



healthwatch
Nottingham & Nottinghamshire

Community Pharmacy Hot Topic Survey

February 2025

Why we did it

- We received growing concerns from the public about pharmacy access and medicine shortages
- Mixed reviews about the new Pharmacy First Scheme which has the potential to enhance access to primary care
- Community pharmacies are a cornerstone of primary care, serving as accessible, walk-in healthcare providers for local communities.

What we did

- Designed a Hot Topic Survey
- Explored public experiences with community pharmacies, focusing on accessibility, medicine shortages, reasonable adjustments for dispensing needs
- Examined perceptions of Pharmacy First scheme & aimed to raise awareness of this new initiative
- Asked both quantitative & qualitative questions
- Collected 284 responses & analysed the data

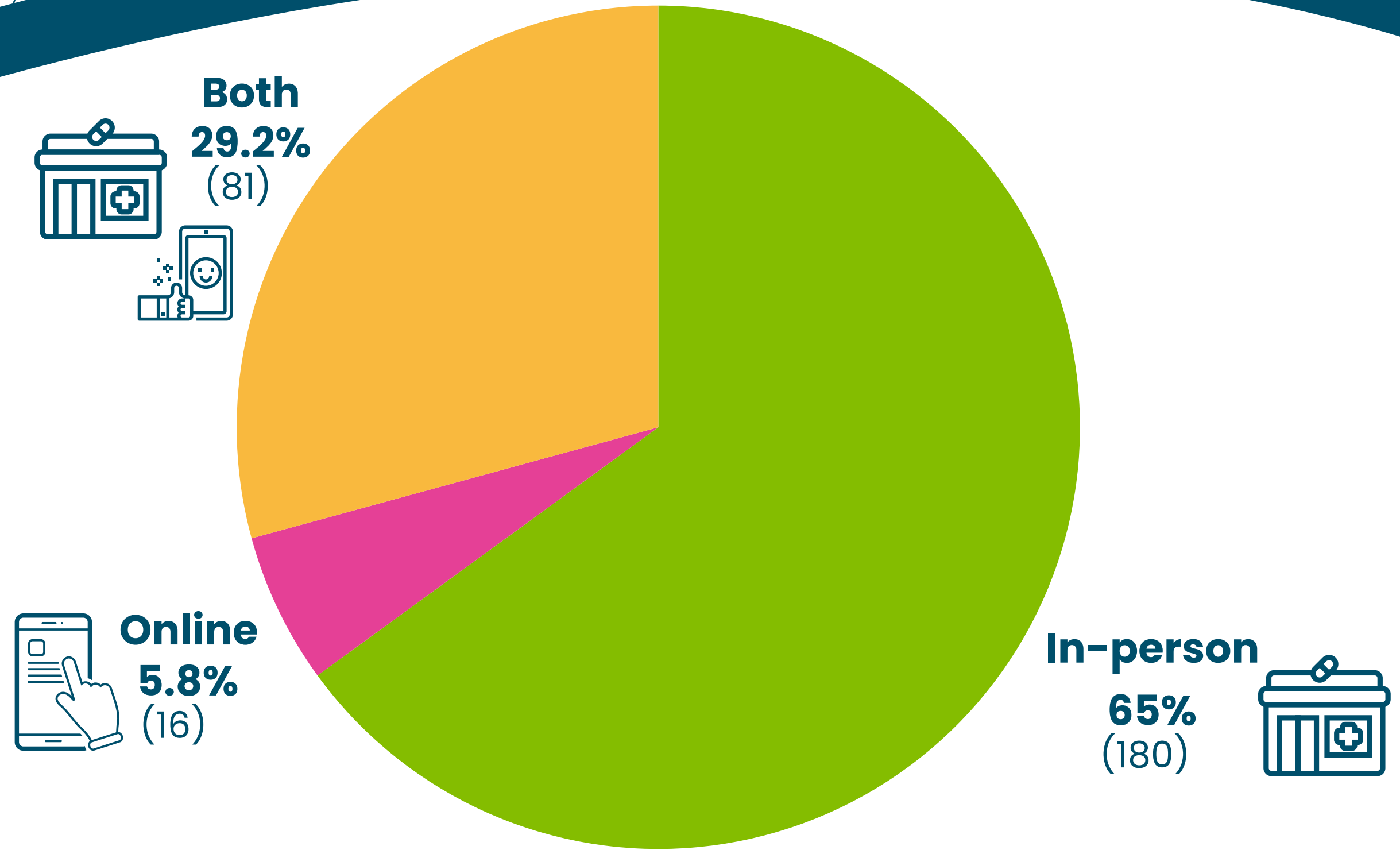


Accessibility



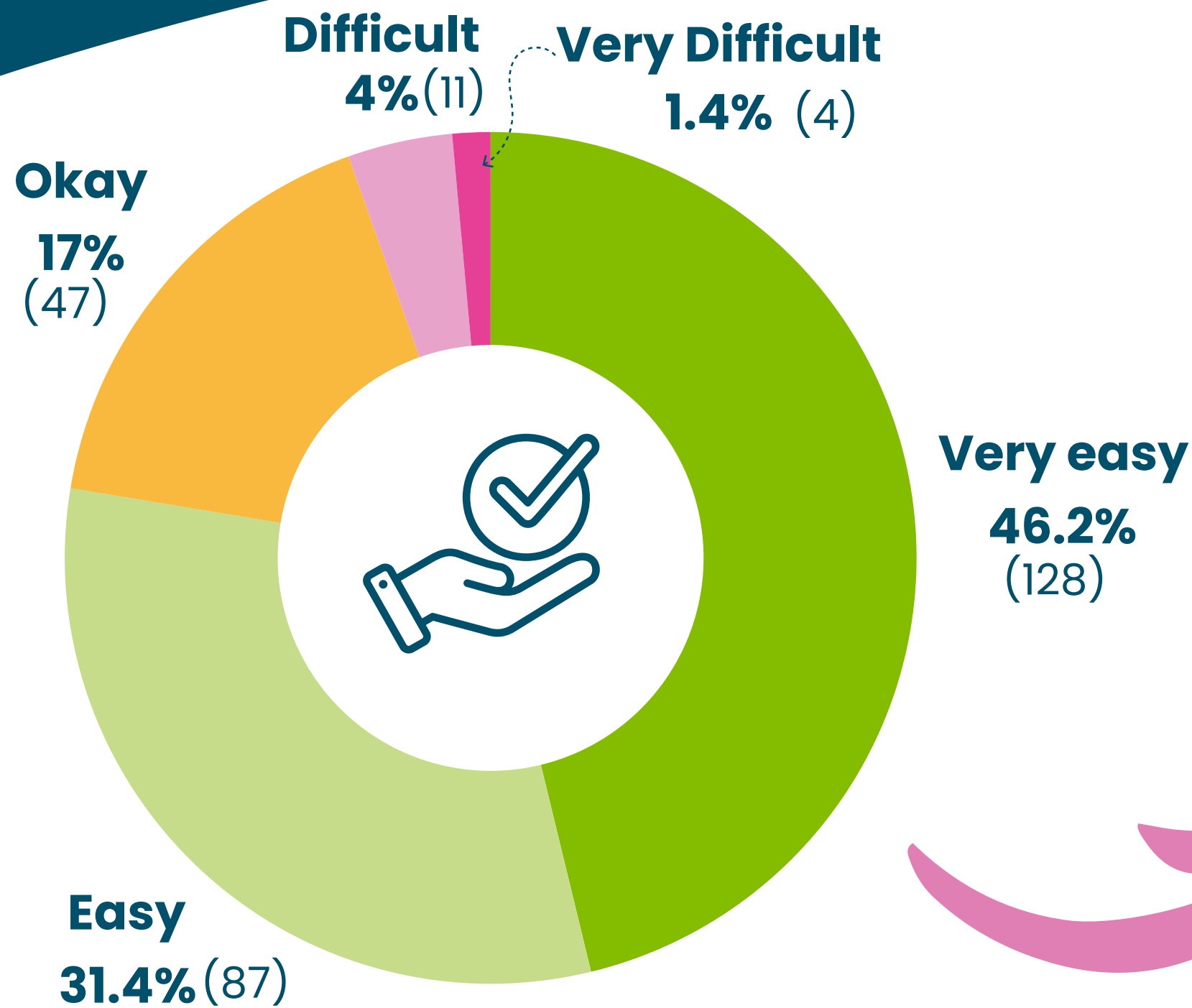
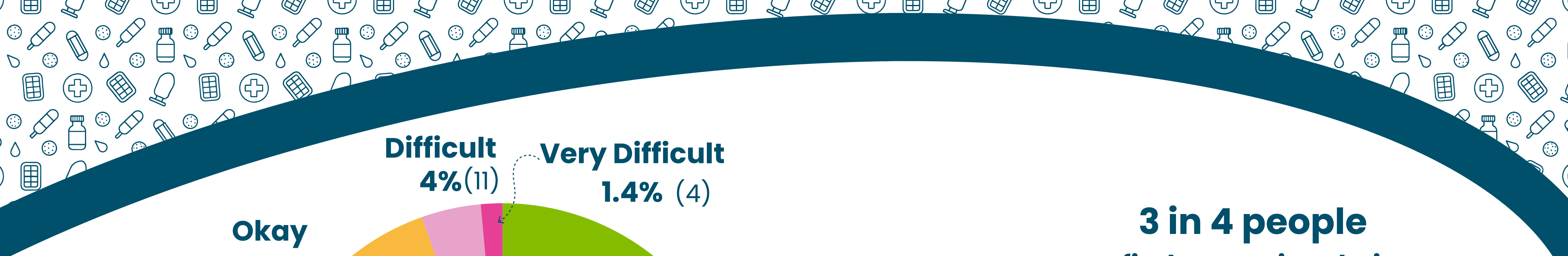
97.5% (277) respondents used a pharmacy in the last 12 months

Source: All respondents (n=284)



