

# Physicians' Attitudes & Perceptions on Physician Associates

 FEBRUARY 2025

# Methodology

Morning Consult conducted online interviews among a national sample of attending physicians.

- 999 interviews yielding a confidence interval of +/- 3%\*.
- Fielded January 2<sup>nd</sup> through January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
- Sample was composed of attending physicians holding either MD, DOs, or PhDs.

*\*Confidence intervals are greater for subgroups of each population.*



# Key Takeaways

## 1 PAs are seen as improving access to care

Physicians agree patients have a hard time accessing healthcare, and PAs contribute to alleviating provider shortages. **A majority agree removing barriers for PAs could improve access to care.**

## 2 Physicians describe PAs as safe, effective, and qualified

Physicians report that PAs provide **safe and effective care** and see PAs as especially qualified when it comes to examining patients

## 3 PAs are seen as facing undue barriers in providing care

A majority of physicians **agree PAs face administrative barriers in providing care.**

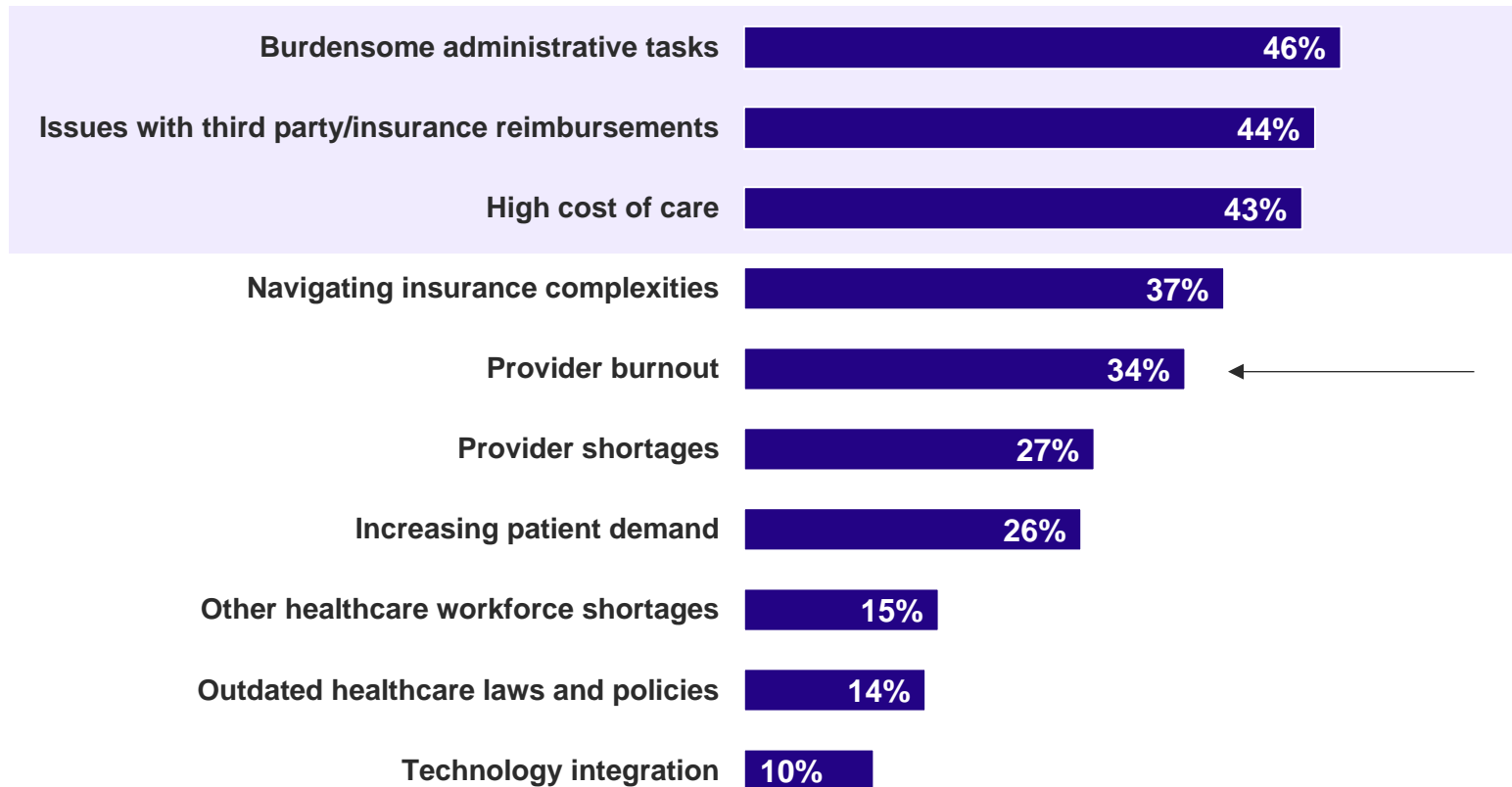
## 4 Physicians display trust in the care provided by PAs

An overwhelming majority of physicians report they **are rarely or ever in the room during PA-patient interactions and spend little time monitoring care provided by PAs.**

## ISSUES IN US HEALTHCARE

# Physicians rank administrative burdens, insurance, and cost as the top three challenges in US healthcare system

What would you say are the biggest challenges working in the US healthcare system? Please rank options one through 10 where one is the biggest challenge and 10 is the smallest challenge. (Showing % ranked one through three among all)

