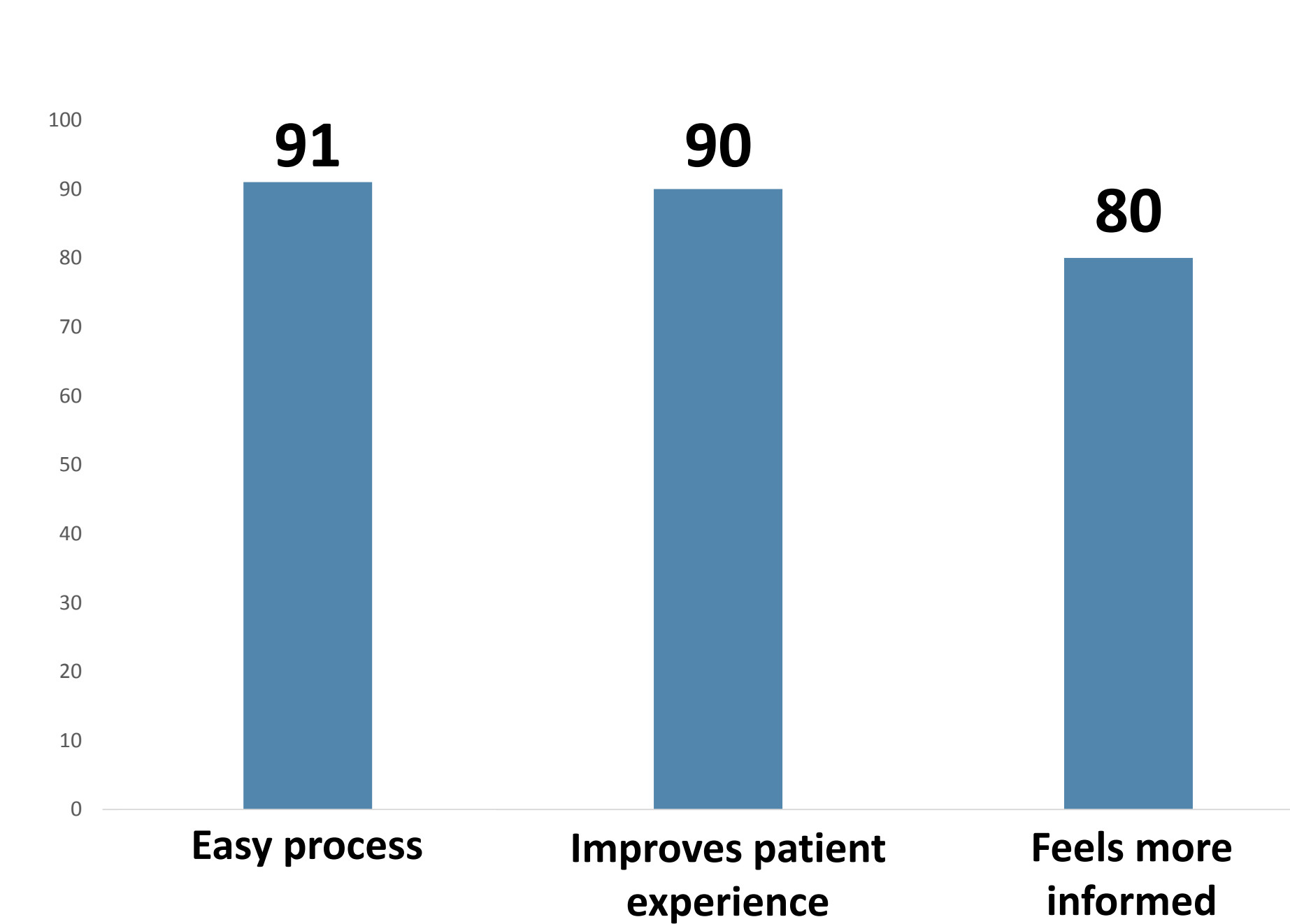


Figure 7. Users' Opinion and Level of Agreement with the eReferral System

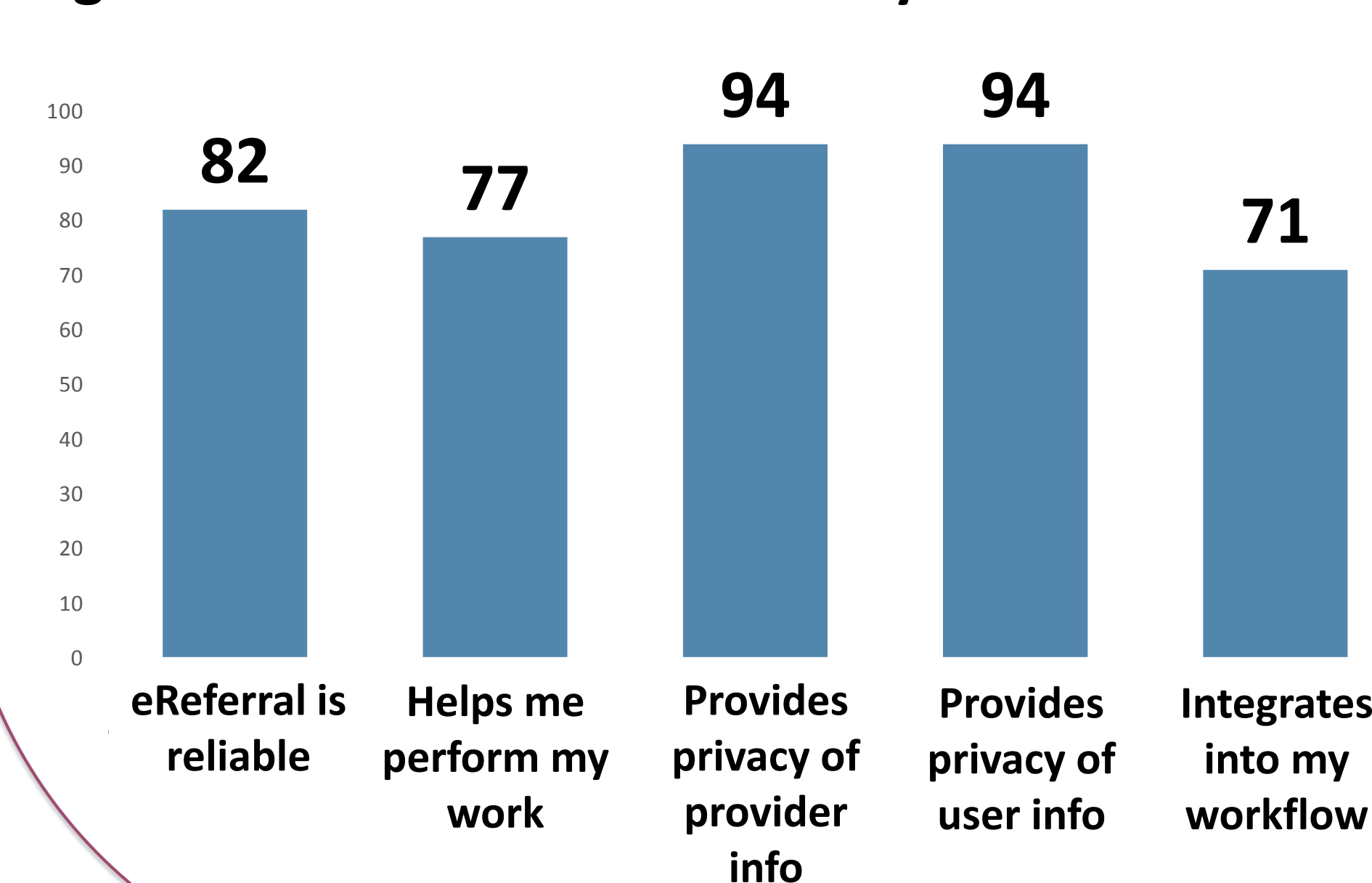
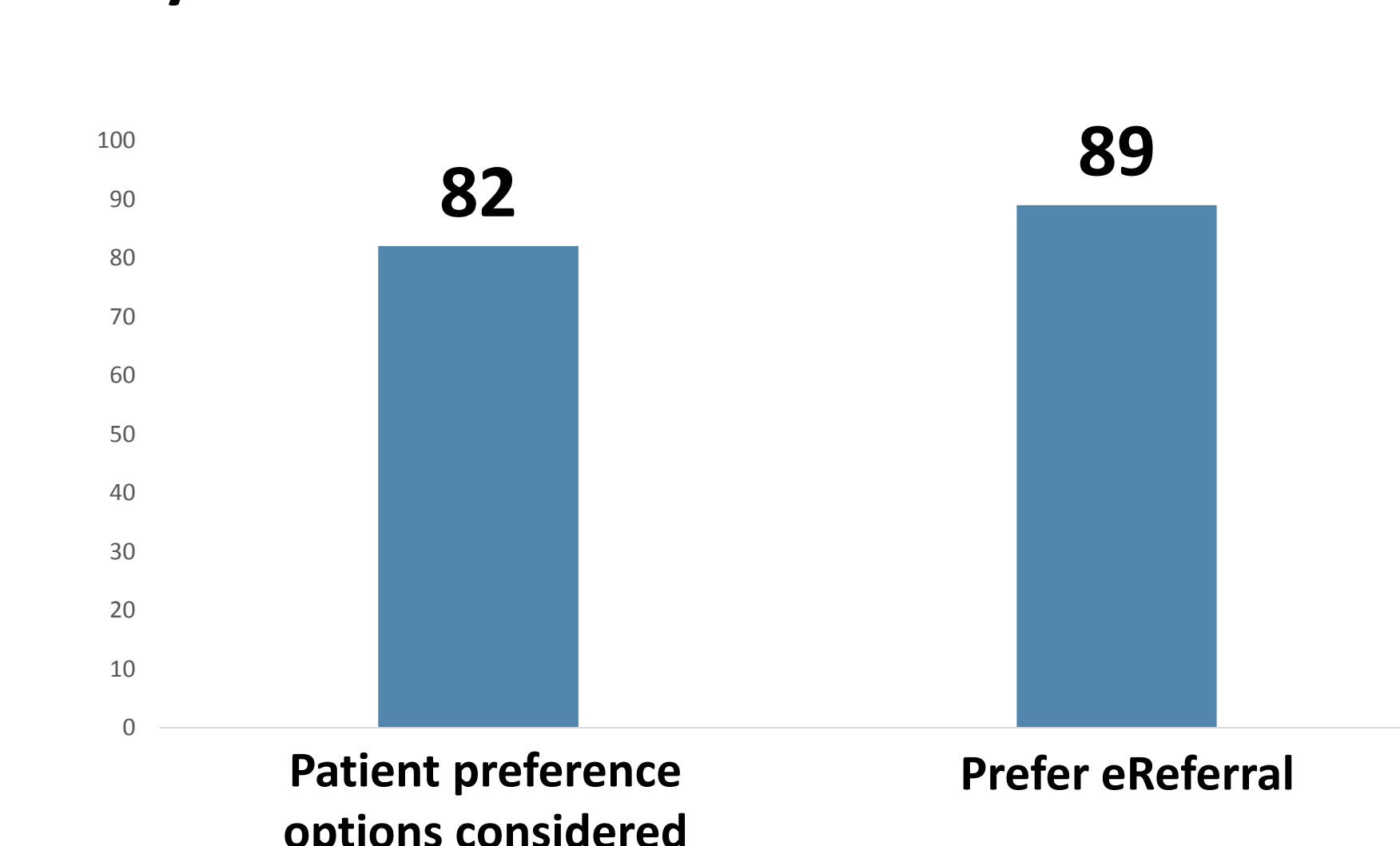


Figure 8. Patients' Opinion of eReferral System



Results (Continued)

What We Heard from Patients



Fantastic system...great to see technology coming in place to make things better for PATIENTS

Loved getting the email confirming my date and time... for sure I felt in control

I like the fact that it was emailed and that I didn't have to write it down somewhere, only to have it get misplaced



Conclusion/Future Direction

What the Findings Imply

- It is valuable to integrate an eReferral solution in healthcare practice settings
- The eReferral solution has the potential to stimulate better practice flow and communication between clinicians
- The eReferral solution is shaping a standardized coordinated system that includes active communication that meets the needs of both patients and providers
- Future expansion of the eReferral system will include other pathways in additional LHINs

References

- Barua B, Ren F. Waiting your turn: Wait times for health care in Canada. Fraser Institute 2016 report. Accessed December 21, 2017.

Acknowledgement

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