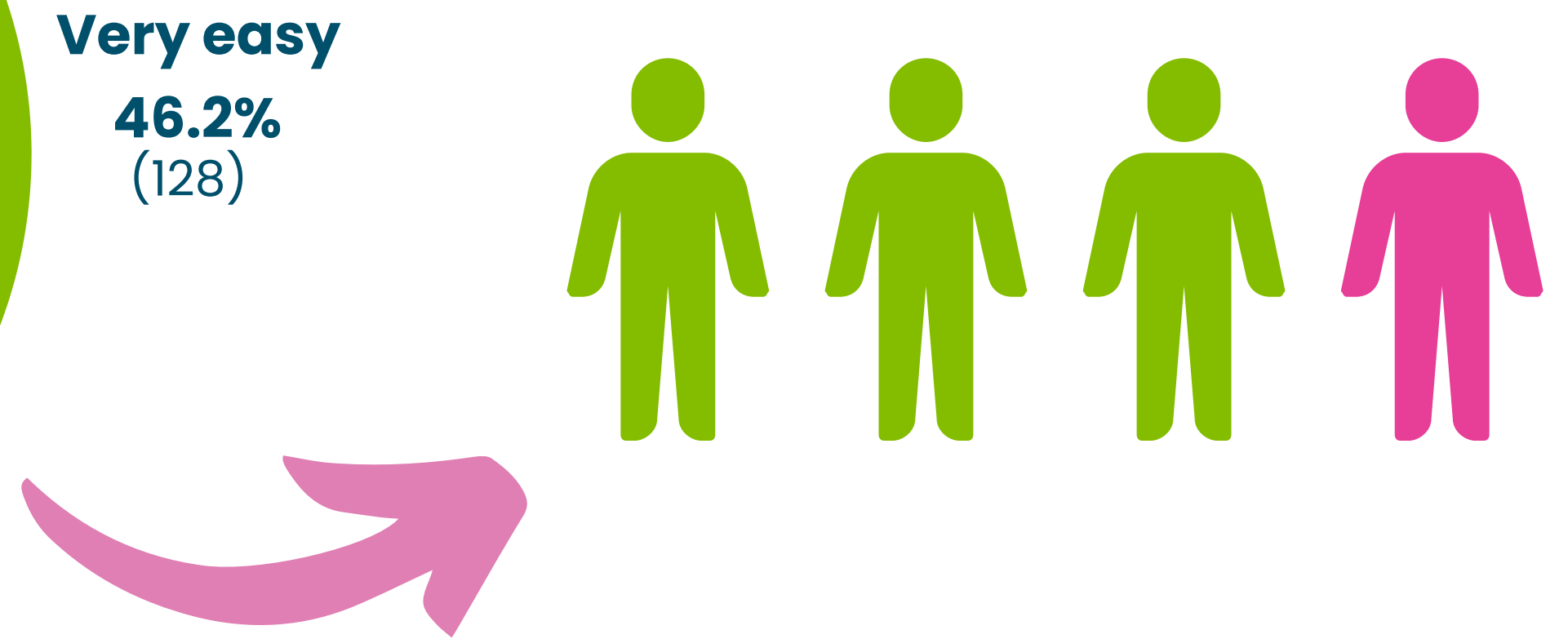
How people prefer to access their pharmacy?

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)



3 in 4 people
find accessing their
pharmacy easy/very easy

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)



How convenient people find it to access their pharmacy?

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)