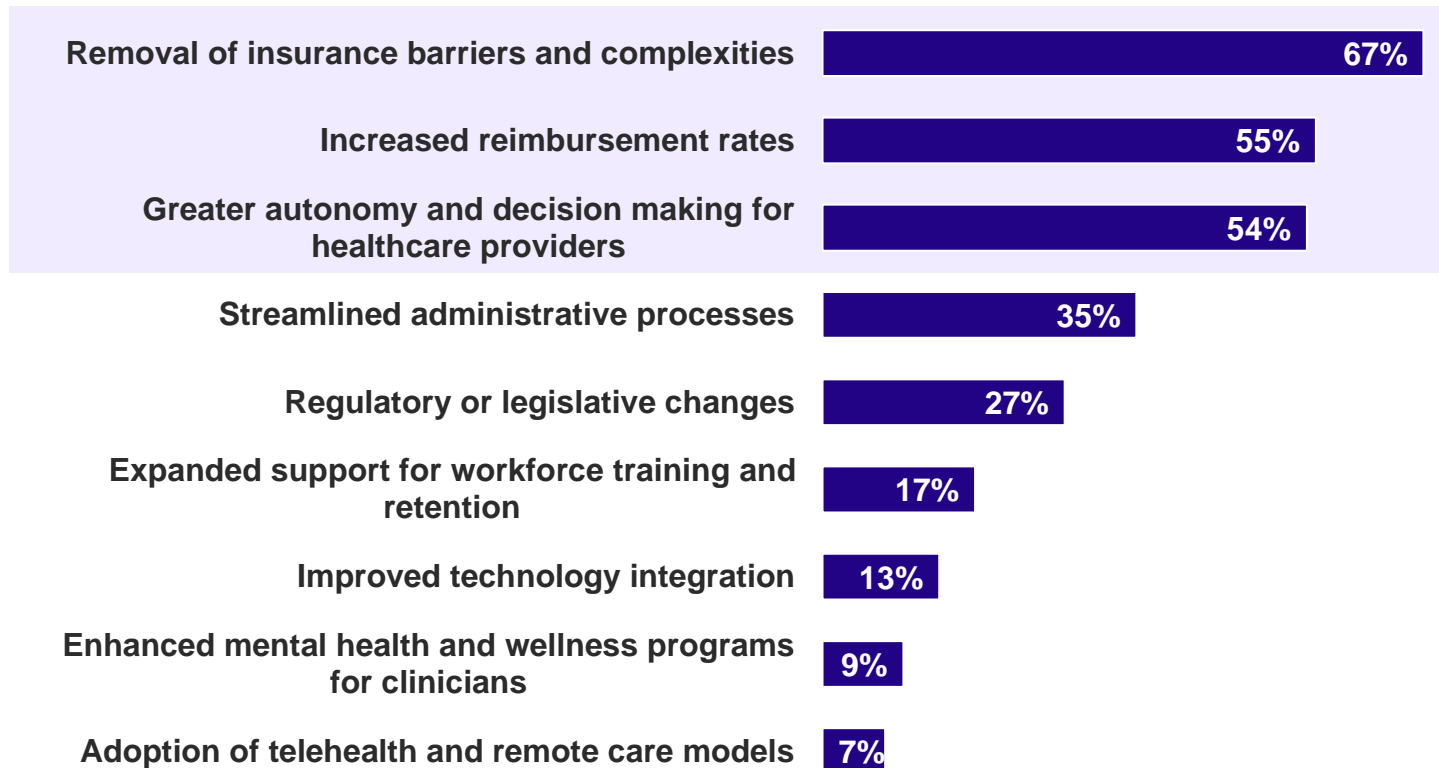


Physicians aged 65+ report provider burnout as a significant challenge at a lower rate (24%) than those aged 45-64 (38%) and those aged 35-44 (38%).

## ISSUES IN US HEALTHCARE

# Greater autonomy for providers is seen as one of the top solutions to addressing healthcare system challenges

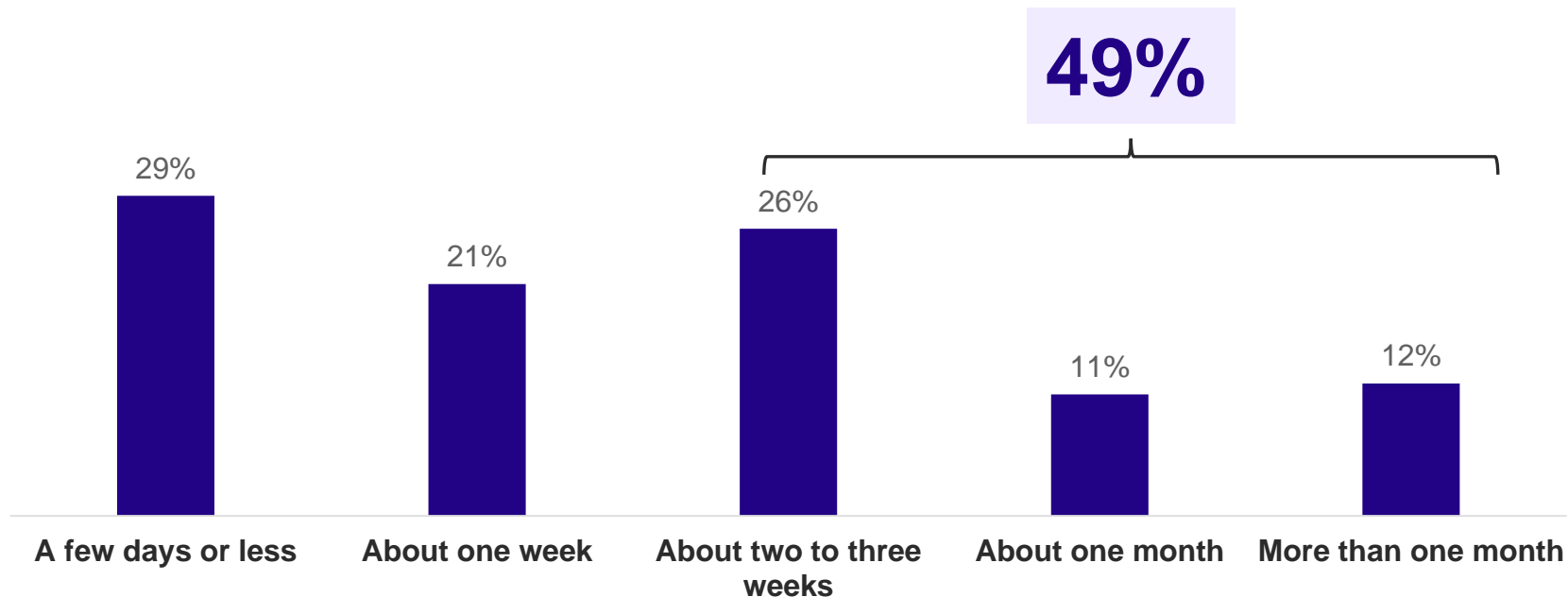
*What do you believe are the most effective solutions to address these challenges? Select up to three.*



