Aging in Place

What We Heard Report

August 5, 2025

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

We humbly acknowledge that the land on which we live, learn, work and play is Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dene, and the unceded territory of the Métis.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Municipality with the Council-appointed Advisory Committee on Aging (ACOA) are looking to understand senior's housing needs, identify gaps in existing services and to explore the potential development of a new Aging In Place facility located next to the Willow Square Continuing Care Centre.

From May 22-July 12, 2025, opportunities to provide feedback were offered through:

- **Surveys:** Three uniquesurveys were offered. 1)for seniors 65+, 2) caregivers/family and 3) the public with a total of 611 completed surveys.
- **Interviews:** Ten community partner interviews
- **Pop-ups:** Attended three events during Senior's Week with 279 engagement actions at local events.
- **Information session:** One session hosted at the Golden Year's Society with approximately 100 attendees.

Feedback gathered will help shape the feasibility study -- Ensuring that it reflects local perspectives and supports future planning that allows seniors to age in place with dignity and connection.



PARTICIPANTS

Who did we talk to?

Opportunities to share input were available to the following audiences:

- All residents (urban and rural)
- Seniors aged 65 and older
- Older adults 50 +
- People with aging family members
- Caregivers
- Community partner and senior serving organizations and agencies.







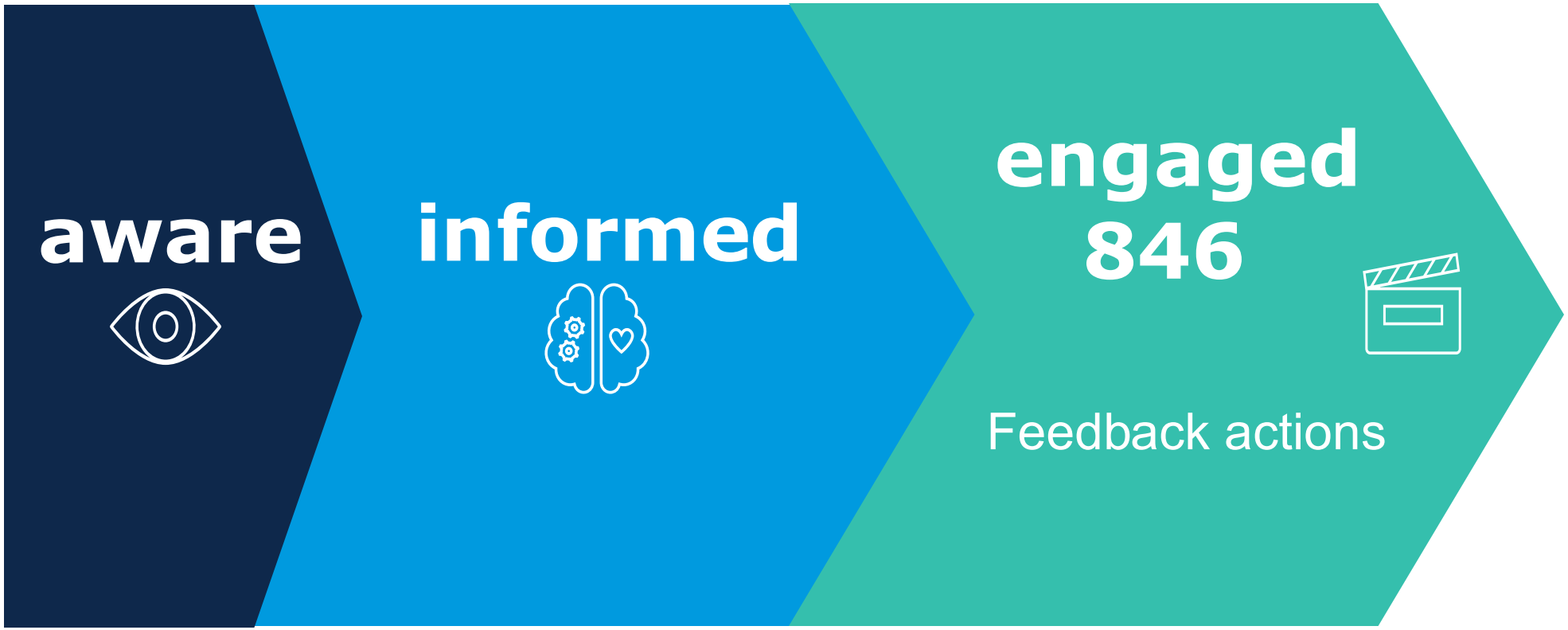
ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS

aware

ways people saw communications and advertisements.

- Digital impressions: 15,072
- People who visited information table: 209
- Participate Wood Buffalo newsletter: 2,598
- Email invitations: 10

ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS

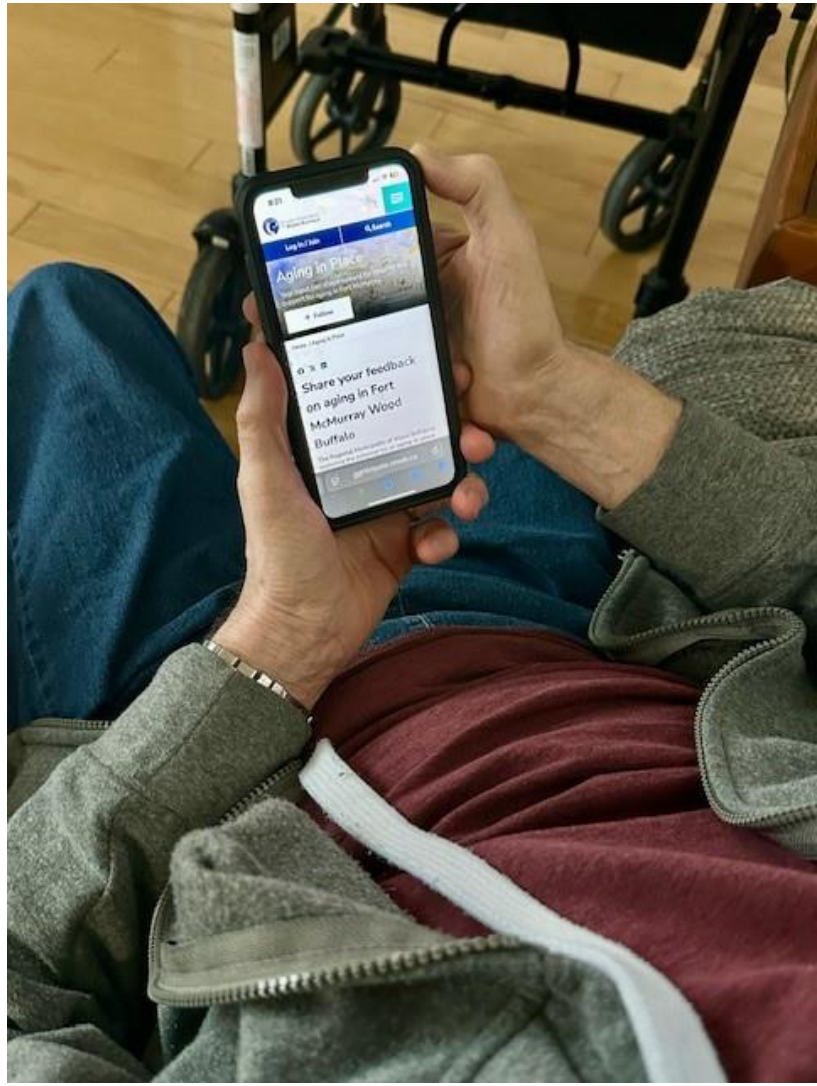


ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

Where did we engage with the community?

ONLINE

1,604	Participate Wood Buffalo (PWB) AIP project page views
1,164	Unique visitors to the PWB project page
611	Completed surveys **Printed surveys were also available at in person events, rural municipal offices, community partner locations and could be completed over the phone through Pulse.* • 256 – Are you 65 or older? • 191 – Not a senior or someone with aging family? • 164 – Have an aging family member?
54	New project page followers



ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

Where did we engage with the community?

IN-PERSON

10 Community partner conversations/interviews

- Alberta Health Services
- Alzheimer's Society of Canada
- Golden Years Society
- Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo
- Nistawoyou Association Friendship Center
- St. Aidan's Society
- Support Services Wood Buffalo
- Wood Buffalo Housing
- Wood Buffalo Pride
- YMCA

3 Pop-up events

- St. Aidan's Tailgate Tuesday (128 attendees)
- Council's Luncheon for Seniors and Elders (280 attendees)
- Anzac Senior's Luncheon (130 attendees)

1 Information session/Workshop hosted at the Golden Years Society (Apprx. 100 attendees)







OVERALL KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



1. Need for more senior and 55+ housing options

- 70% of the respondents to all three surveys indicated that will stay or have aging family members who will stay in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo as they age.
- Nearly 6 in 10 participants anticipate a move in the next 5-10 years, either for themselves or a family member, due to age, mobility issues or the need for aging in place supports.
- Respondents highlighted the need for more retirement communities, single-level homes, bungalows, and cottages, mentioned **141 times** across all three surveys.
- In conversations, seniors with higher incomes or retirement savings indicated that affordable housing options would not provide the lifestyle or type of facility they are seeking.



2. Affordability challenges

- 67% of survey respondents to the senior and general public surveys indicated that affordable housing is *very important.*
- 59% of respondents with aging family members said *cost of living* is the top challenge for their family members to live independently.
- In the long answer questions asked in all three surveys, affordability was a common theme mentioned 130 times.

OVERALL KEY FINDINGS/THEMES

3. Accessibility and age-friendly design

- Among the features identified in all three surveys for an aging in place facility, these five emerged as the top priorities:
  - **Medical services** (clinic, pharmacy, or on-site health care) – 468 respondents (77%).
  - **Programs and recreation** – 310 respondents (51%).
  - **Laundry and housekeeping services** – 268 respondents (44%).
  - **Community kitchen and dining with meals provided** – 230 respondents (38%).
  - **Safety and independence supports** – 110 respondents (18%).
- Accessibility and desired design features were mentioned 236 time across open-ended responses in all three surveys.
- The seniors survey highlighted that the top three accessibility features were **accessible bathrooms, grab bars, and step-free access**. Additionally, 86% of respondents said they would use health services if they were located in or near their building.
- Supports to help seniors remain in their own homes, such as financial assistance, home renovations, and accessibility adaptations, were mentioned 34 times in open-ended responses across all three surveys.

OVERALL KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



4. Support services and community connection

- 44% of respondents to the seniors and aging family members survey said they or their family members felt *somewhat connected* or *not vey connected* to their community.
- Barriers to accessing support were raised 215 times in the open-ended responses of all three surveys, including availability, awareness, long wait lists, transportation and gaps in local medical services and rural support.