Proximity to home

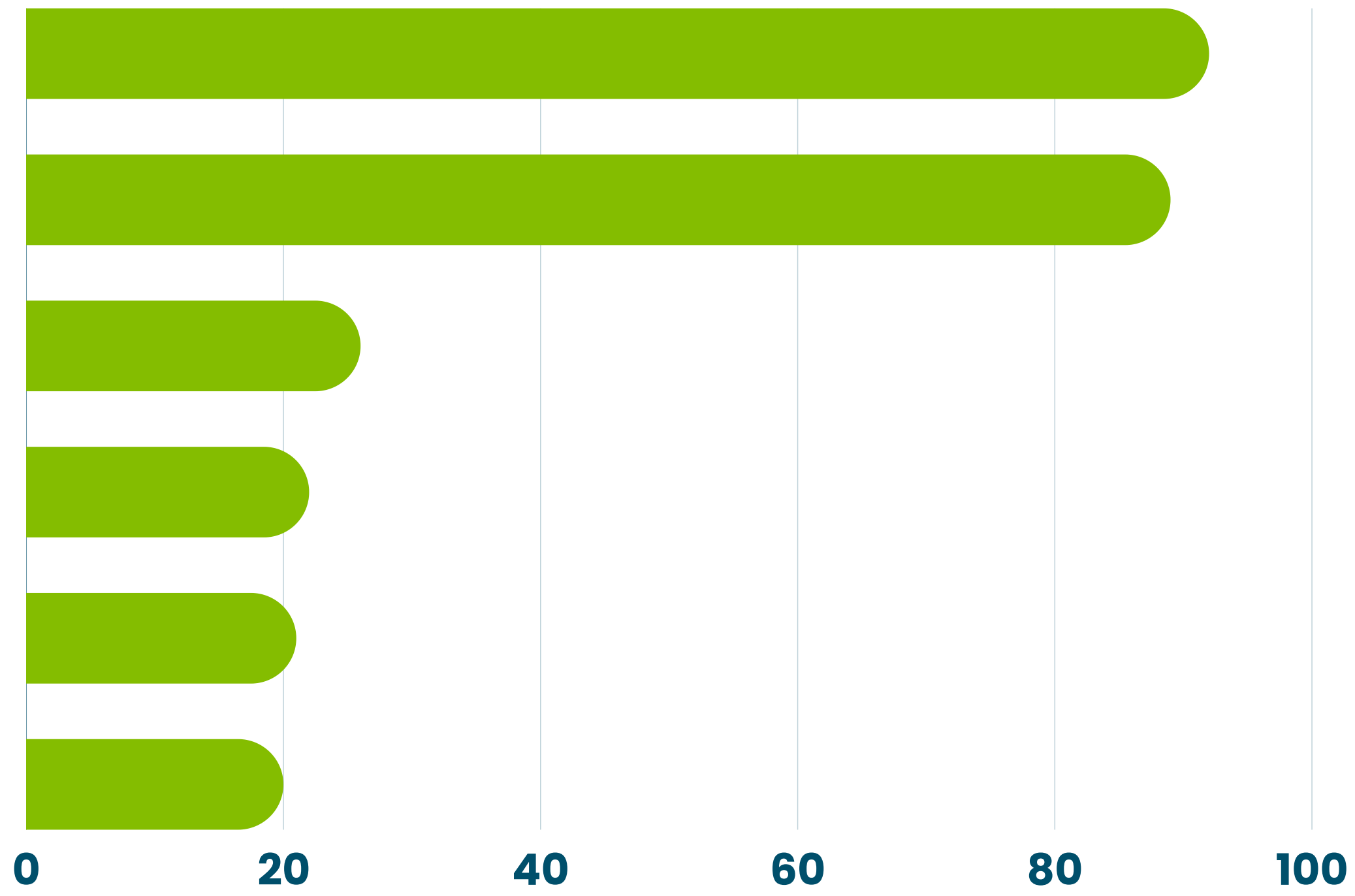
Staff attitude

Central location

Opening hours

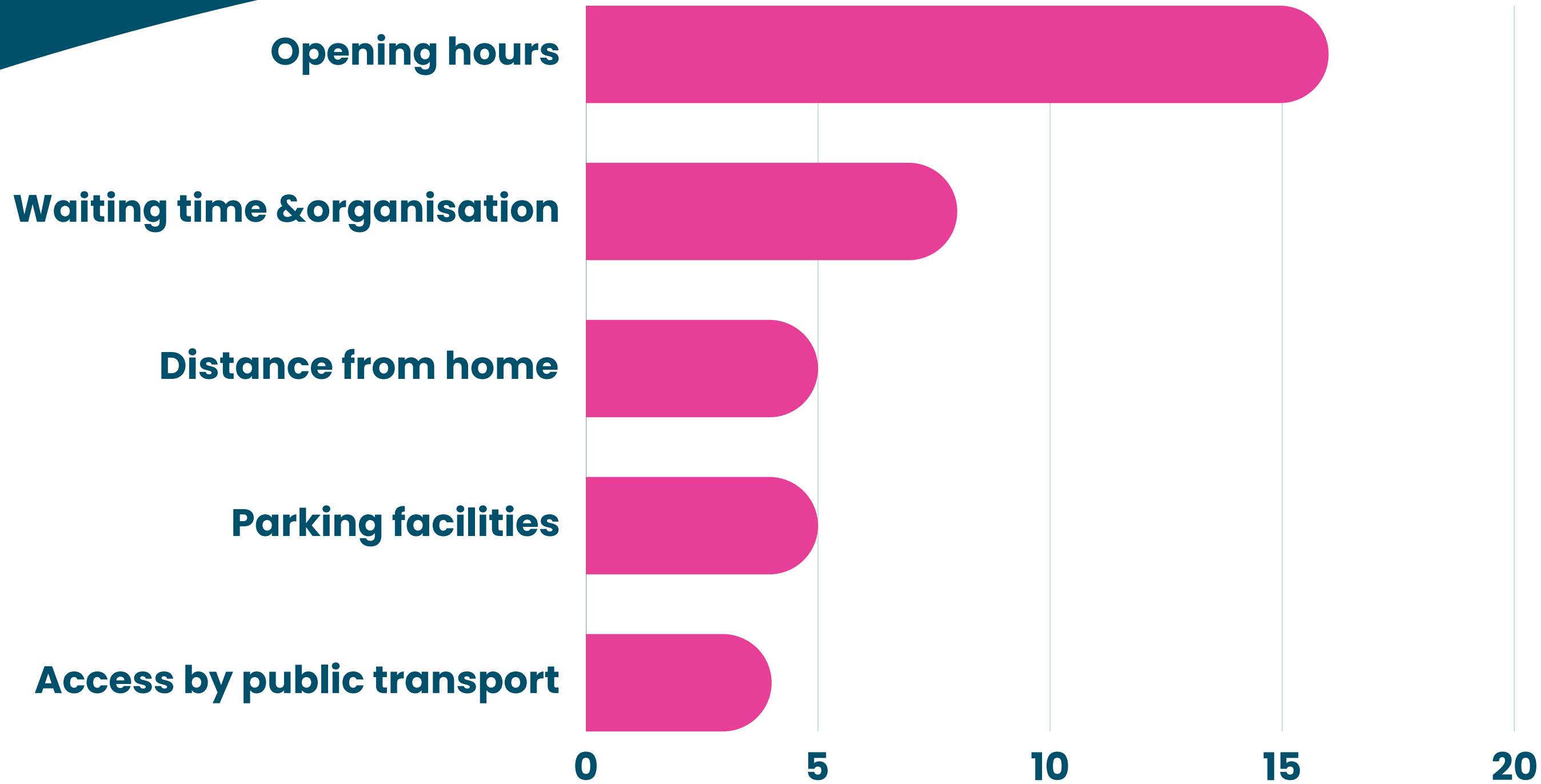
Parking facilities

Proximity to GP



What makes it easy for people to access their pharmacy?