## PROVIDER SHORTAGES

# Nearly half of all physicians report patients waiting two weeks or longer for appointments

*On average how long would you say your patients wait between scheduling an appointment and seeing a provider within the setting where you practice? (Showing % selected among all)*

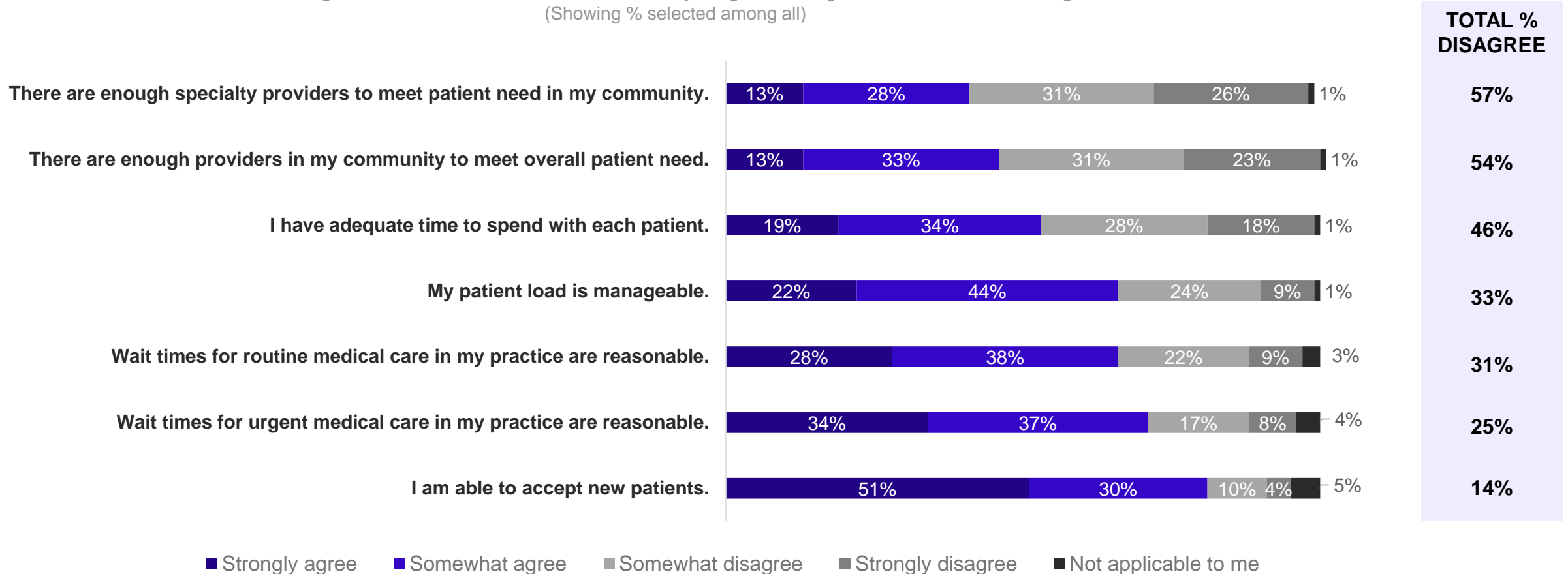


- **Physicians in the South are less likely to report long wait times**, with 44% reporting waits of two weeks or more versus 55% in the Midwest, 53% in the West and 51% in the Northeast.
- **General practitioners (43%) are less likely to report wait times of 2 weeks or more than specialists (49%).**

## PROVIDER SHORTAGES

# Over half say there aren't enough providers, one-third struggle with patient load

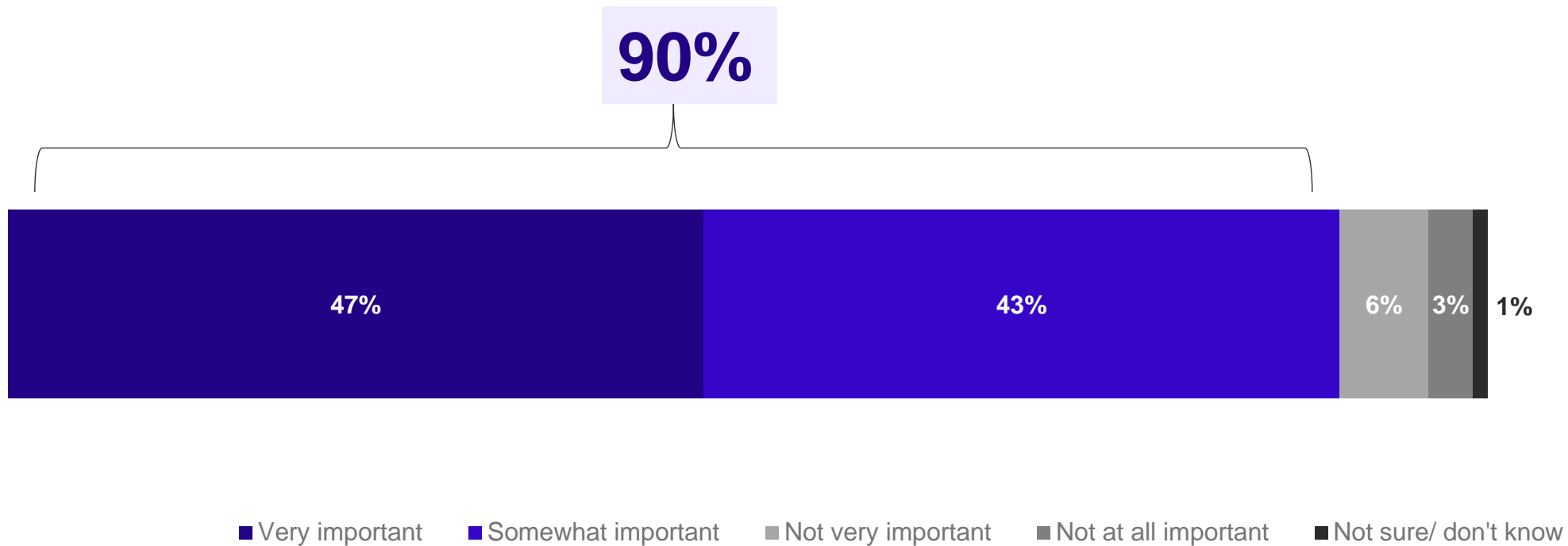
Thinking about the statements below, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following?  
(Showing % selected among all)