5. Diverse housing options with multiple levels of care

- 85% of respondents to all three surveys support a multi-purpose seniors' facility—or say their family members would stay or relocate to the region if more housing and care options were available.
- The need for more diverse care options, including independent, assisted, transitional, Aging in Place facilities, hospice, and specialized dementia care, was mentioned 209 times in open-ended responses across all surveys.
- In conversations, seniors indicated a desire for housing options that align with higher income.

COMMUNITY PARTNER CONVERSATIONS

Conversations Overview:
Hosted by the RMWB Aging in Place project team (Planning, Community Services, Communications, Advisory Committee on Aging), ten in-person interviews were conducted with organizations specializing in senior care and programming.

Discussions provided first-hand insight into current needs, challenges and opportunities for supporting older adults and seniors and aging in place.

Format:
Two to three members of the Aging in Place project team met with the community partners, asked questions and gathered feedback from representatives of each organization.

Key Themes:

- **Community Partnerships:** Most frequently mentioned; need for collaboration among organizations and stakeholders.
- **Social Programming:** Meaningful activities and engagement opportunities to enhance seniors' quality of life.
- **Vision for Aging in Place & Inclusive Services:** Emphasizes culturally inclusive spaces and services reflecting community diversity.
- **Independent Living:** Supports autonomy and self-sufficiency for older adults.
- **In-Home Support & Language Access:** Ensures accessible care and effective communication.

INFORMATION SESSION

Event Overview:
Hosted by the RMWB Aging in Place project team (Planning, Community Services, Communications, Advisory Committee on Aging). XX attendees joined to learn about the feasibility study over coffee and treats.

Format:
Presentation followed by small-group table discussions for questions, feedback, and suggestions.



Key Themes:

- **Home-like housing:** Preference for cottages, townhomes, row houses.
- **Accessibility:** Single-level, wide doorways, grab bars, walk-in showers
- **Affordability:** Income-appropriate housing options
- **Lifestyle + Housing Preference:** Higher income seniors want alternatives to affordable housing.
- **Diverse and flexible living:** Mix of independent & assisted living, couples' units, variety of unit sizes
- **Community and amenities:** Social spaces, cafés, gardens, walking paths (indoor and outdoor)
- **Location and infrastructure:** Parking, traffic, safety, alternative location preferences
- **Safety and support services:** Optional cleaning, meal prep, wellbeing checks, physiotherapy, esthetics (pedicures, massages, etc.)

NEXT STEPS

Members of the Aging in Place project team will present an update to Council on Sept. 4, 2025.

For more information including the Council meeting schedule, agendas and packages visit rmwb.ca/council.

For project updates follow rmwb.ca/AgingInPlace



Thank You

For more information on this report email **participate@rmwb.ca**.

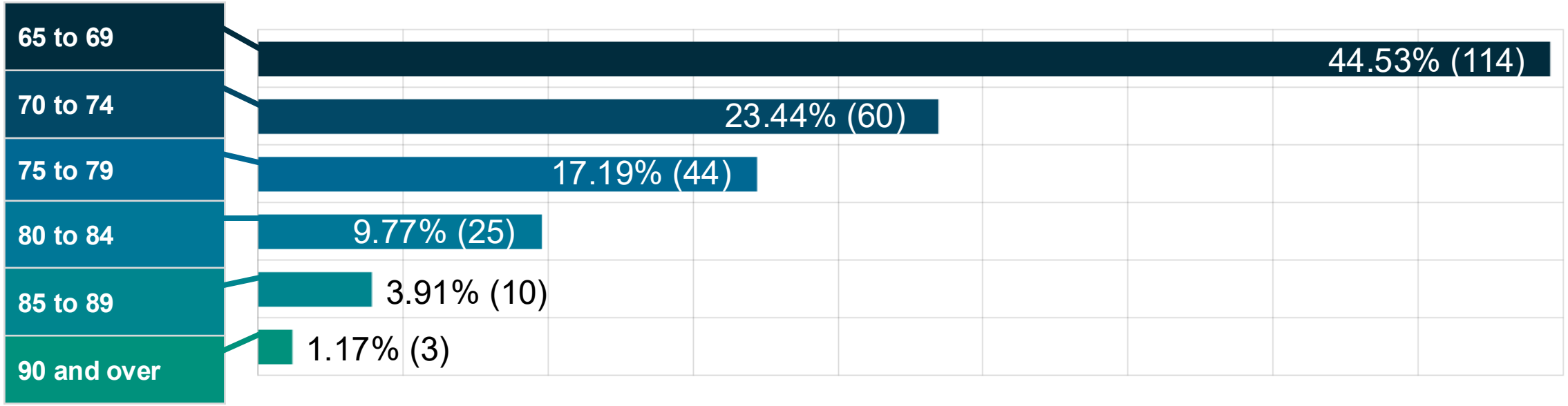
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Appendix A
Senior survey responses

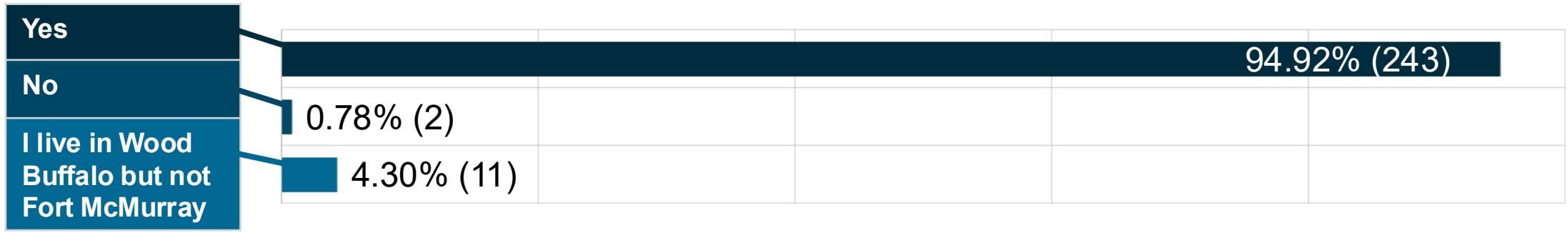
Are you 65 or older?
(Total of 256 responses)

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Q1 – How old are you? (Total of 256 responses)



Q2 – Do you live in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo? (Total of 256 responses)



Q2a – Which rural community do you live in? (Total of 11 responses)

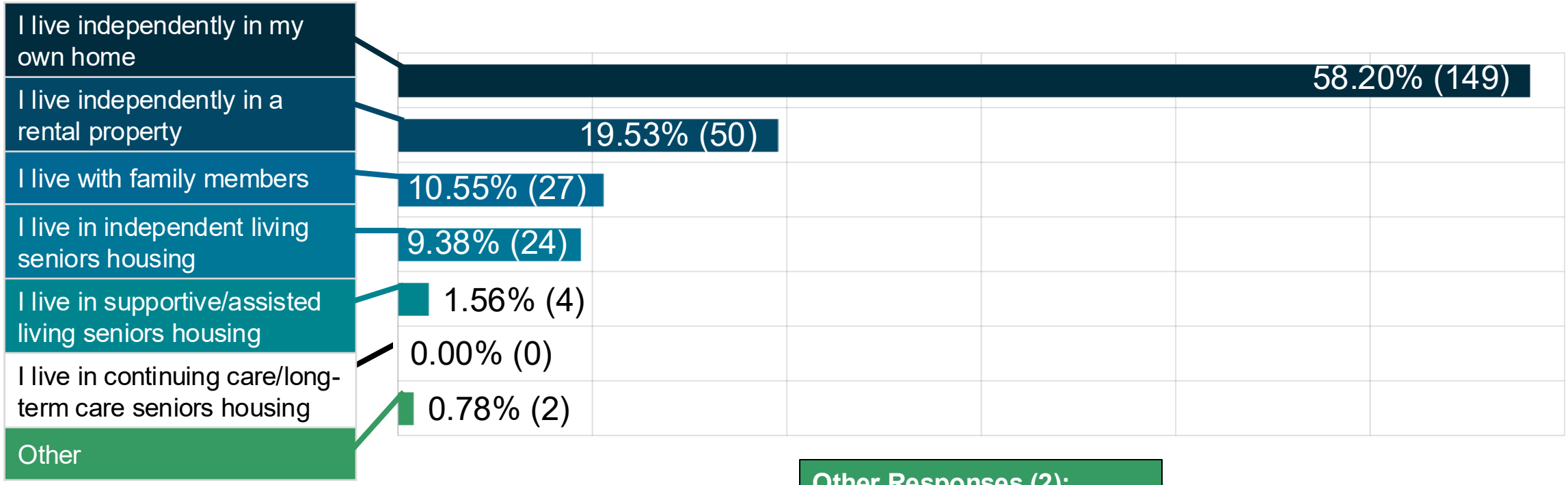
Saprae Creek Estates	9.09% (1)
Anzac	81.82% (9)
Conklin	9.09% (1)

Q2b – Where do you live? (Total of 2 responses)

Red Deer, Alberta
Beaumont

Q3 – How would you describe your current living arrangement?

(Total of 256 responses)

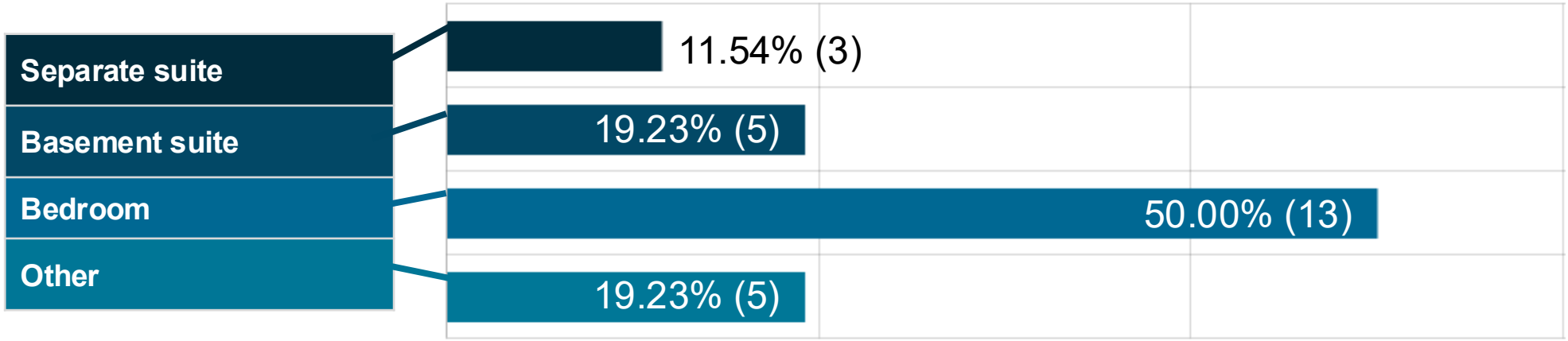


Other Responses (2):