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)

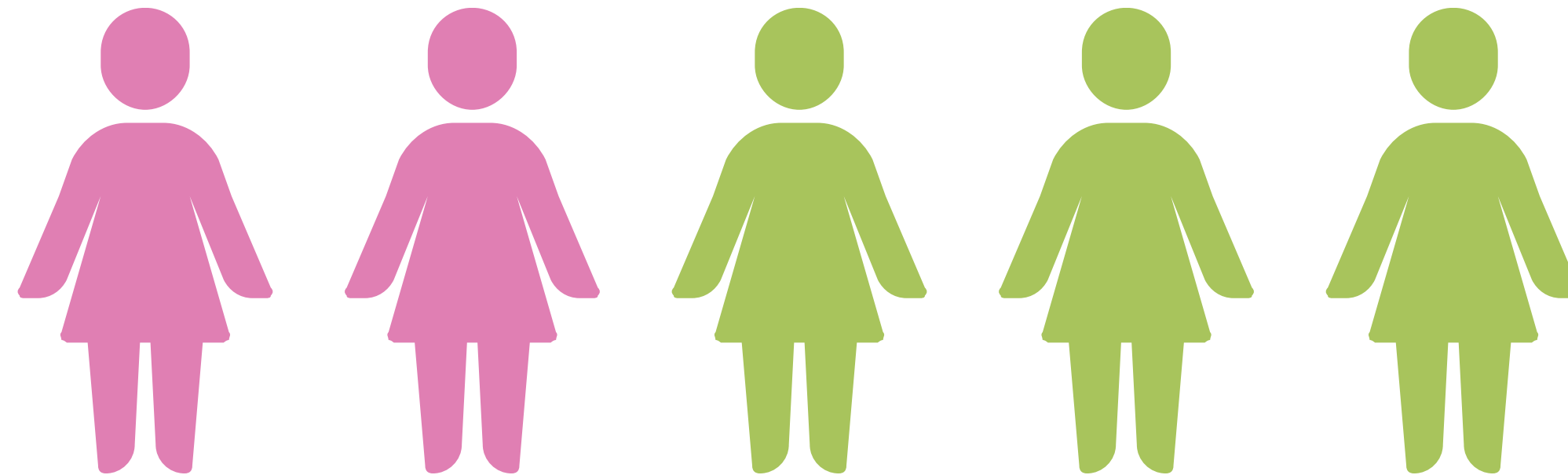


What makes it difficult for people to access their pharmacy?

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)



Medicine Supply & Shortages



More than 2 in 5 people have faced problems in their medicine supply

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)



