

# Community Health Center Experiences with Clinical Workforce Vacancies, Recruitment and Retention

*Findings from the 2015-16 National Health Center Clinical Workforce Survey*



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# What Are Community Health Centers?

Community, Migrant, Homeless, and Public Housing Health Centers are preventive and primary care providers who:

- serve in federally-designated medically underserved areas (MUAs)
- are non-profit
- offer services on a sliding fee scale to anyone who enters
- are governed by a consumer-majority board
- employ a broad definition of “health”

# Community Health Centers Today

- Serving **over 24 million patients** who are predominantly:
  - low income (92% < 200% FPL)
  - uninsured or insured by Medicaid (46% Medicaid, 27% Uninsured)
  - members of racial/ethnic minority groups (62%)
  - suffering from complex and chronic conditions
- **1,300+** organizations with **9,000+** delivery sites
- Over **170,000 staff**, with the majority delivering health and wellness care services
  - Number of clinical care staff has almost doubled since 2005

# Survey Overview

- GOAL: Assess current clinical vacancies, staffing priorities, perceptions of recruitment and retention challenges, and participation in programs that place or train clinicians in underserved areas.
- Methods
  - Online survey to 2014 UDS FQHC CEOs or designee
  - Fielded Nov 2015 - Jan 2016
  - N = 499 (39% response rate)
  - Representative of health centers nationally along key characteristics
    - Size (total patients)
    - Patient mix (percent with Medicaid, Uninsured)
    - Geography (urban/rural location)
    - Costs of care