## PA PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES

# Overwhelming majority of physicians say PAs are important to enhancing care delivery

On the scale below, how important are PAs to enhancing care delivery in the medical setting where you practice?  
(Showing % selected among all)



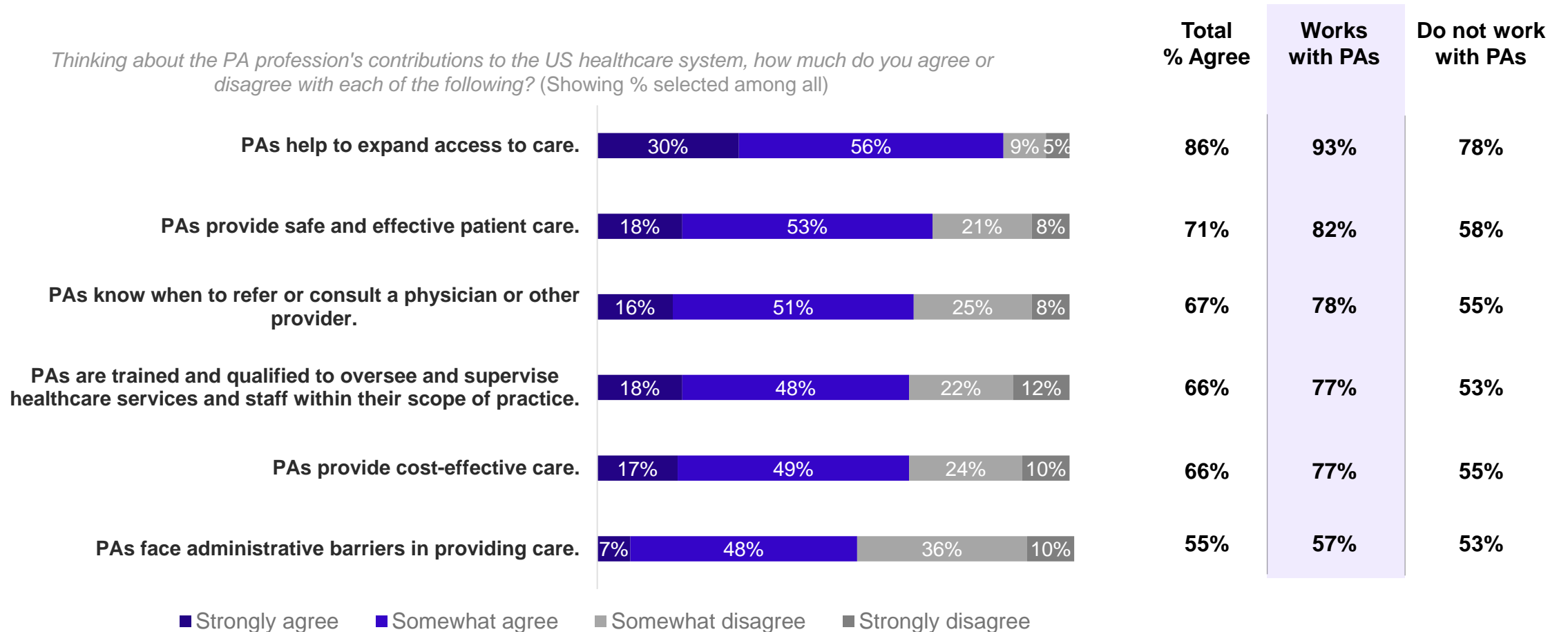


## PA PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES

# Physicians agree PAs expand access to care but face administrative barriers

Physicians who work with PAs are more likely to view them as safe, effective, and collaborative clinicians who provide cost-effective care

Thinking about the PA profession's contributions to the US healthcare system, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following? (Showing % selected among all)