- **"-"**
- **"Rent a room"**

Q3a – I live with family members in a:

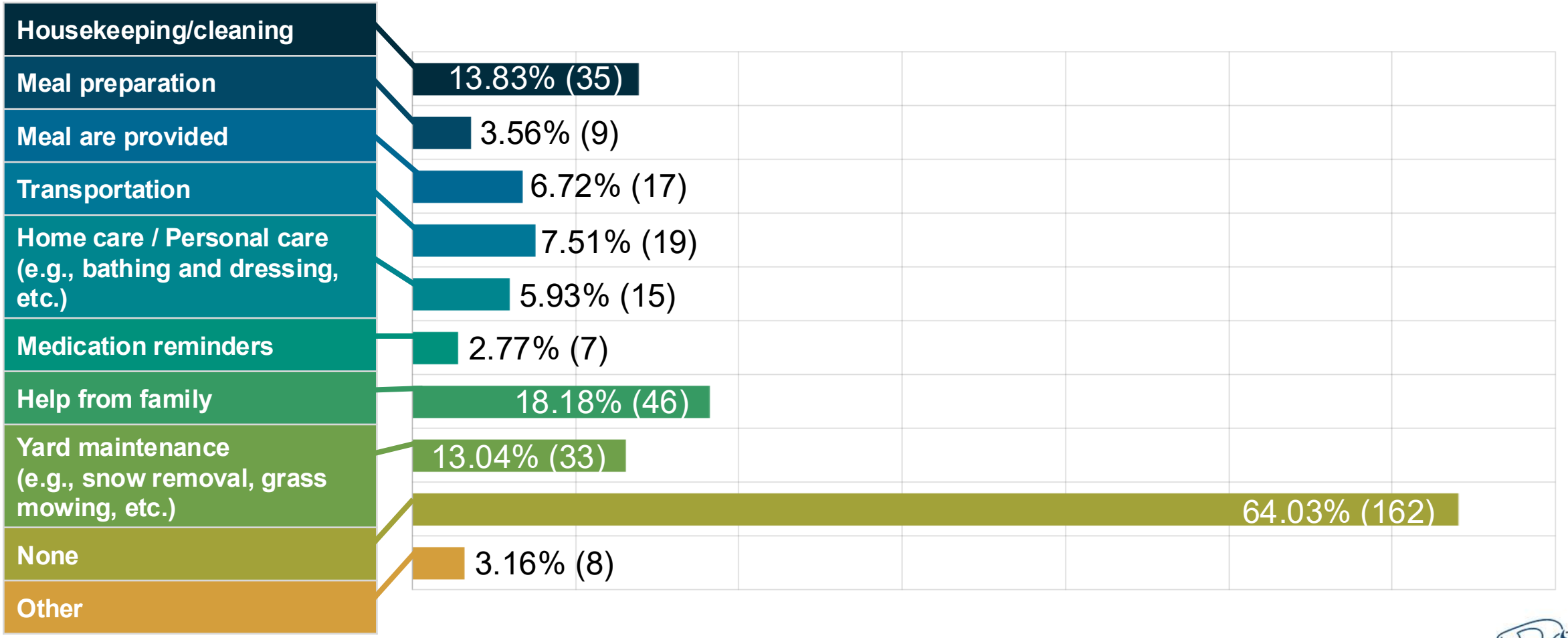
(Total of 26 responses)



Other Responses (5):

- **"On my brother's land in a run-down trailer with my son. In bad need of a new home"**
- **"Residential home"**
- **"Rented WBH"**
- **"Home"**
- **"In a basement sharing the kitchen, laundry and shower facilities"**

Q4 – Do you currently receive any support to help you live independently? (Check all that apply) (Total of 253 responses)



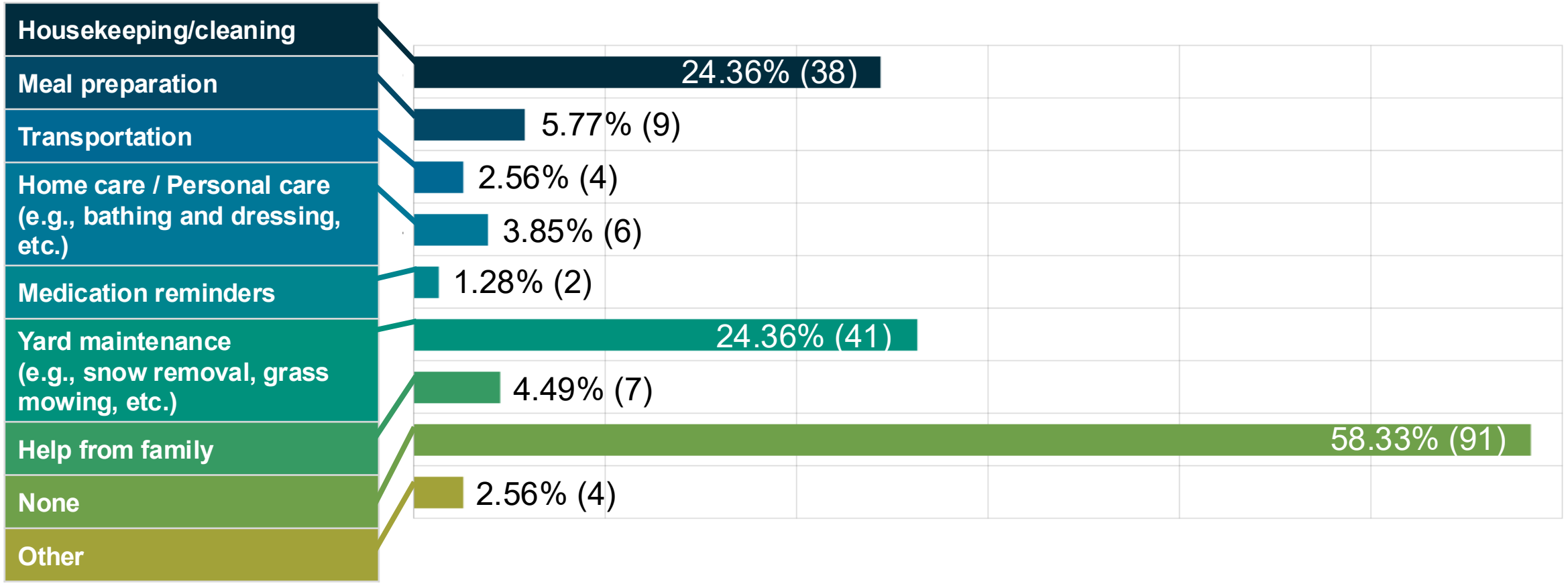
Q4 Continued – Do you currently receive any support to help you live independently? (Check all that apply) (Total of 253 responses)

Other Responses (8):

- **“Meals on wheels”**
- **“Would like housekeeping”**
- **“St. Aiden’s Society – Senior Outreach Worker”**
- **“Volunteer that takes me for errands for a couple of hours every week”**
- **“I would like support with housekeeping, meal preparation, transportation and home care”**
- **“I would like help with housekeeping, home care, medication reminders”**
- **“St. Aiden’s are always helpful”**
- **“Would like help with housekeeping”**

Q4a – Are there supports you would like to have? (Check all that apply)

(Total of 156 responses)



Q4a Continued – Are there supports you would like to have? (Check all that apply) (Total of 156 responses)

Other Responses (4):

- **“Snow removal”**
- **“Rail equipped in the bathroom”**
- **“Reduction to my property taxes”**
- **“Not at this time”**

Q4b – If you would like support, can you briefly explain why you are not currently receiving support? (Total of 55 responses by theme)

1. **Do not currently need support (mentioned 21 times)**
   - Independent and able to do things myself
   - 7 respondents mentioned that they would like or recognize that they will need support in the future

2. **Do not qualify (mentioned 7 times)**
   - Income too high to receive support
   - Not eligible for benefits/programs
   - Owning a pet prevents eligibility for senior housing

3. **Access barriers (mentioned 7 times)**
   - No response to submitted applications
   - Long wait times for available services
   - No one is available to do what is needed especially on an infrequent basis
   - Unable to advocate

4. **Unaware of supports (mentioned 6 times)**
   - Have not looked for help
   - Unaware of what supports are available and where to find them

Q4b Continued – If you would like support, can you briefly explain why you are not currently receiving support? (Total of 55 responses by theme)

5. Affordability (mentioned 6 times)

- Fixed income
- The cost of services is too high
- There are other ways to help cut costs for seniors to help them stay in their homes longer
  - Lower property taxes
  - Savings on school/education taxes
  - Savings on municipal utilities
  - Financial support for renovations and home adaptations

6. Other (mentioned 5 times)

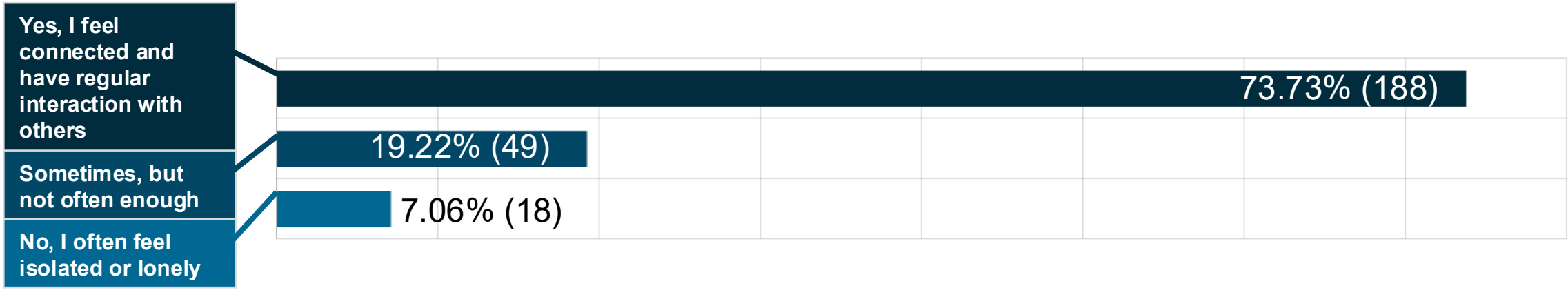
- Lists of where help is needed (e.g., need help with heavy chores and housekeeping)