# Health Centers' Current Clinical Vacancies

FIGURE 1 — PERCENT OF HEALTH CENTERS REPORTING A VACANCY FOR SPECIFIC CLINICAL POSITION

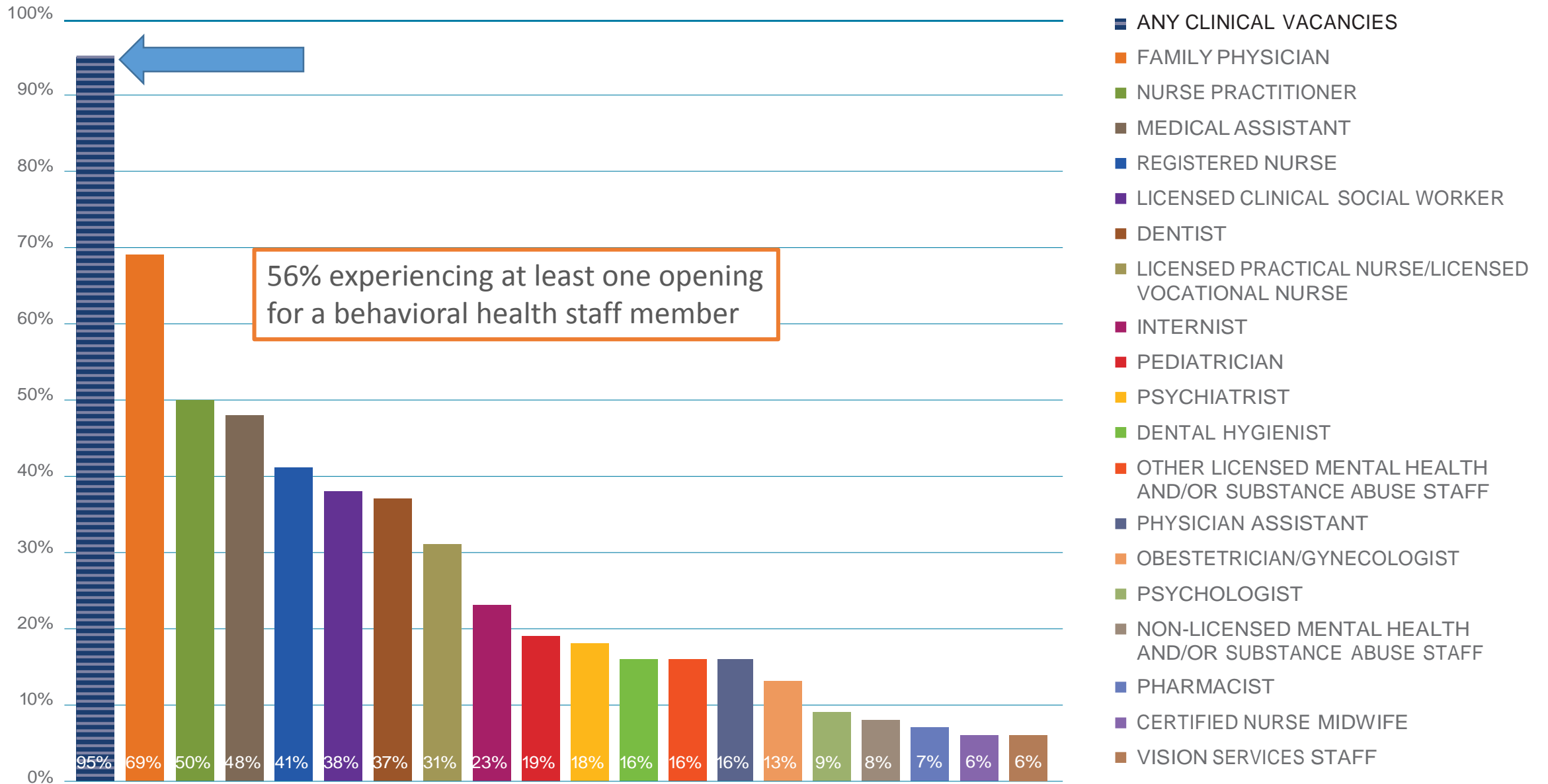


FIGURE 2 — AVERAGE HEALTH CENTER CLINICAL VACANCY RATES

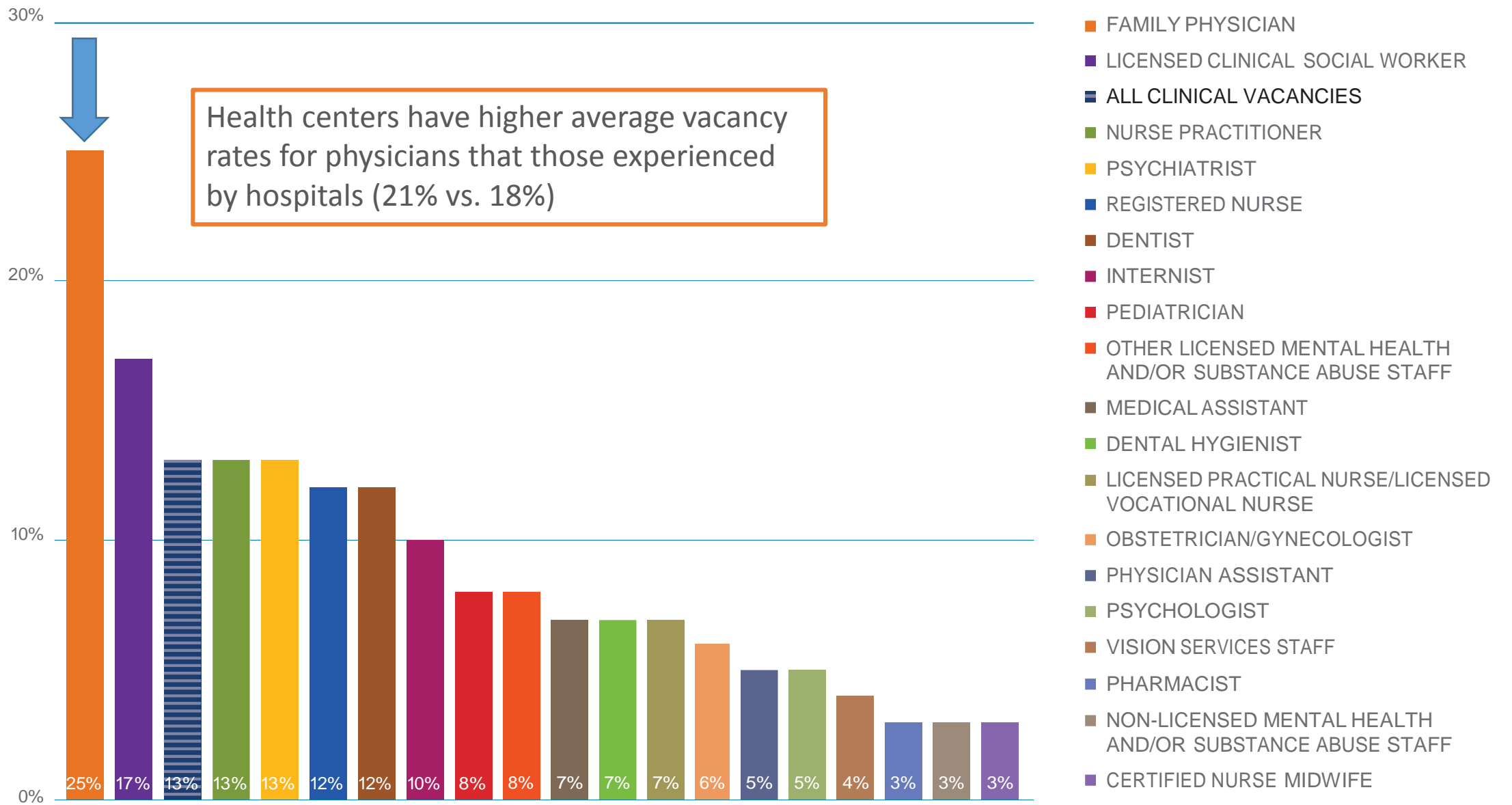


FIGURE 3 — PERCENTAGE OF HEALTH CENTERS RATING SPECIFIC CLINICAL VACANCIES AS VERY DIFFICULT TO FILL