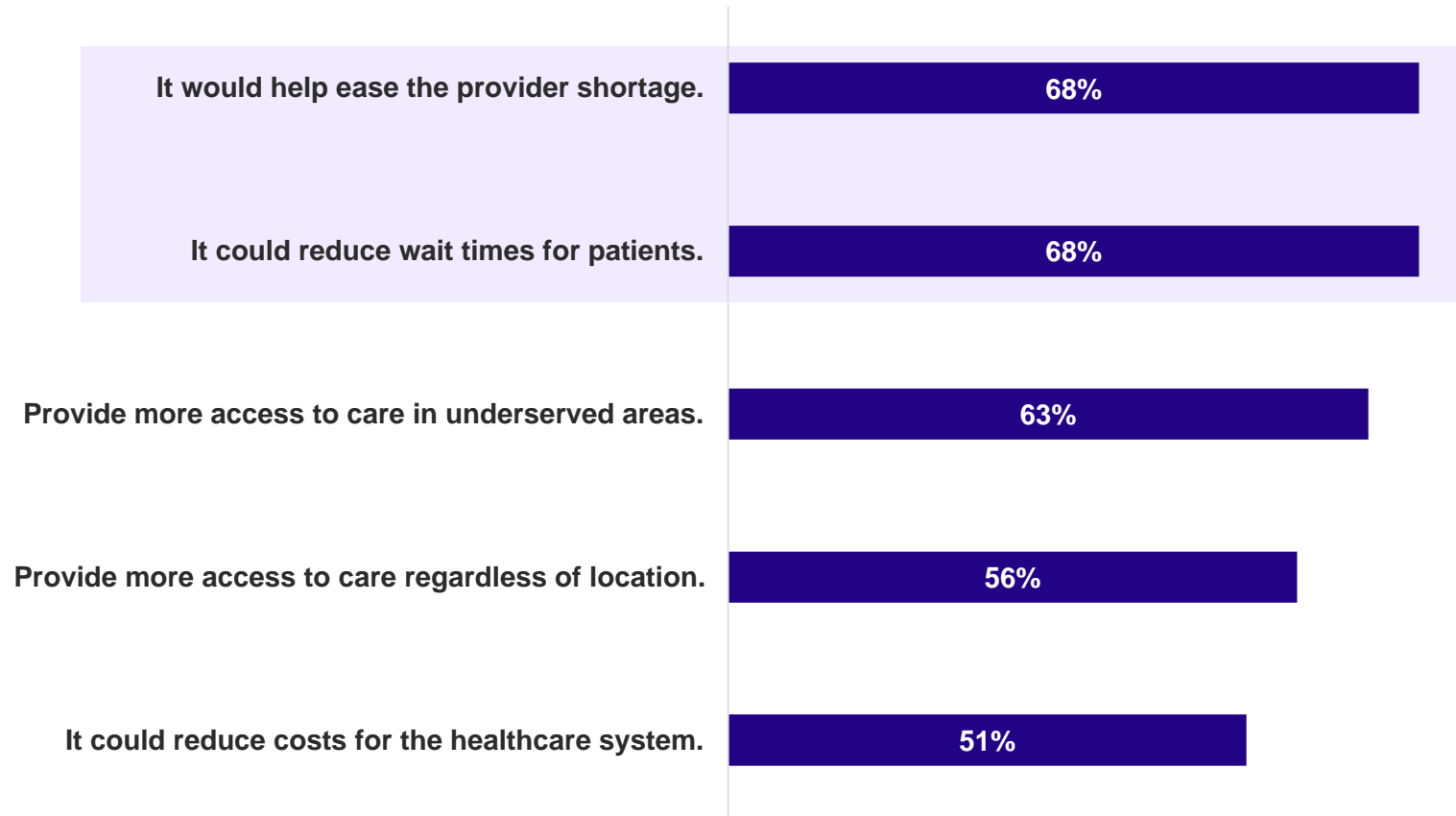


## MANDATORY PHYSICIAN AGREEMENTS

# Top five reasons physicians support modernizing PA laws and regulations

PA autonomy is seen as key to addressing provider shortages and increasing access

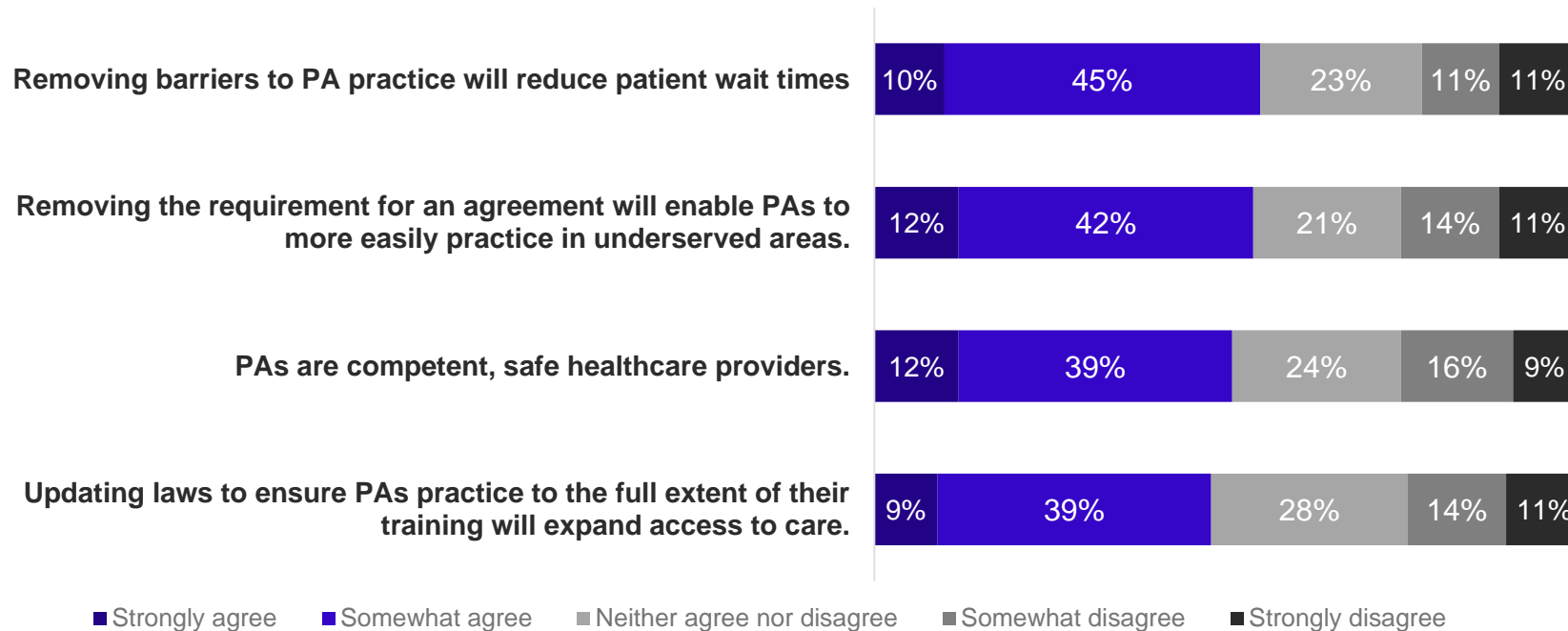
*Which of the following are reasons why you support modernizing the laws and regulations governing PAs, allowing them to practice without requiring an agreement with a physician?  
(Showing % selected among those who agree with removing mandatory physician agreements)*