Multiple visits to pharmacy



Excessive waiting time



Alternative medicines



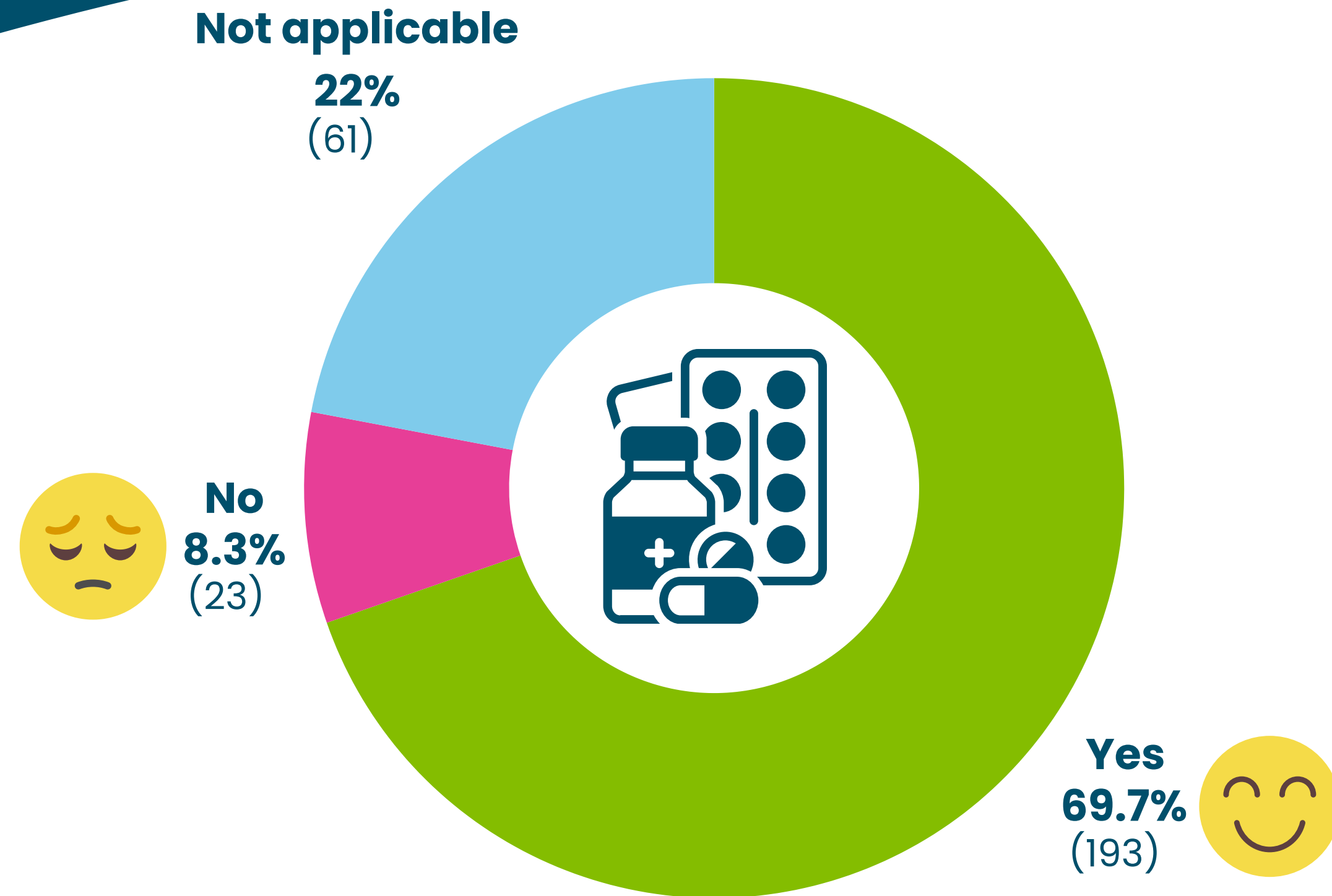
0 10 20 30 40 50 60

Consequences of medicine shortages for patients

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)



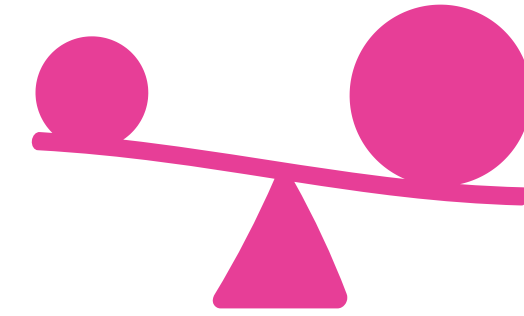
Reasonable Adjustments for Medicine Dispensing



Are medicines dispensed in a way that meets your needs?

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)

Notable trends



Vulnerable groups are disproportionately impacted by challenges in access, medicine shortages and dispensing tailored to their needs.

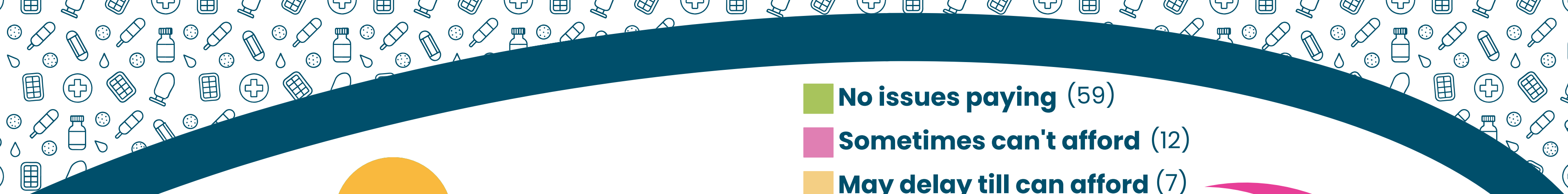
These include people living with:

- Mental health conditions
- Physical or mobility impairment
- Sensory impairment
- Long term conditions
- Cared for
- Carers