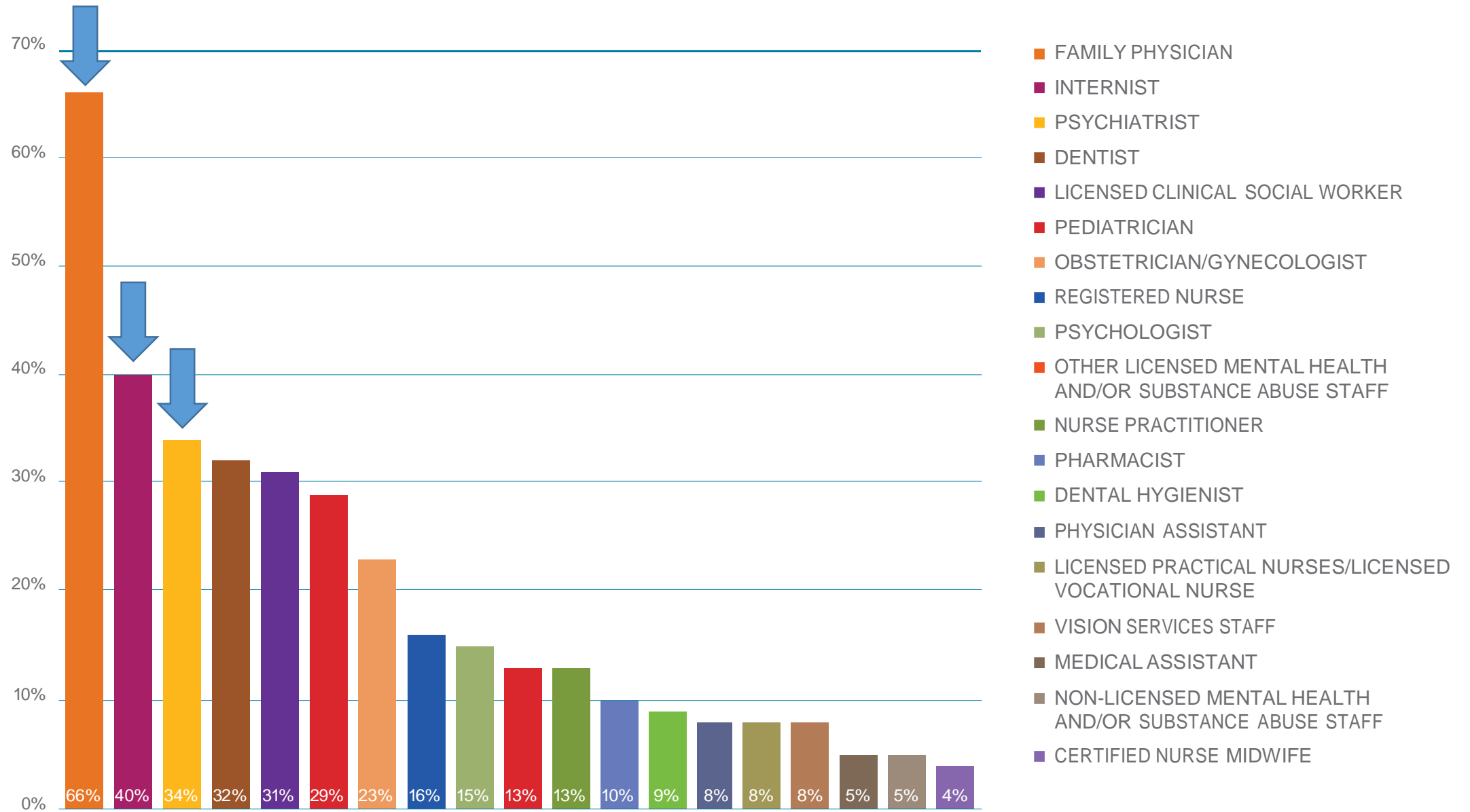




FIGURE 4 — AVERAGE NUMBER OF MONTHS SPENT RECRUITING FOR SPECIFIC CLINICAL VACANCIES

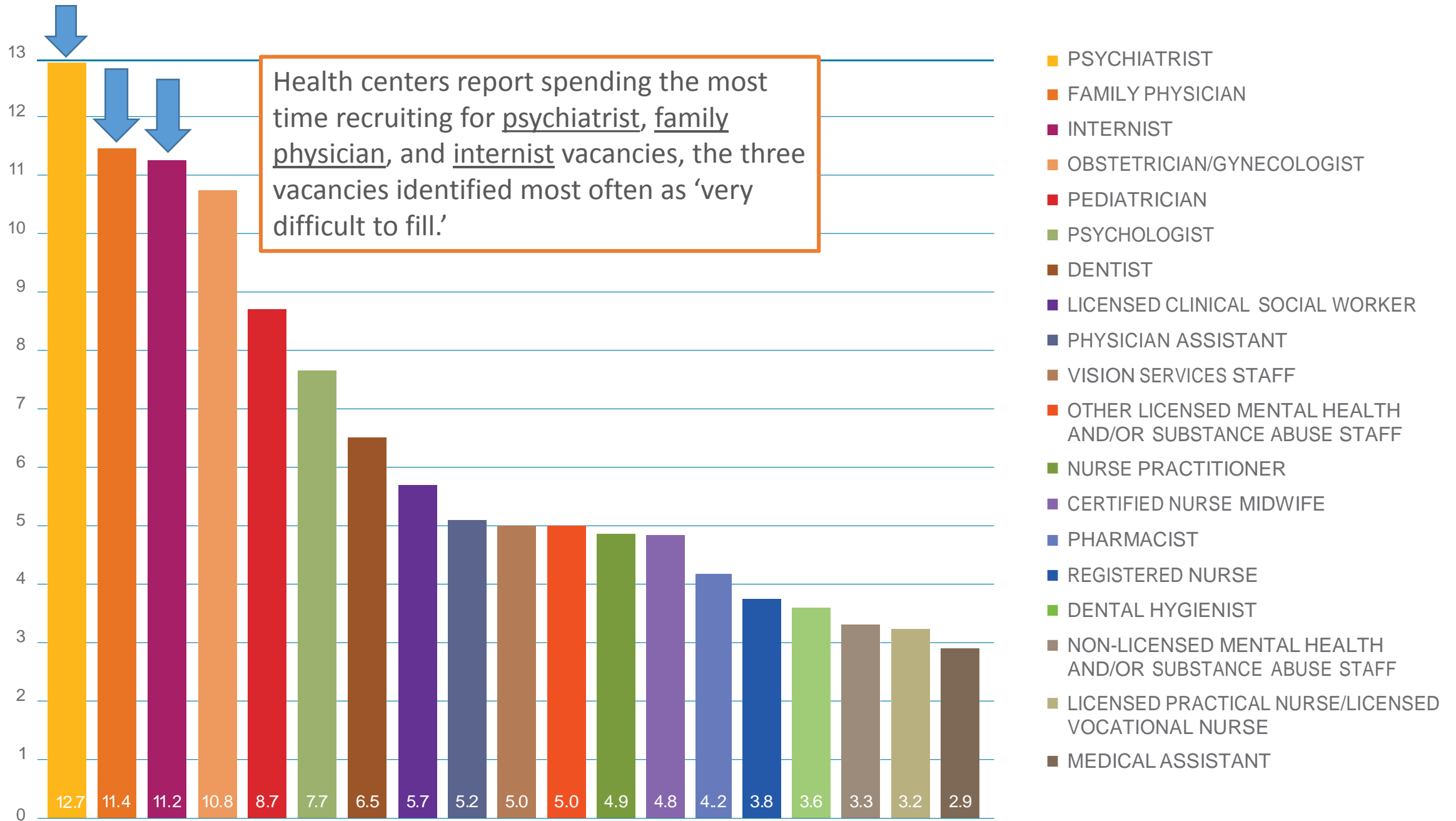
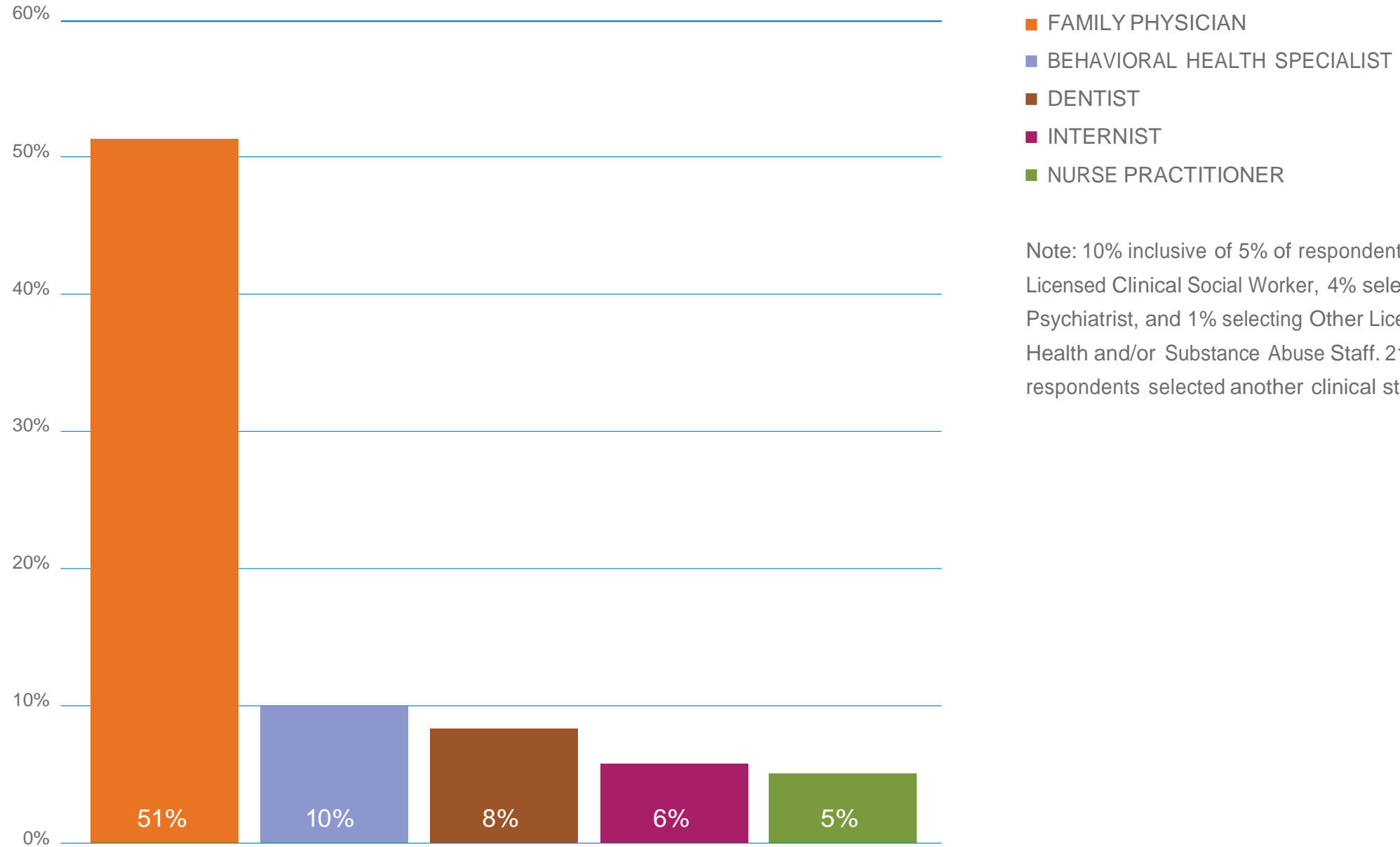


FIGURE 5 — TOP 5 VACANCIES RATED AS HEALTH CENTERS' HIGHEST PRIORITY TO FILL



Note: 10% inclusive of 5% of respondents selecting a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, 4% selecting Psychiatrist, and 1% selecting Other Licensed Mental Health and/or Substance Abuse Staff. 21% of respondents selected another clinical staff position.

# Health Center Recruitment and Retention Experiences

FIGURE 6 — IMPORTANT PROBLEMS FOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