## MANDATORY PHYSICIAN AGREEMENTS

# A majority of physicians agree removing barriers to PA practice will reduce patient wait times for appointments

*Below are some statements from people that support modernizing the laws and regulations governing PAs, allowing them to practice without requiring an agreement with a physician. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (Showing % selected among all)*



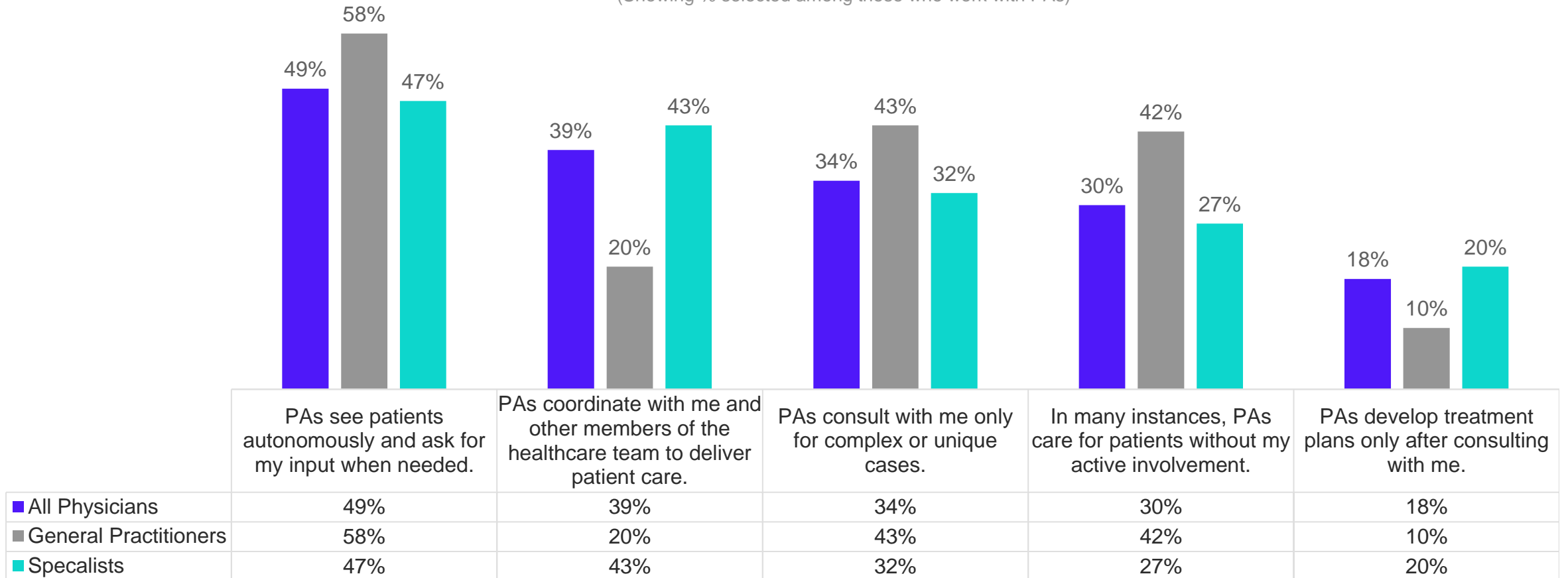
	Total % Agree	Works with PAs	Do not work with PAs
Removing barriers to PA practice will reduce patient wait times	55%	61%	49%
Removing the requirement for an agreement will enable PAs to more easily practice in underserved areas.	54%	59%	48%
PAs are competent, safe healthcare providers.	51%	62%	37%
Updating laws to ensure PAs practice to the full extent of their training will expand access to care.	48%	54%	41%

**Physicians who work with PAs are much more likely (+25pts) to see PAs as competent, safe healthcare providers than physicians who do not work with PAs.**

PA-PHYSICIAN COLLABORATION

# Physicians confirm PAs see patients autonomously in primary and specialty care settings

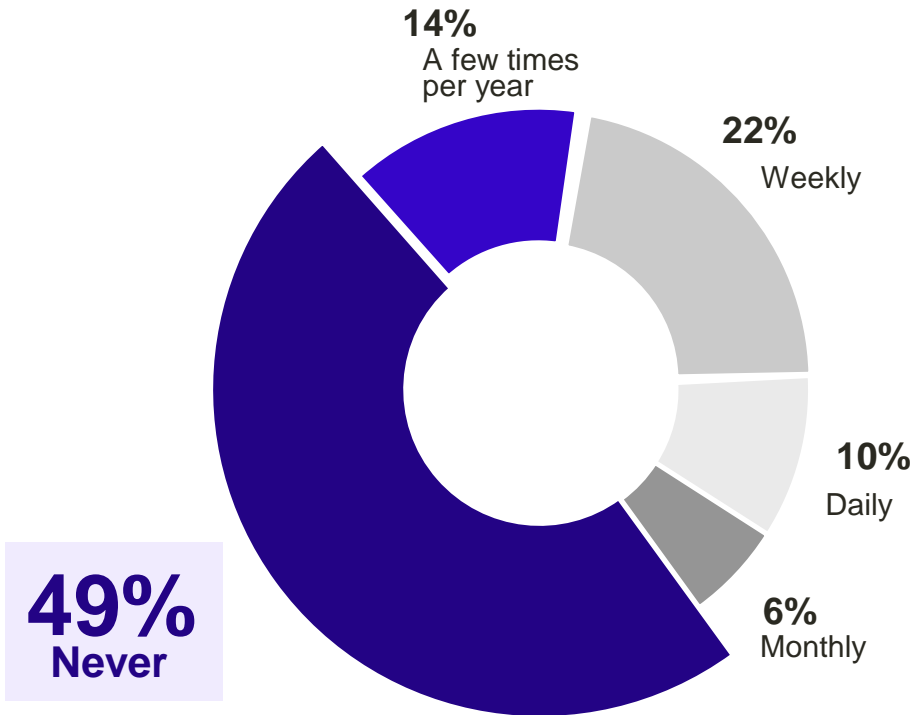
*In the medical setting where you practice, how do PAs typically care for their patients?  
(Showing % selected among those who work with PAs)*