7. Already receiving support (mentioned 3 times)

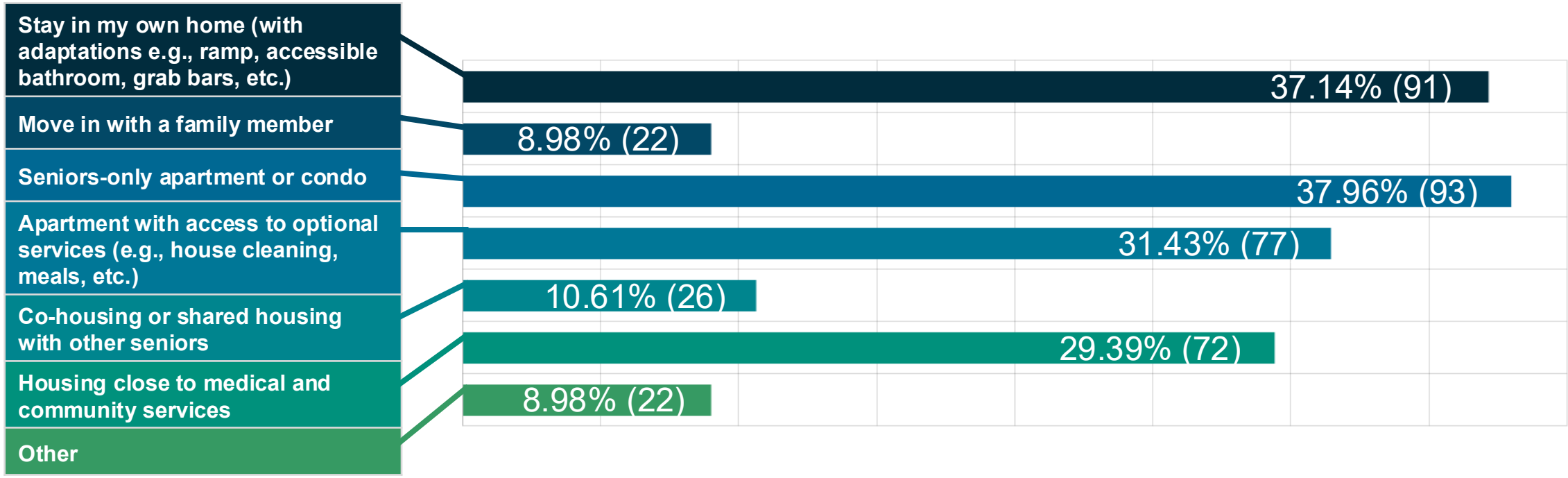
- Support through local unions
- Family support
- Pay for someone to shovel snow and for housekeeping

Q5 – Do you feel socially connected in your current living situation

(Total of 255 responses)



Q6 – If you move from your current home, where will you consider moving? If possible, what would be your future preference? (Check all that apply) (Total of 245 responses)

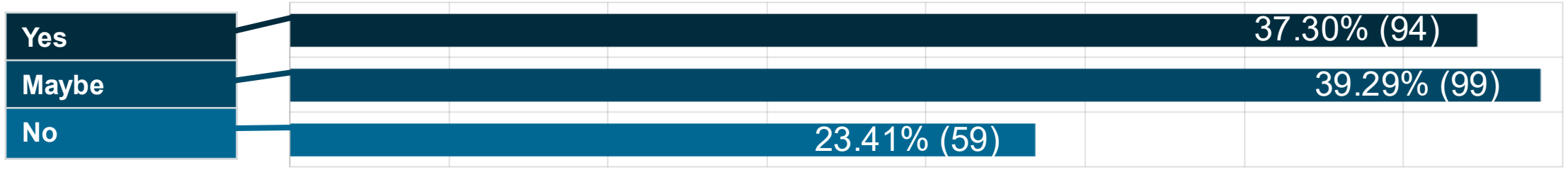


Q6 Continued – If you move from your current home, where will you consider moving? If possible, what would be your future preference? (Check all that apply) (Total of 245 responses)

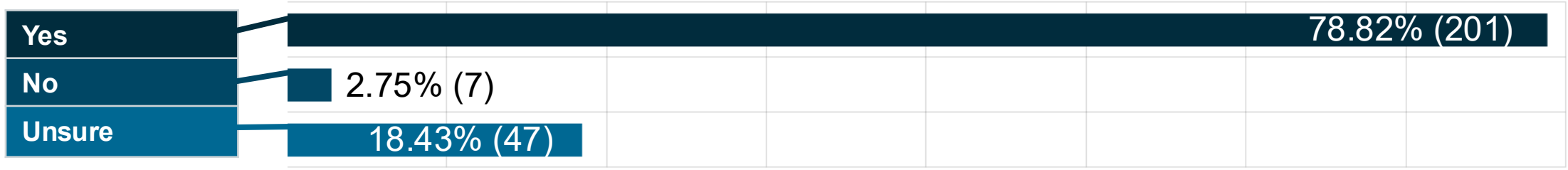
Other Responses (22):

- "Open to options-depends"
- "Privacy is important"
- "Privacy is important"
- "I would like to remain independent."
- "Right now I live in a seniors' residence"
- "Already at Rotary House"
- "Willow Square"
- "Not moving"
- "I would like it if there were 1-2 bedroom small cottages all together. Just for seniors"
- "I would keep living with my family"
- "Subsidized housing"
- "Lake cottage already purchased"
- "Downsize but something nice"
- "Move to Red Deer- close to family"
- "Closer to family"
- "One level single housing (eg: town house), single garage and optional services (house cleaning, meals, etc.)"
- "Out of Fort McMurray closer to Edmonton specialists etc."
- "Underground parking"
- "Condo, townhouse (limited stairs), or suitable mobile"
- "All requirements for daily living on one floor. We currently live in a multi-level home"
- "55 plus duplex/townhouse community"
- "Close to Mc Island and downtown shopping within walking distance would be Nice. A place where I could sell my truck and use an e bike for most of the year"

Q7 – Do you anticipate moving from your current home in the next 5-10 years due to aging-related challenges or mobility issues? (Total of 252 responses)



Q8 – Do you intend to live in Wood Buffalo as you age? (Total of 255 responses)



Q8a – Why would you like to age in Wood Buffalo?

(Summary of key themes from the185 responses received)

1. **My family and friends live here (mentioned 98 times)**
2. **It's home (mentioned 64 times)**
3. **The programs and services that are available for seniors (mentioned 27 times)**
4. **I like it here, it's beautiful and a great location (mentioned 29 times)**
5. **The cost of living is affordable (mentioned 5 times)**

Q8b – Why are you planning to leave Wood Buffalo as you age?
(Total of 5 responses)

- “To go back to hometown.”
- “To be closer to family members.”
- “Moving closer to family.”
- “To get away from severe cold, to be able to afford a home of my own that’s cheaper than Fort Mac, my family are planning on moving towards Edmonton as they retire, environmental issues such as tired of fires and evacuations, don't like 'one way out' situation, etc.”
- “Wood Buffalo is an expensive town; there is no hope of financial recovery for the boom years in housing. This effects seniors or soon to be retired people the heaviest. There is no willingness of Council to bring services or retail which offer cost reduction to the area. Living remotely 2 hrs from Edmonton will provide me and my husband better access to healthcare, ability to live frugally but healthy with cheaper options for groceries and items required. Having been a strong figure in Senior's care in RMWB I know the challenges for seniors that are not retiring on huge Oil sands pensions.”

Q9 – Select the top five on-site services that would be important to you at an Aging in Place facility. (Choose 5) (Total of 252 responses)

	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Medical clinic	**68.65%**	**173**
Programs and recreation (e.g., entertainment, bingo, cards, woodworking, etc.)	**63.10%**	**159**
Laundry and housekeeping services	**57.54%**	**145**
Community kitchen and dining room with meals provided	**49.60%**	**125**
Pharmacy	**47.22%**	**119**
Health services (e.g., physiotherapy, massage, etc.)	**42.46%**	**107**
Outdoor garden or greenhouse space	**38.10%**	**96**
Fitness or exercise space	**37.30%**	**94**
Café or restaurant	**26.59%**	**67**
Hair salon or barber	**24.60%**	**62**
Spiritual or cultural space	**17.06%**	**43**
Library or reading areas	**16.27%**	**41**
Postal Services	**13.10%**	**33**
Other	**6.75%**	**17**
Private meeting rooms	**6.35%**	**16**
Convenience or gift shop	**5.95%**	**15**

Q9 Continued – Select the top five on-site services that would be important to you at an Aging in Place facility. (Choose 5) (Total of 252 responses)

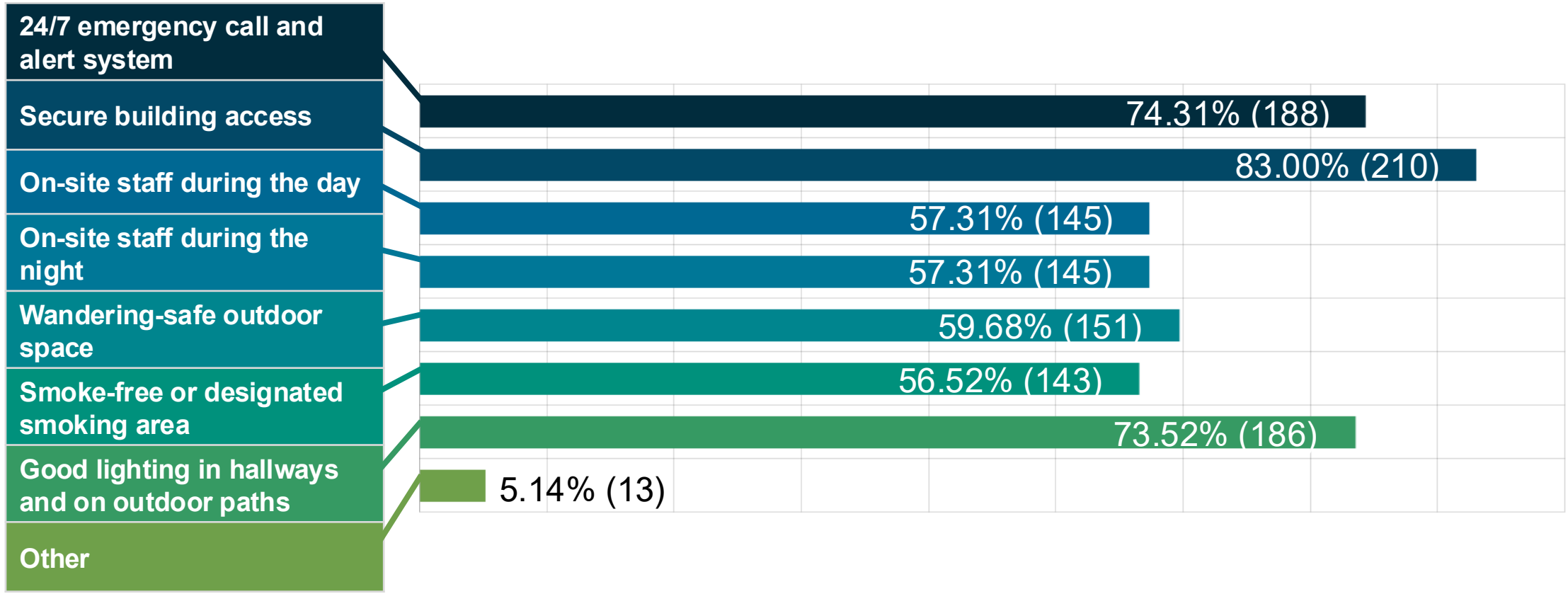
Other Responses (17):