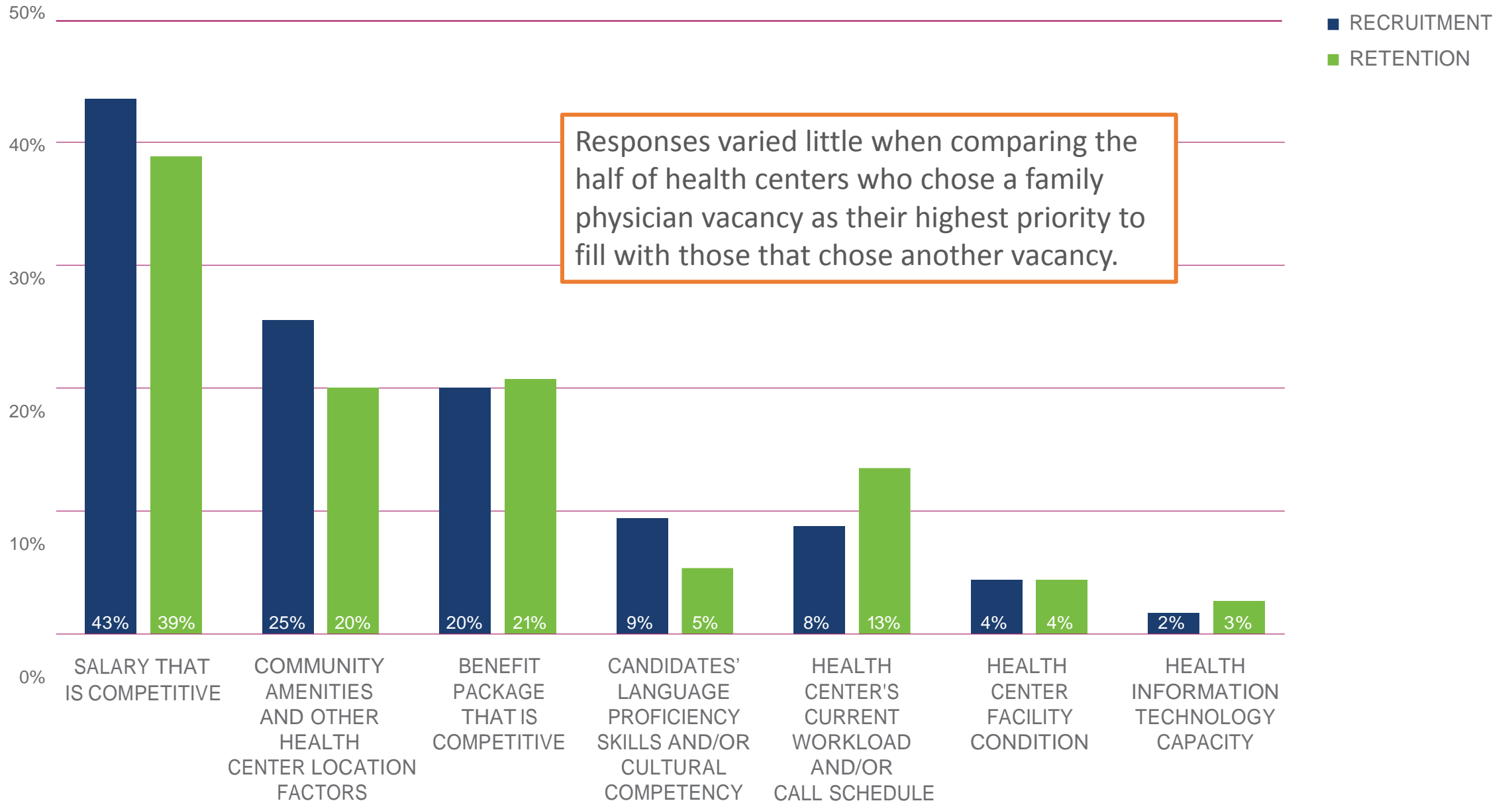


FIGURE 7 — STAFF HIRED BY HEALTH