Payment for prescriptions



Don't Pay for Prescriptions

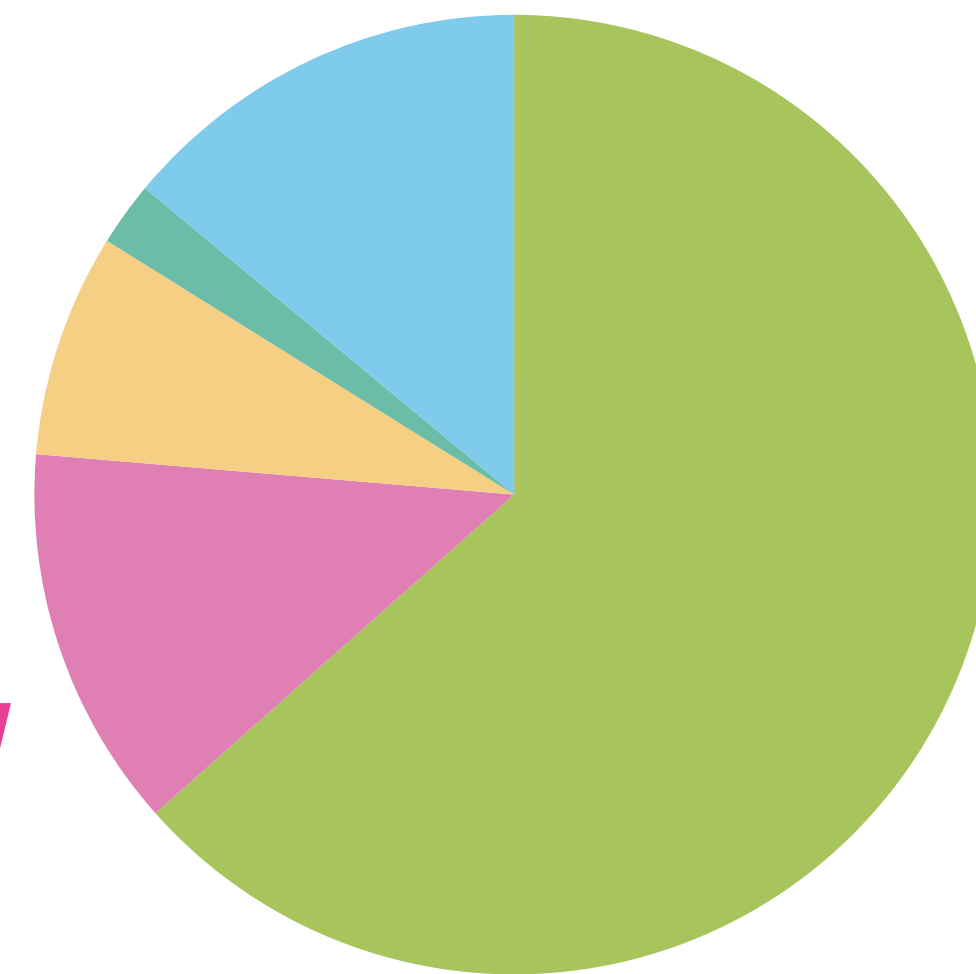
69%
(177)

Pay for Prescriptions

31%
(81)



- No issues paying (59)**
- Sometimes can't afford (12)**
- May delay till can afford (7)**
- Can afford some items only (2)**
- Other issues (13)**



27%
of those who pay for prescriptions reported issues with affordability

Affordability of Prescriptions

Source: Respondents who answered this question (n=258)