- **"I would not want to be in a facility"**
- **"Vehicle parking"**
- **"New bus, underground parking"**
- **"New bus, common for games and movies, underground parking"**
- **"Access to laundry facilities"**
- **"One-stop shop services"**
- **"No thank you. The gov't will take the whole pension cheque, too expensive"**
- **"Closet space"**
- **"Transportation – like a shuttle service"**
- **"Swimming pool – social"**
- **"All of the above"**
- **"Family visitation area"**
- **"Close to all above. IE Willow Square"**
- **"Free parking"**
- **"Balcony, outdoor space"**
- **"Estate services, disability supply store (walkers, wheelchairs, commodes, etc.)"**
- **"Pets welcome"**

Q9 – How important is it for your housing to be (Check one for each item):
(Total of 252 responses)

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
Affordable and geared to income?	2.40% 6	9.20% 23	18.40% 46	70.00% 175
Accessible for mobility devices?	5.02% 12	16.32% 39	31.38% 75	47.28% 113
Pet-friendly?	41.77% 99	20.25% 48	14.77% 35	23.21% 55
Close to medical, cultural, and community services?	2.87% 7	10.66% 26	28.69% 70	57.79% 141

Q11 – What safety or security features would be most important to you? (Check all that apply) (Total of 253 responses)

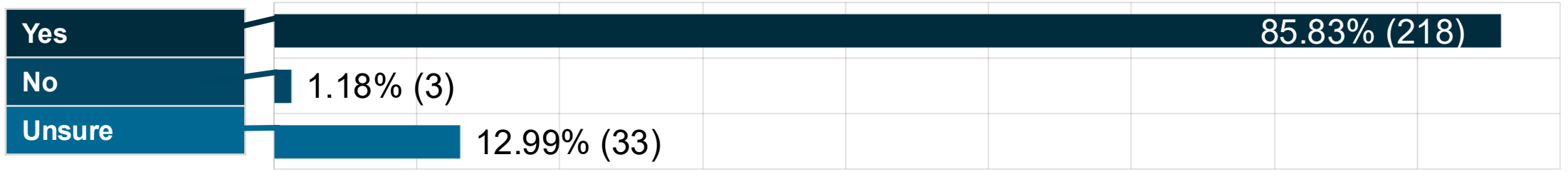


Q11 Continued – What safety or security features would be most important to you? (Check all that apply) (Total of 253 responses)

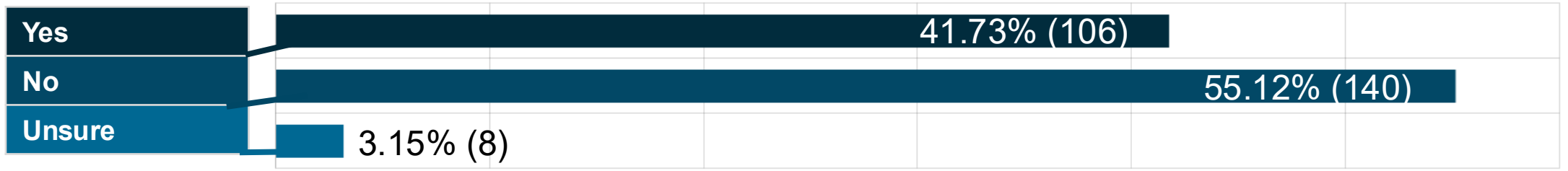
Other Responses (13):

- **“Garden hose that we can use”**
- **“Smoke-free”**
- **“Heat in bathrooms”**
- **“Mental health”**
- **“Recreational”**
- **“All of the above”**
- **“Flashing and vibrating fire alarms for hearing impaired when hearing aids are removed at night”**
- **“Handrails in hallways”**
- **“Security patrols”**
- **“Fenced”**
- **“Security cameras outside and inside hallways and communal areas”**
- **“Camera being monitored for safety if someone was to fall down they would be found in time”**
- **“Accessible”**

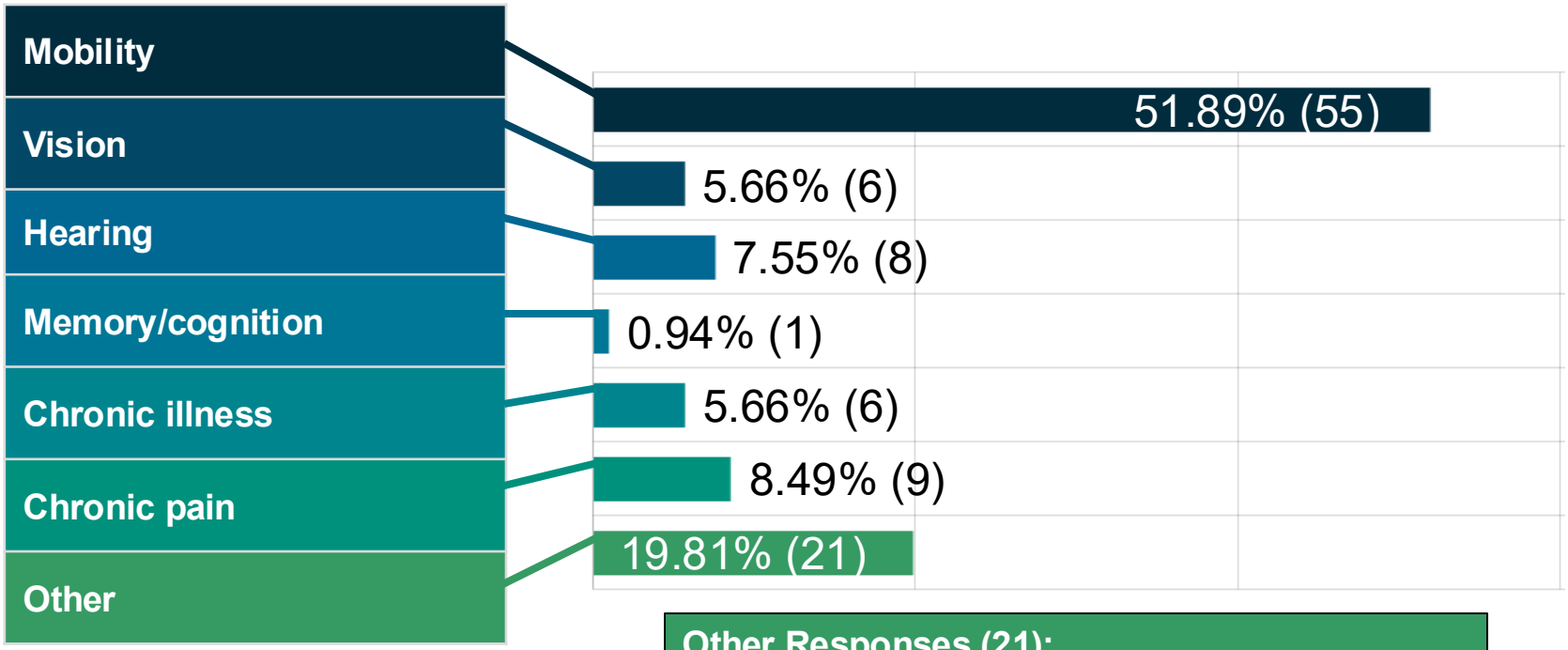
Q12 – Would you use health services if they were located in your building or nearby (Total of 254 responses)



Q13 – Do you currently live with any physical, sensory, cognitive or mobility related issues? (Total of 254 responses)



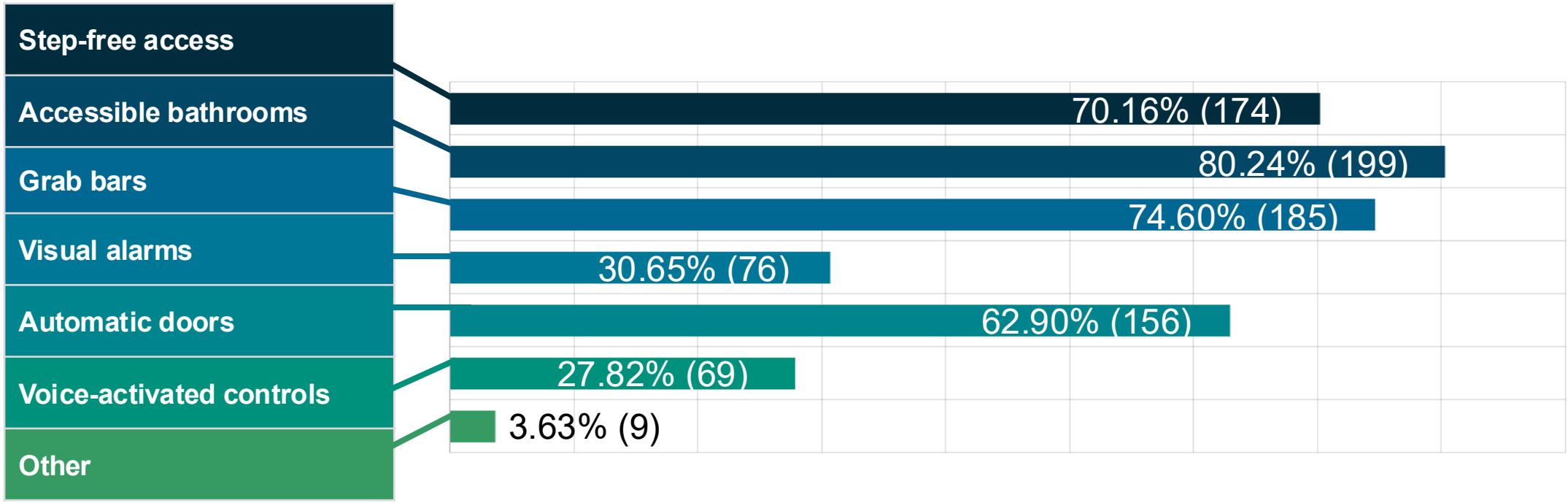
Q13a – What type? (Total of 106 responses)



Other Responses (21):

- Mobility (mentioned 11 times)
- Vision (mentioned 4 times)
- Hearing (mentioned 4 times)
- Memory/cognition (mentioned 3 times)
- Chronic illness (mentioned 5 times)
- Chronic pain (mentioned 9 times)
- Heart trouble (mentioned 3 times)
- Arthritis (mentioned 2 times)