CENTERS IN THE PAST TWO YEARS

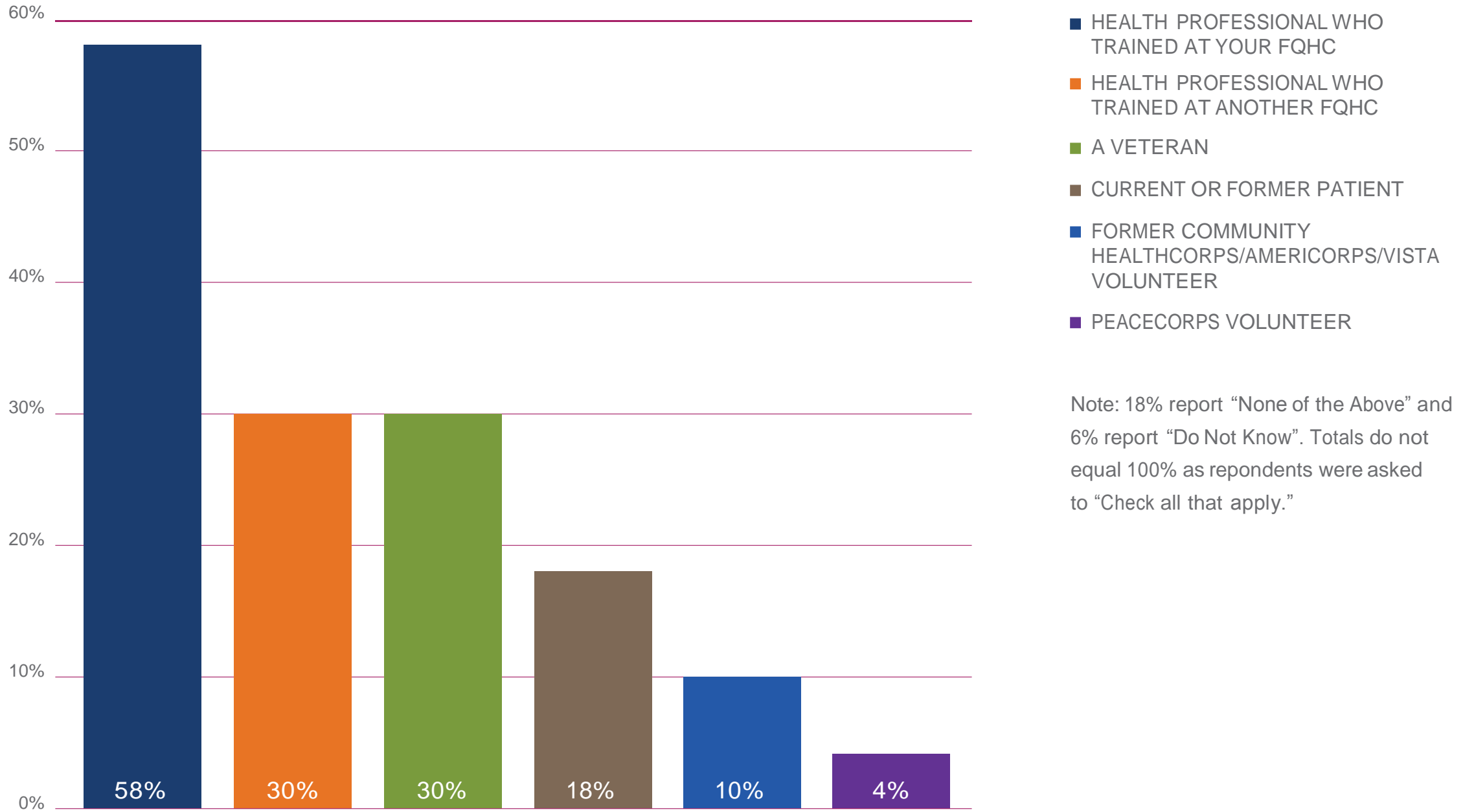