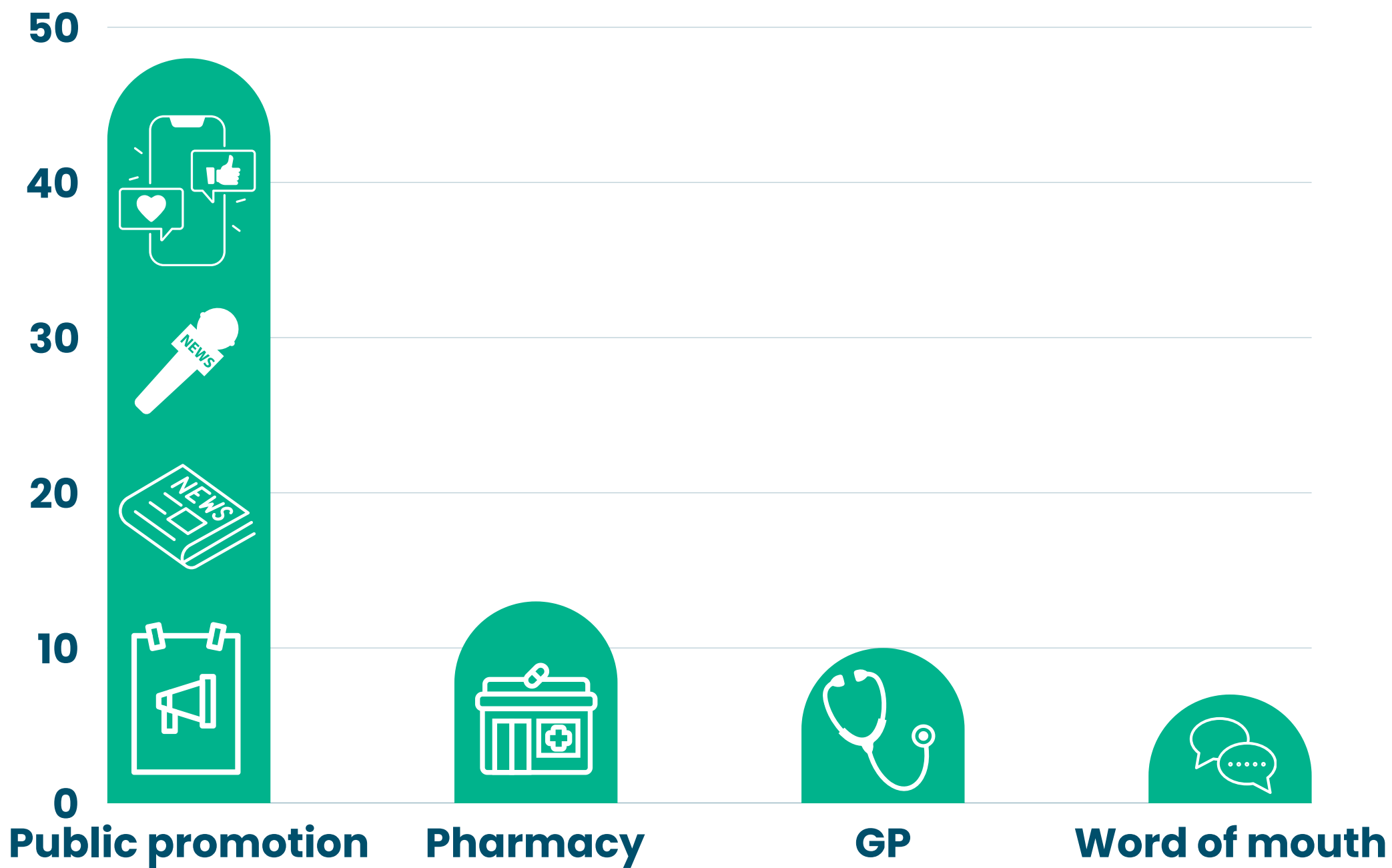


Pharmacy First



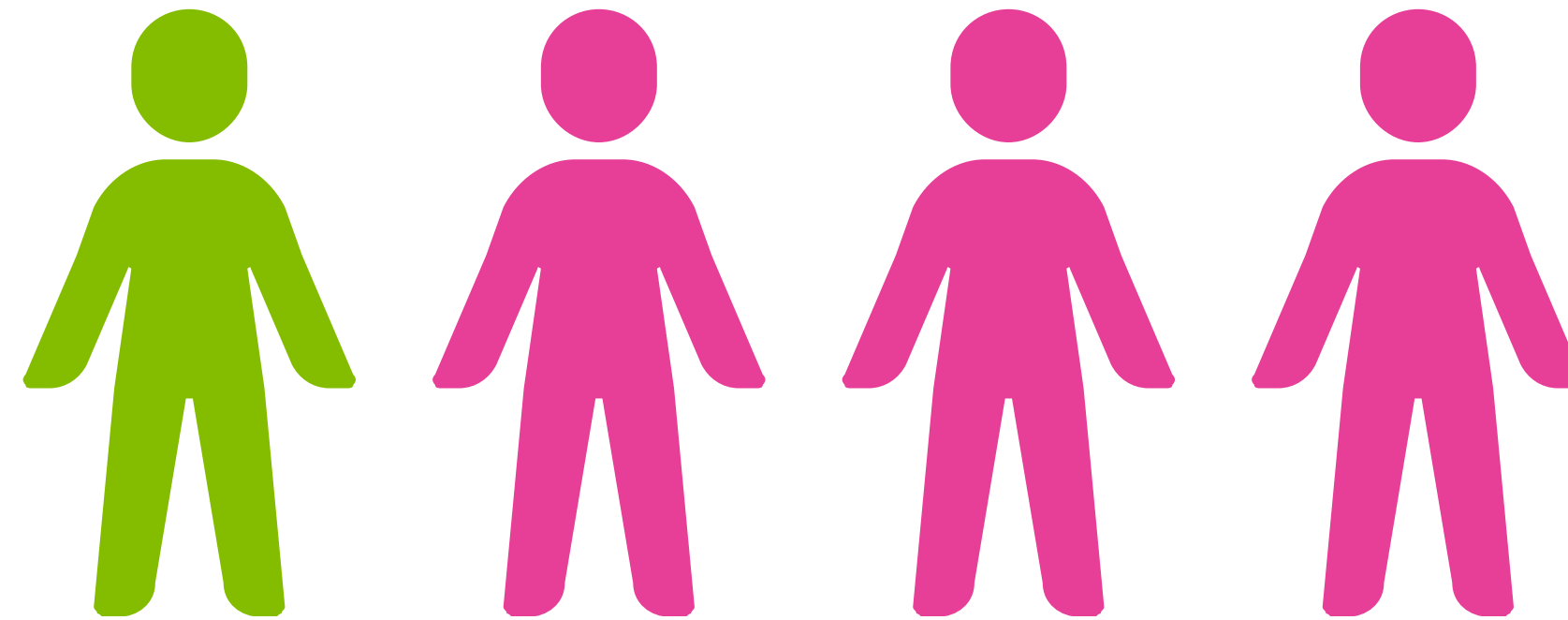
40% (112) respondents had heard about Pharmacy First

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)



How did people hear about Pharmacy First?

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)



1 in 4 people have tried using Pharmacy First

Source: Respondents who used a pharmacy in last 12 months (n=277)

Mixed feedback about Pharmacy First



- Provided quick treatment/ advice
- Signposted to GP or other service
- Easy to access
- Saved GP visit



- Increased treatment time due to referrals
- Limitations in age, conditions, or medications covered
- Lack in confidence in pharmacists' ability to diagnose & prescribe
- Added cost

Gaps in public awareness about the full offer,
Public attitude & perception,
Training need



Recommendations

Recommendations

Opening Hours

Adjust opening hours to better align with the needs of working individuals.

Effective Communication

Improved clarity in communication will enhance the effectiveness and long term sustainability. Focus on eligibility awareness, building public confidence & effective signposting.

Ensure good communication between pharmacists and patients, especially around affordability, reasonable adjustments, supporting vulnerable patients.

Pharmacy First Scheme

Communication on Medicine Shortages and Pharmacy Closures

Proactive approach in communicating with the public about medicine shortages and pharmacy closures by the ICB.

Pharmacy Accessibility & Location

The ICB needs to actively monitor and mitigate the effects of closures.



Thank you!