Q14 – What accessibility features would be essential for you in an aging in place facility? (Total of 248 responses)

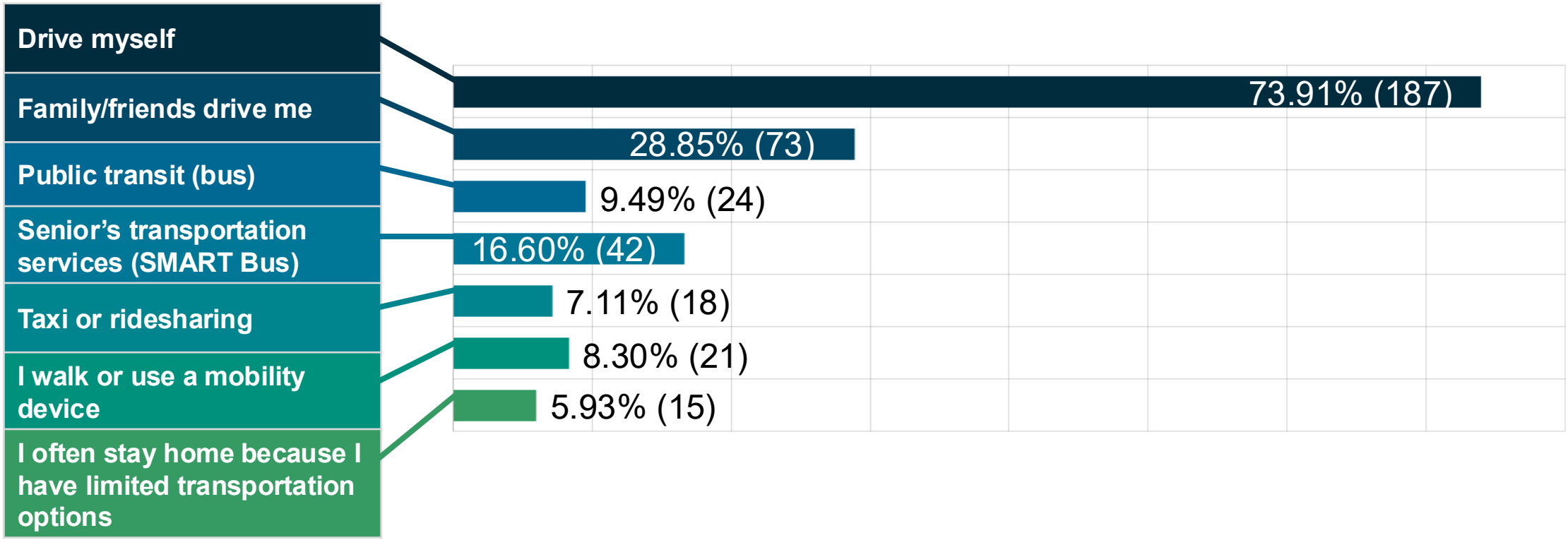


Q14 Continued– What accessibility features would be essential for you in an aging in place facility? (Total of 248 responses)

Other Responses (9):

- **“Not interested”**
- **“Ice-snow free”**
- **“All of the above”**
- **“Flat outdoor access, not located on a hill or near a busy intersection”**
- **“Stand-up showers vs. bathtubs”**
- **“An elevator”**
- **“Not currently needed but possibly in the future”**
- **“Railings in hallways, mobility aid parking area on each floor, extra wide parking stalls, huge floor to ceiling windows in all suites for enhanced natural light, barrier-free deck/balcony in suites and common areas to accommodate extra wide wheelchairs, ability to install assist poles in aesthetic manner”**
- **“Camera to monitor people coming and going for security”**

Q15 – How do you usually get around in your community? (Check all that apply) (Total of 253 responses)

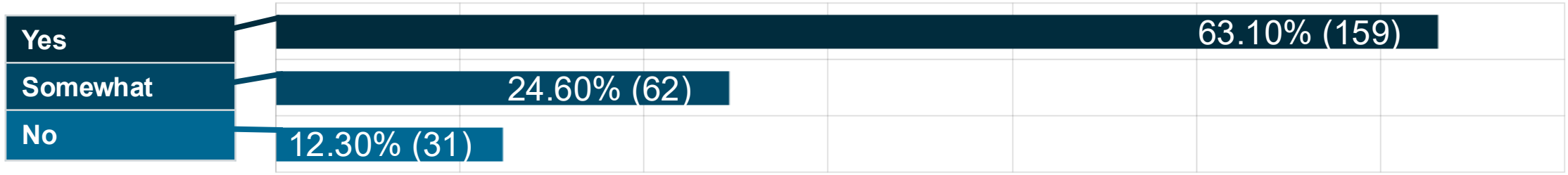


Q16 – What barriers have you faced when looking for accessible housing?

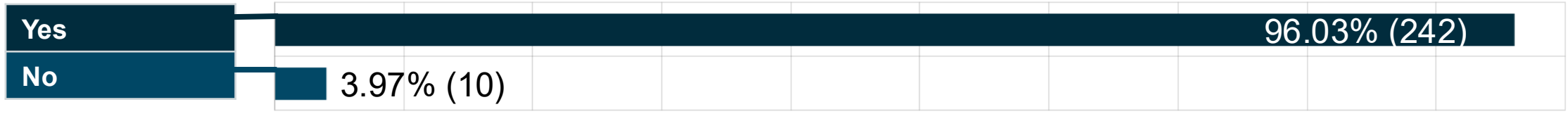
(Total of 122 responses by theme)

1. **None at this time (mentioned 48 times)**
2. **Affordability (mentioned 33 times)**
3. **Accessibility (parking stairs, no space for mobility devise, etc.) (mentioned 32 times)**
4. **Availability (mentioned 12 times)**

Q17 – Are you comfortable using technology (e.g., internet, email, online forms? (Total of 252 responses)



Q18 – Do you have access to your own smart phone, tablet or laptop?
(Total of 252 responses)

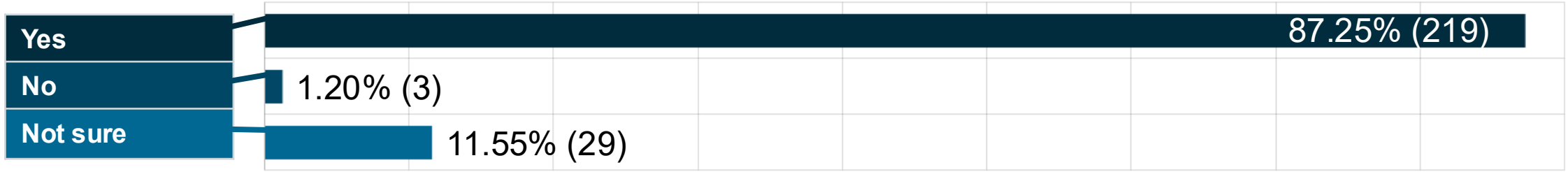


Q19 – How important are these features in a future home?

(Total of 252 responses)

Feature	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
A private balcony or outdoor space	4.05% 10	13.77% 34	34.01% 84	48.18% 119
Washer and dryer in the unit	4.94% 12	12.76% 31	32.10% 78	50.21% 122
A flexible room design (can change over time)	15.65% 36	32.61% 75	33.48% 77	18.26% 42
Space for couples to live together	26.16% 62	8.44% 20	23.21% 55	42.19% 100
Plenty of storage (e.g., closets, drawers, lockers, etc.)	1.67% 4	18.83% 45	38.49% 92	41.00% 100
Shared areas to visit and socialize	4.15% 10	17.84% 43	39.42% 92	38.59% 93
Lots of natural light and large windows	5.33% 13	8.20% 20	31.97% 78	54.51% 133
Air conditioning and fresh air circulation	5.76% 14	4.94% 12	28.81% 70	60.49% 147
Access to the internet	6.61% 16	4.96% 12	25.21% 61	63.22% 153
Units for visiting family to rent	26.75% 61	25.44% 58	22.81% 52	25.00% 57

Q20 – Would you support a multi-purpose, centrally located seniors' community that includes housing, retail, medical services and recreation all on one site? (Total of 251 responses)



Q21 – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors like you?

(Total of 200 responses by theme with sample responses)

1. **More seniors/55+ housing or apartments (mentioned 37 times)**
   - "Lack of housing for our aging seniors. I know we all like different types of housing. But, I guess trying to find a happy medium that would make everyone content is key. This is a good start letting everyone have a voice."

2. **Affordable housing, support and rent subsidies (mentioned 34 times)**
   - "Rentals perhaps could be subsidized. Condos and apartments for seniors only would be awesome. Rent is extremely high for seniors on a fixed income"

3. **Single homes, secure retirement communities, independent living (mentioned 30 times)**
   - "Homes that are designed for accessibility or aging in mind, so that people can "age in place" in their own homes. Financial assistance for adaptions to homes. Too much reliance on non-profit agencies and volunteers to provide services - the Municipality should do more to support them and/or play a more active role. Focus of housing for seniors is on assisted living and long-term care, and there does not seem to be any middle ground for active seniors who are capable of living independently, but who need to be closer to services, and amenities."

   - "Individual small housing for seniors that is manageable."

Q21 Continued – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors like you?

(Total of 200 responses by theme with sample responses)

4. **More seniors' programs and services are needed (e.g., medical, mental health and housing associations (mentioned 21 times)**
   - "Lots of us stay in when it's winter because sidewalks n roads are not properly maintained. Options for seniors with pets. More opportunities for socialization not just with other seniors but with kids or families too."
   - "More medical services and specialists."

5. **Desired home features: Outdoor space, recreation, programs, events, pet-friendly, accessible, parking, safety, housekeeping, elevators, garbage chutes, meals, laundry (these features were mentioned in 20 responses)**
   - "Pet friendly senior housing."
   - "Wheelchair accessible housing."
   - "Affordable seniors housing with on-site amenities and activities."

6. **Not sure (mentioned 20 times)**
   - "Not sure anything is missing but there is always room for growth."

Q21 Continued – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors like you?

(Total of 200 responses by theme with sample responses)

7. Aging in place facility (mentioned 18 times)

- "An aging in place centre that starts with apartment suites where single/couples can start out living independently then move to the next level as needed."
- "Aging in place- full apartments with meal support if desired, other levels of support if desired. A pleasant place to live and socialize."
- "I would like a shared space with my wife who has dementia."

8. Support for seniors to stay in their own home (e.g., tax breaks and financial aid) (mentioned 17 times)

- "Help with maintaining the exterior of my home, ie. snow removal, lawn care. Property tax rate for seniors."
- "The monthly cost of living in your own home on a fixed income is very high. Any reduction in property taxes, or subsidies for gas and electricity would help."

9. Nothing is missing (mentioned 16 times)

- "So far I have found nothing missing. Fort McMurray does a great deal for their seniors."