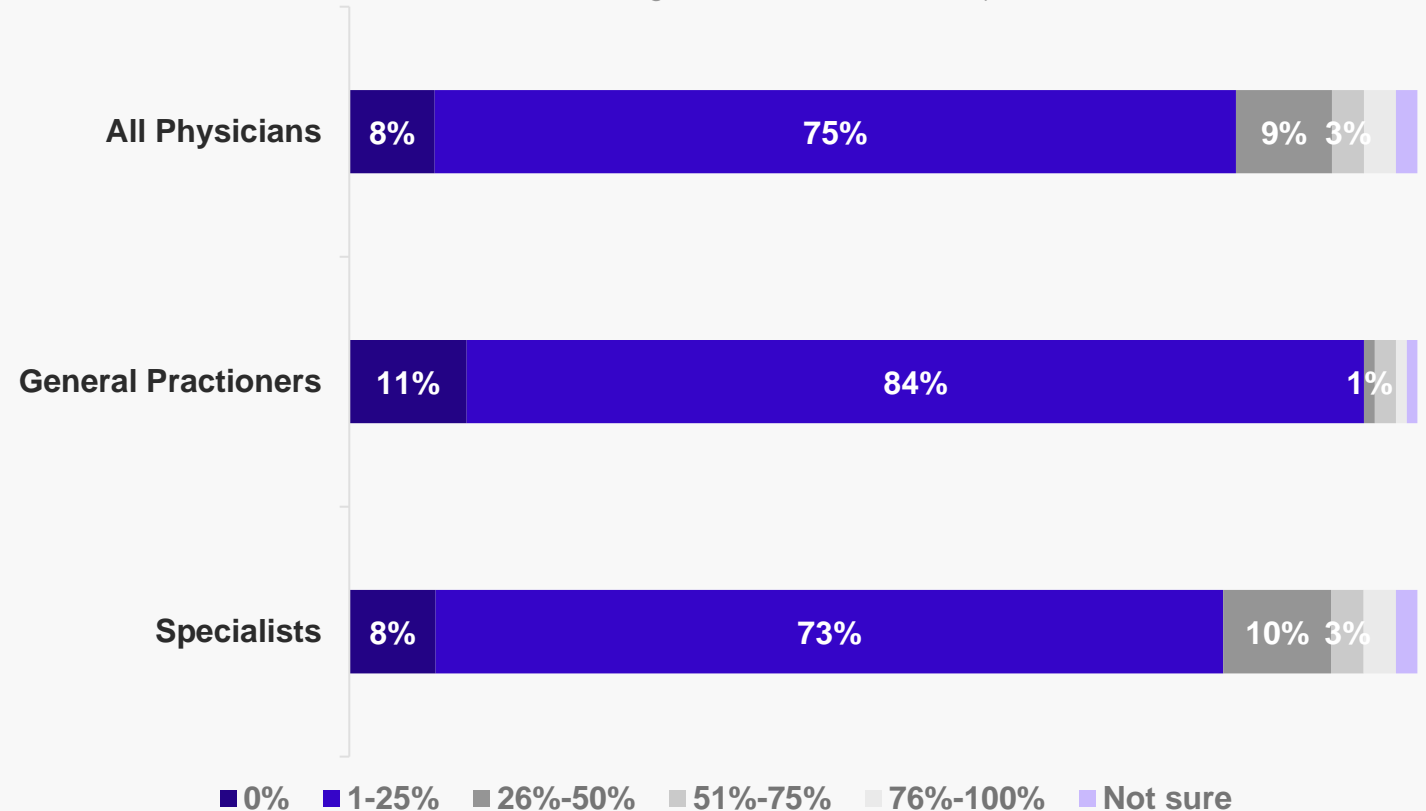
## PA-PHYSICIAN COLLABORATION

# Physicians spend little time with PAs, and half are never in the room during PA-patient interactions

On average, how often are you physically present in the room with a PA during their patient interactions? (Showing % selected among all)