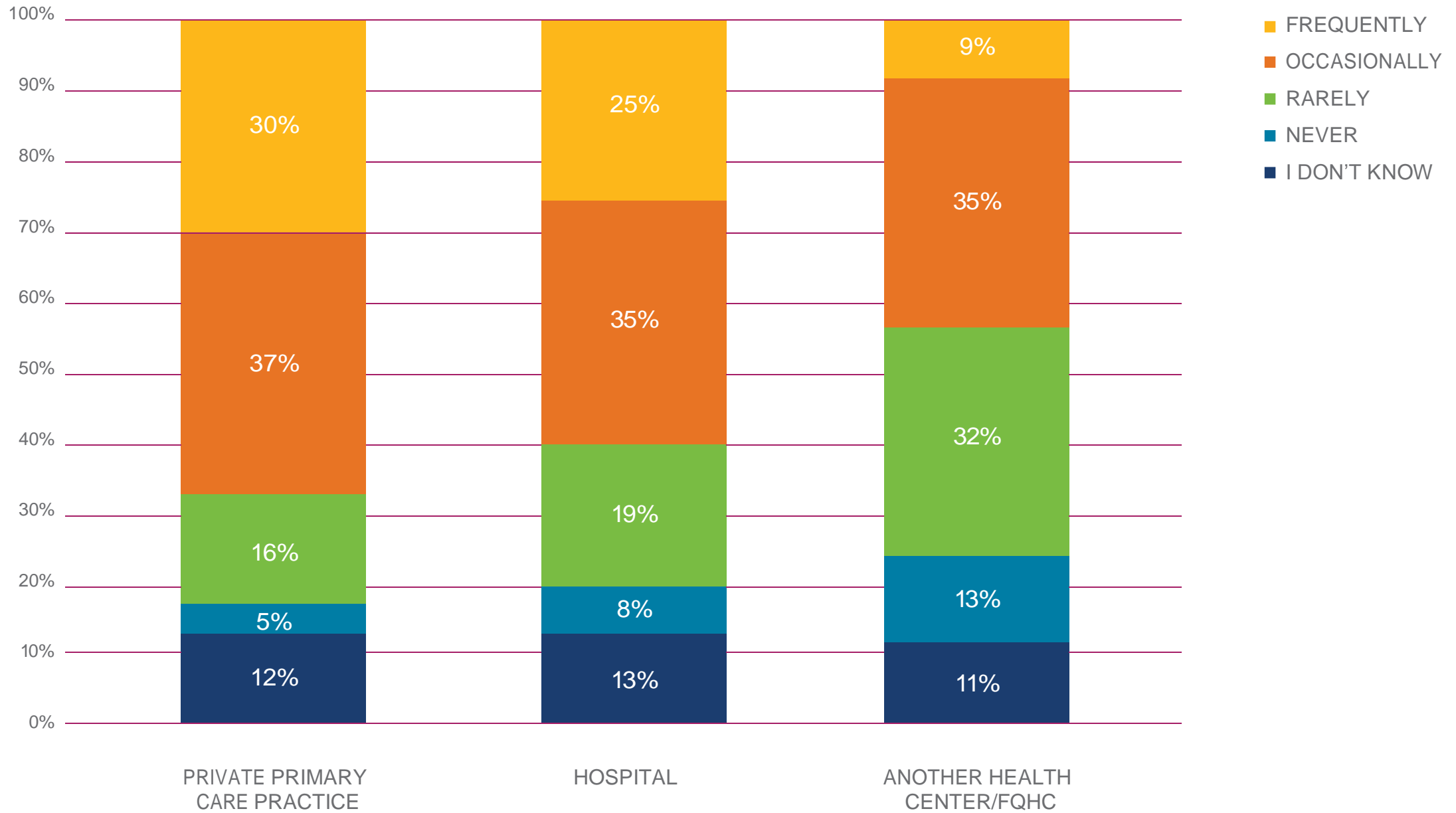
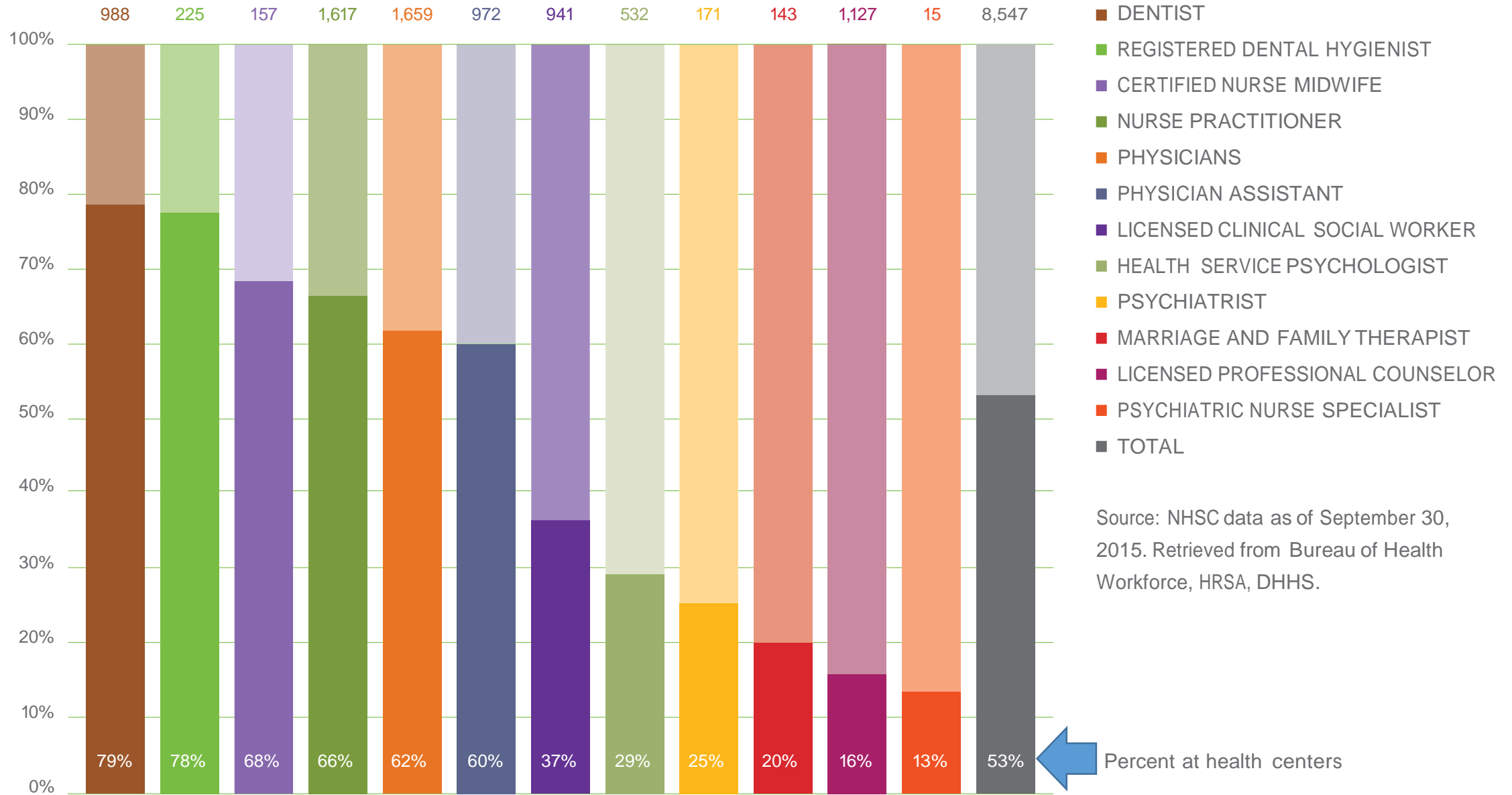