Q21 Continued – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors like you?

(Total of 200 responses by theme with sample responses)

10. Easier access to supports and increased availability of supports (mentioned 11 times)

- "More communication/information on what is available to seniors and the extent of availability."
- "More availability."
- "Not knowing where to find out what is available in the community for seniors."

11. Better transportation, including out-of-town medical trips (mentioned 10 times)

- "Proper transportation that's easily available. Living spaces that allow seniors to stay here in the community."
- "Medical- driving to Edmonton for everything medical is very expensive."

12. Shorter wait times for seniors housing (mentioned 5 times)

- "Everything is missing. There are 5 senior support housing units and they are filled with long extensive waiting lists. For the amount of Baby Boomers in Fort McMurray they desperately need to focus and plan on more Senior Housing Facilities."

Q21 Continued – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors like you?

(Total of 200 responses by theme with sample responses)

13. More senior-friendly spaces (e.g., parks, parking lots, shopping carts, and snow clearing) (mentioned 4 times)

- "Too much focus put on other issues. Why do our parks have next to nothing for seniors?"
- "Need more housing for seniors as the senior population is growing fast. Better parking and more assistance during cold weather since our streets do not get plowed and sidewalks are just left snowed in. Fort McMurray is really not friendly for seniors to live in except during summer as there is very poorly planned winter maintenance."

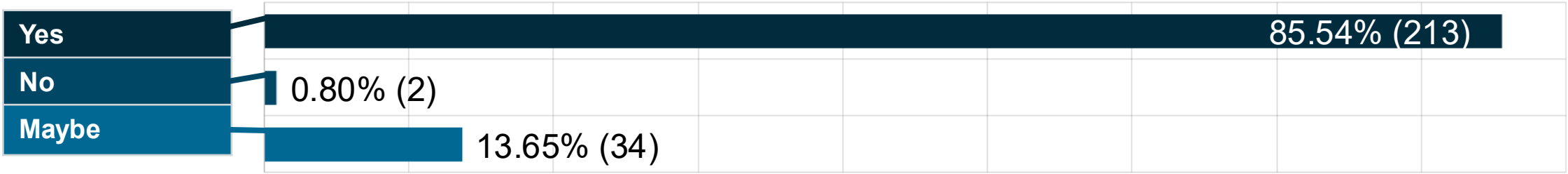
14. Support in rural communities, housing for Elders that upholds cultural traditions (mentioned 2 times)

- "Housing for our First Nation Elders. Needs to be culturally sensitive and understanding of our traditional way of living."
- "Support in the rural areas."

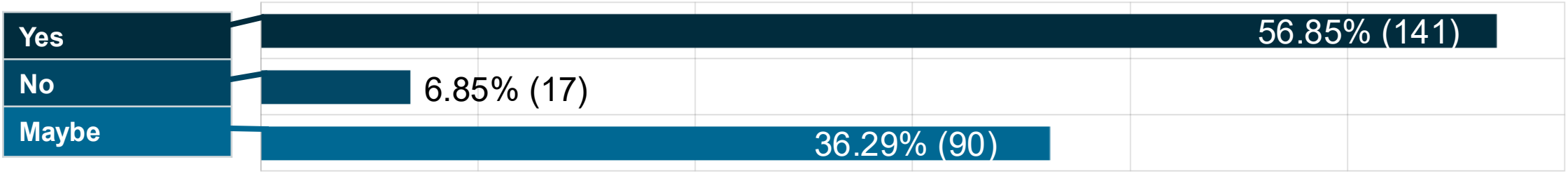
15. Housing that is not low income (mentioned 1 time)

"No middle class housing- all for low income."

Q22 – Do you think housing options are needed for seniors who don't yet need full-time care but want to stay independent? (Total of 249 responses)



Q23 – Would you be interested in moving into a senior's aging in place facility in the future? (Total of 248 responses)



Q24 – Are there any other thoughts, ideas, concerns or suggestions you would like to share? (Total of 111 responses by theme)

1. No additional comments (mentioned 30 times)

2. Availability and timeliness (mentioned 12 times)

Some survey respondents feel that more accommodations are needed urgently, as current waiting lists are very long and capacity is low.

- More accommodations are urgently needed
- Another facility is a great idea
- Waiting lists for accommodations are too long

3. Affordability and financial impact (mentioned 11 times)

Concerns about high living costs, fixed incomes, loss of equity and potential relocation due to expenses were expressed.

- Affordable housing is needed
- Cost of living is too high
- Loss of equity when moving
- May need to move if unable to find affordable housing

Q24 Continued – Are there any other thoughts, ideas, concerns or suggestions you would like to share? (Total of 111 responses by theme)

4. Facilities, features and amenities (mentioned 30 times)

Participants want a wide range of features all designed to support comfort, safety and connection. Some also suggested to reconsider the location of the proposed facility.

- **Desired features:** raised gardens, hobby room, proper heating, security, outdoor spaces, pet-friendly units, spacious layouts, soothing colours,
- **Amenities:** swimming pool, pickleball courts, exercise facilities, bookable gathering rooms, programs and outings
- **Accessibility:** easy application process, accommodations for couples, lots of parking, access to Transit, medical services, facility located in a newer area away from busy areas

5. Support for aging at home (mentioned 9 times)

Survey respondents value services that allow seniors to stay at home longer. Including renovations, homecare and support for family caregivers.

- Renovations to make homes senior-friendly
- Support for family members caring for seniors
- Senior-friendly independent living options
- More senior-friendly spaces in the community

Q24 Continued – Are there any other thoughts, ideas, concerns or suggestions you would like to share? (Total of 111 responses by theme)

6. Access to health care (mentioned 2 times)

There is interest in having more local specialists and medical procedures available to reduce travel for care.

- More local specialists
- Expanded medical procedures available in the region

7. Community input and local priority (mentioned 10 times)

Participants expressed the importance of talking directly to people who will use the facility and consult them on things like design. They would like to see priority given to long-time residents and encourage research of examples in other communities while improving communication on available supports.

- Engage directly with potential residents in design
- Priority for long-time local residents of the region
- Draw from examples such as Dutch senior care, Kamloops, Calgary and Westlock
- Better communication on available supports

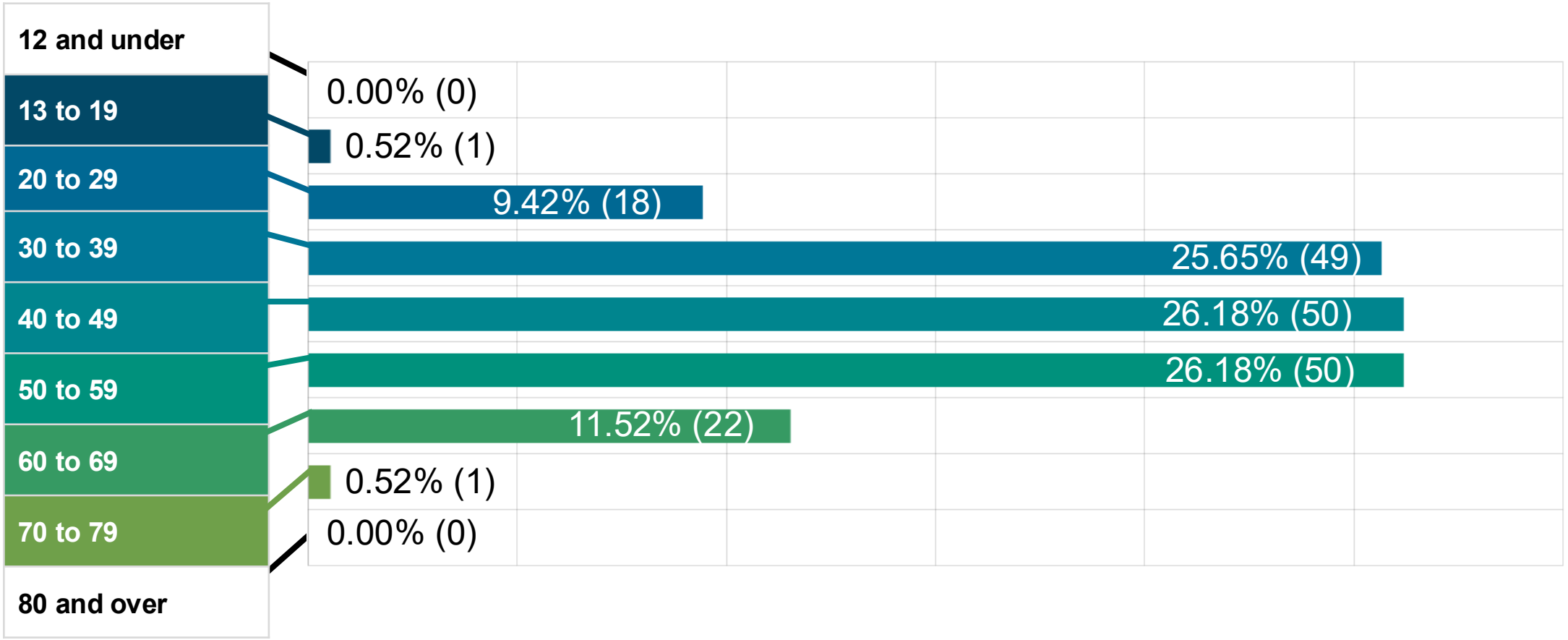
Appendix B
General public survey responses

Not a senior or someone with aging family?