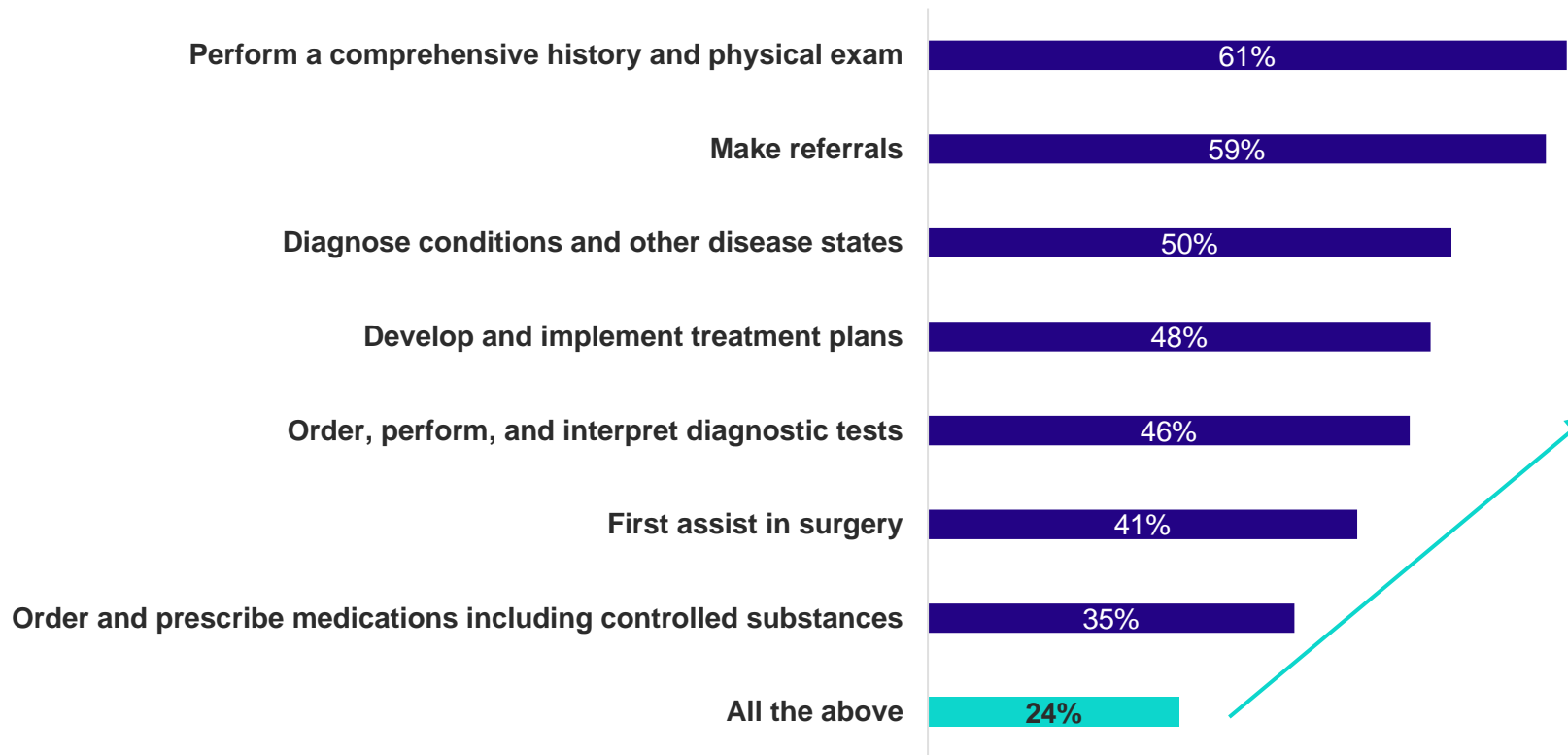
What percent of your working time would you say you spend actively monitoring PAs? (Showing % selected among those who work with PAs)



## PA PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES

# Physicians trust PAs to examine patients and make referrals

Based on your knowledge of PA qualifications, what are PAs trained and qualified to do? Please select all that apply. (Showing % selected among all)



an additional  
**24%**  
of physicians think PAs  
are qualified **for all** of  
these responsibilities.

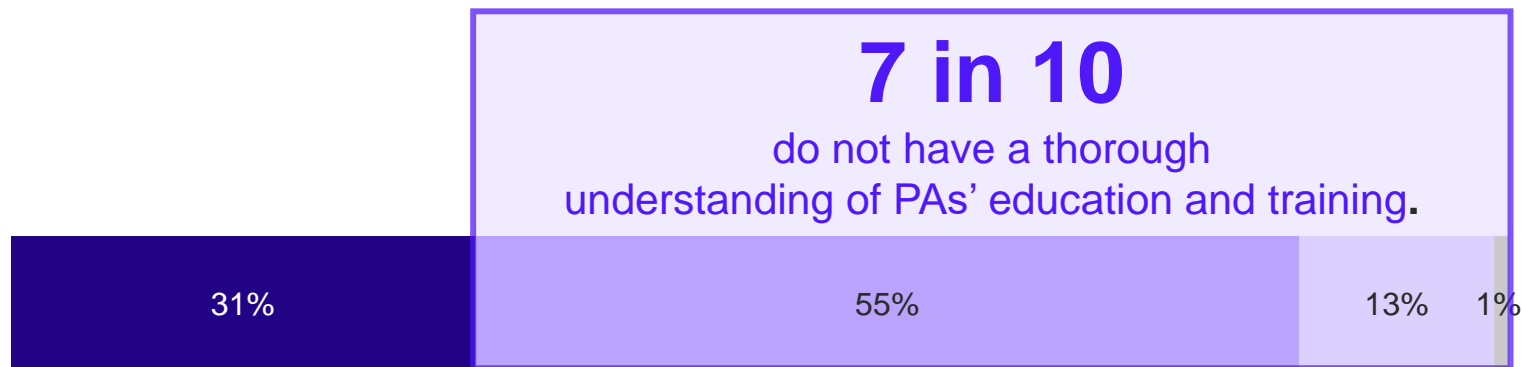
Physicians aged 65+ are more likely to believe PAs are trained and qualified to:

- Make referrals (+9pts)
- Diagnose conditions (+9pts)
- Develop treatment plans (+8pts)
- Run diagnostic tests (+8pts)
- Perform patient exams (+8pts)

## PA-PHYSICIAN COLLABORATION

# Even among physicians who work with PAs, most do not have a thorough understanding of PA training and education

*How familiar are you with the education and training required to become a PA? (Showing % selected among those who work with PAs)*



- Very familiar (I have thorough knowledge of PA education, training, and board certification requirements.)
- Somewhat familiar (I have some understanding of PA education, training, and board certification requirements.)
- Not very familiar (I have limited understanding of PA education, training, and board certification requirements.)
- Not at all familiar (I have no understanding at all of PA education, training and board certification requirements.)