FIGURE 8 — WHERE HEALTH CENTER STAFF WORK AFTER LEAVING HEALTH CENTER



# Importance of the National Health Service Corps

FIGURE 9 — TOTAL NHSC PARTICIPANTS BY PROVIDER TYPE, AND PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT HEALTH CENTERS



Source: NHSC data as of September 30, 2015. Retrieved from Bureau of Health Workforce, HRSA, DHHS.

← Percent at health centers



# Health Professions Education and Training in Health Centers

FIGURE 10 — PERCENT OF HEALTH CENTERS REPORTING KEY BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATING IN RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMS

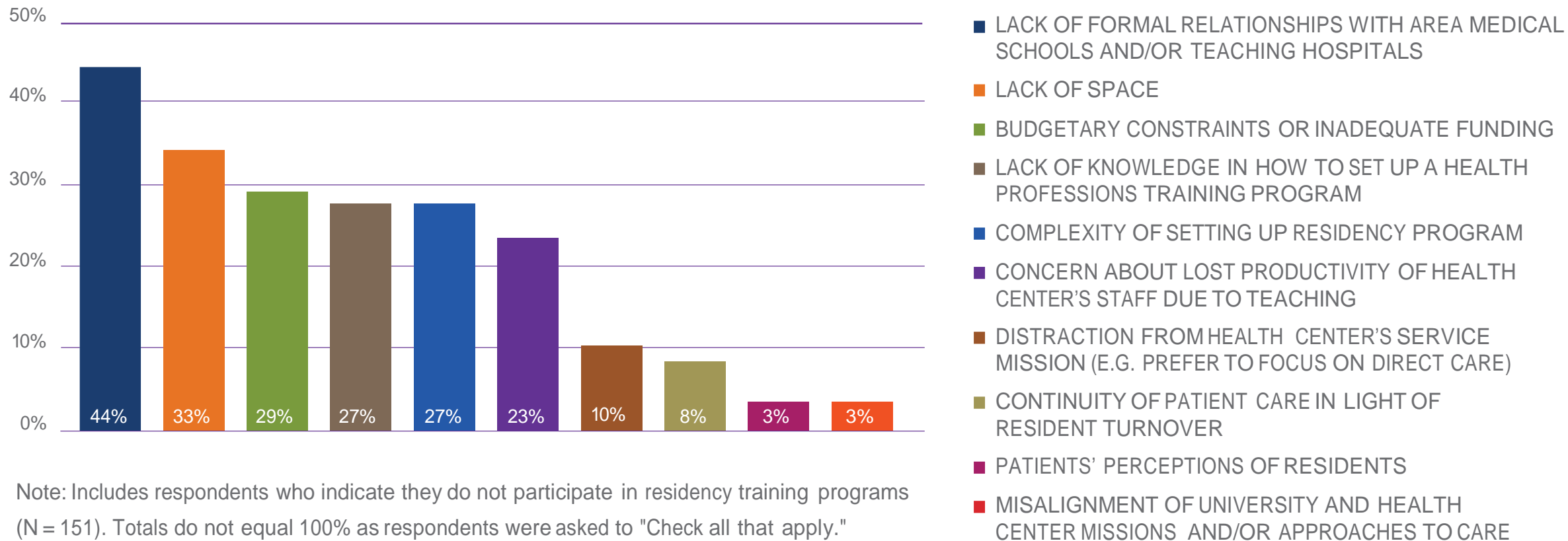
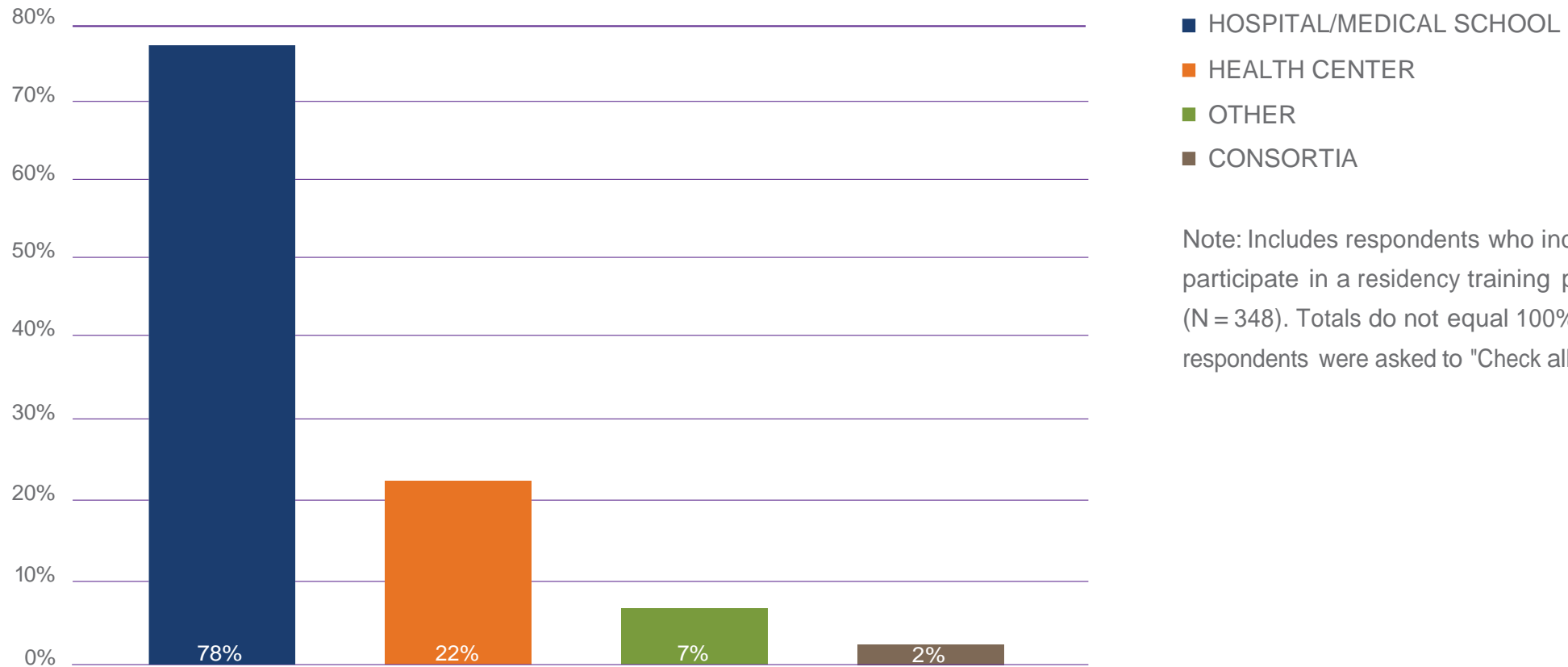


FIGURE 11 — ORGANIZATIONS HOLDING THE ACCREDITATION FOR HEALTH CENTERS' RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMS



Note: Includes respondents who indicate they participate in a residency training program (N = 348). Totals do not equal 100% as respondents were asked to "Check all that apply."



# Main Takeaways

- Nearly all health centers (95%) are experiencing at least one clinical staff vacancy.
  - **Two million more patients could be served if all health centers' clinical vacancies were filled today.**
- Family physicians:
  - Most common vacancy, challenging to fill, long average time open
  - Top priority vacancy to fill for half of sample
- Health centers still recruiting for many different positions (e.g. behavioral health).
  - Recruitment and retention challenges = sharp competition, health center location
- Health centers draw from the network of other health centers across the US to recruit their clinical staff.
- Continued relationship with and reliance on NHSC at health centers
  - More than half all NHSC participants are delivering care at health centers
  - Nearly two-thirds of all NHSC clinical vacancies are at health centers
- While many health centers are participating in clinical health professions training
  - Common barriers for others = budgetary constraints, lack of relationships with area medical schools

# Limitations

- Survey
  - Potential for recall bias
  - 39% response rate
- Focused on clinical workforce only
- New funding opportunities can influence current vacancies and hiring priorities
  - E.g. new oral health funding

# Questions?

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