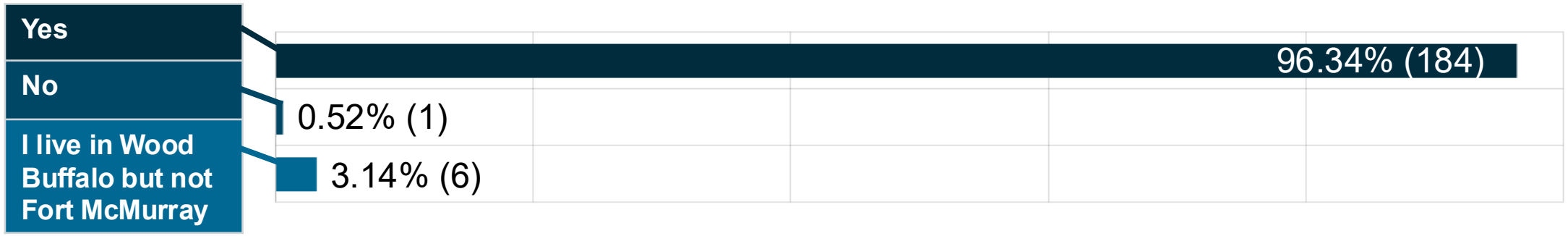
(Total of 191 responses)

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Q1 – How old are you? (Total of 191 responses)



Q2 – Do you live in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo? (Total of 191 responses)



Q2a – Which rural community do you live in? (Total of 6 responses)

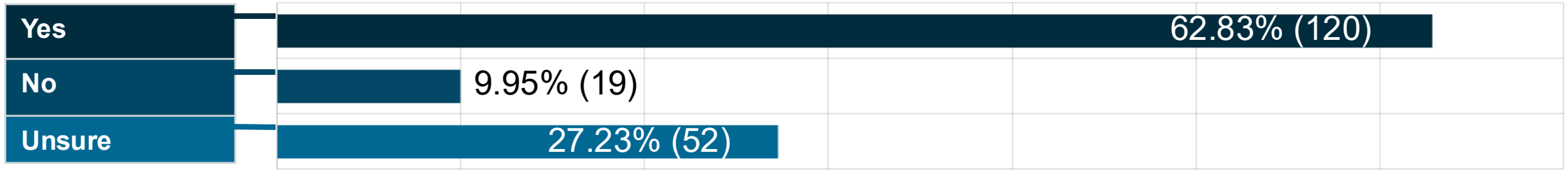
Saprae Creek Estates	33.33% (2)
Anzac	66.67% (4)

Q2b – Where do you live? (Total of 1 response)

Fort Saskatchewan

Q3 – Do you plan to stay in Fort McMurray Wood buffalo as you age?

(Total of 191 responses)



Q4 – Why do you plan to leave Wood Buffalo as you age? (Total of 19 responses)

- “Retiring back east”
- “Too isolated and some health care you need to travel to. Also kids not planning on staying so will move a little closer to them. Also grew up here been here 47 years time to move somewhere else.”
- “Family”
- “Family is not here”
- “Limited access to care, specialists, doctors and long-term care.”
- “Career”
- “Terrible emergency room doctors, long wait times. Hardly any specialists. Bad healthcare overall.”
- “We just want to retire in larger city. Fort Mac-dirty and not good for our health.”
- “Job loss”
- “Lack of resources. I have watched dozens of residents spend months, some nearly 2 years. Wait for safe housing accommodations with appropriate support; in that time the most “appropriate” place for them to wait was to be an inpatient on an acute medicine unit at our local health center. I have witnessed the impact of being there, waiting for months on end for our broken system to find a solution; the social isolation and institutionalization is heartbreaking. Accommodations pale in comparison to a jail; there’s no recreational activities, or group dining; you’re secluded to your four white walls and a shared bathroom. Home Care services are maxed out due to the caseload of our community, Willow Square is constantly facing staffing challenges, and Rotary House has limited availability in addition to an age minimum, excluding many residents who would’ve been successful there..”

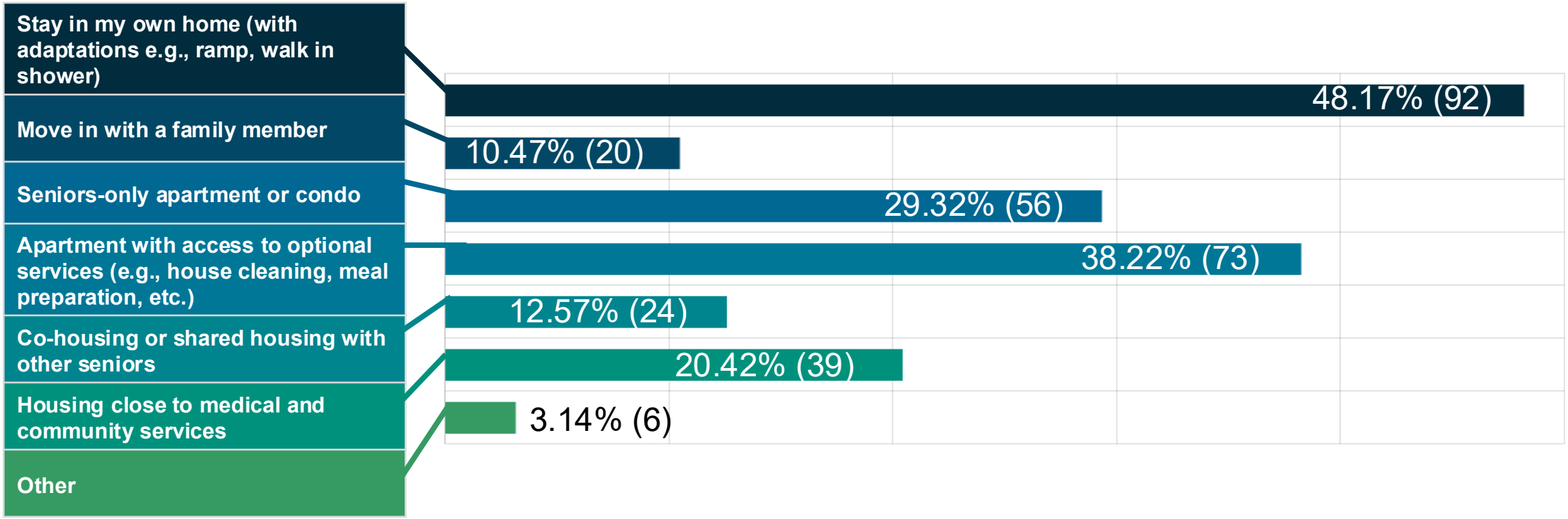
Q4 Continued – Why do you plan to leave Wood Buffalo as you age?
(Total of 19 responses)

- “Moving for work”
- “Aging family, health care.”
- “Not much on health services we are always sent to Edmonton.”
- “There’s not much here when it comes to healthcare. The hospital is not capable of a lot of things like major surgery, there’s no specialists for medical diagnosis. It’s not an ideal place to retire or to grow old. Edmonton or Calgary is better.”
- “Lived in Fort McMurray for 35 years but left once retired.”
- “I plan on retiring somewhere other then Canada once I hit 58 so long farewell”
- “No Costco.”
- “Health services.”
- “Family elsewhere”

Q5 – Would you consider staying in the region as you age if there were more accommodations and services?
(Total of 0 responses)

Q6 – As you age, if you move from your current home, where will you consider moving? If possible, what would be your future preference?

(Total of 191 responses)



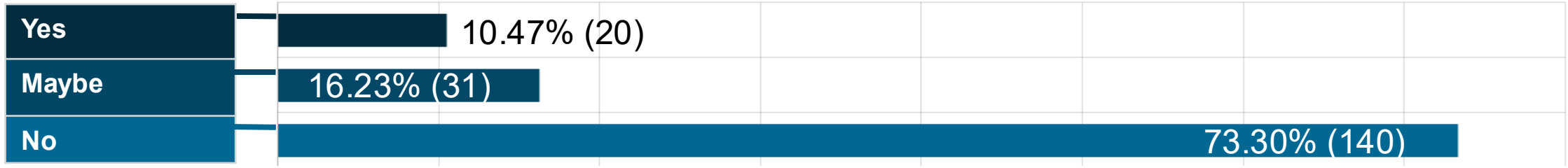
Q6 Continued – As you age, if you move from your current home, where will you consider moving? If possible, what would be your future preference?
(Total of 191 responses)

Other Responses (total of 6):

- “Unsure”
- “Open up space in the area to have more acreages. Absolutely ridiculous that we live in the middle of the forest and you cave to developers' density. Build better!”
- “Somewhere warm where I won’t have to shovel the snow”
- “Rental condo”
- “Rancher home”
- “I would prefer seniors only apartments or condos, apartment with access to optional services or housing close to medical and community services”

Q7 – Do you anticipate moving from your home in the next 5-10 years due to aging-related challenges or mobility issues?

(Total of 191 responses)



Q8 – Select the top five on-site services that would be important to you at an Aging in Place facility. (Choose 5) (Total of 191 responses)

	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Programs and recreation (e.g., entertainment, bingo, cards, woodworking, etc.)	**79.06%**	**151**
Medical clinic or pharmacy	**64.40%**	**123**
Laundry and housekeeping services	**64.40%**	**123**
Community kitchen and dining room with meals provided	**54.97%**	**105**
Outdoor garden or greenhouse space	**54.45%**	**104**
Health services (e.g., physiotherapy, massage, etc.)	**51.93%**	**99**
Fitness or exercise space	**47.12%**	**90**
Café or restaurant	**24.61%**	**47**
Hair salon or barber	**16.75%**	**32**
Spiritual or cultural space	**10.99%**	**21**
Library or reading areas	**10.99%**	**21**
Convenience or gift shop	**8.90%**	**17**
Postal Services	**8.38%**	**16**
Other	**4.79%**	**9**
Private meeting rooms	**1.57%**	**3**

Q8 – Select the top five on-site services that would be important to you at an Aging in Place facility. (Choose 5) (Total of 191 responses)

Other Responses (9):

- **"If no green space at or balconies, then regular dependable transportation to and from"**
- **"Safe walking paths, pet-friendly"**
- **"Aging in place facility need to have a friendly atmosphere, with access to social actives. helpful staff and different levels of care when needed. it is a huge adjustment for most people to move into a facility and lose their independence. Gardening actives, walks, eating out, socializing with family"**
- **"Bar"**
- **"Space to have family come over, particularly outdoors space"**
- **"Another pool"**
- **"Assisted transportation"**
- **"More flight connections"**
- **"Because the number of selections were limited, I would like to include hair salon/barber and reading areas with bookshelves"**

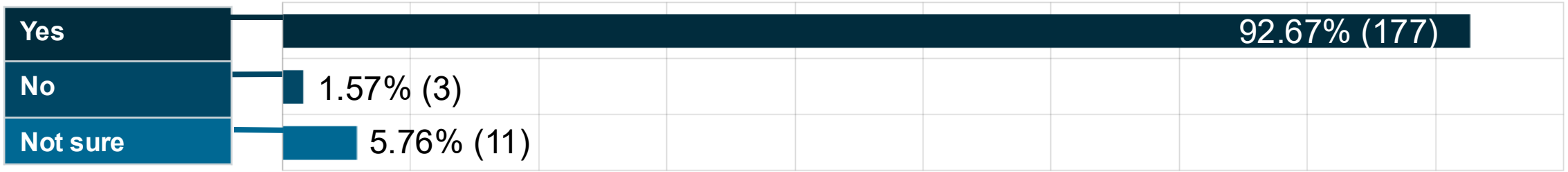
Q9 – How important will it be that your housing is (Check one for each item):
(Total of 191 responses)

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
Affordable and geared to income?	0.52% 1	13.61% 26	21.47% 41	64.40% 123
Accessible for mobility devices?	1.05% 2	10.53% 20	23.68% 45	64.74% 123
Pet-friendly?	20.42% 39	23.56% 45	24.08% 46	31.94% 61
Close to medical, cultural, and community services	2.09% 4	12.04% 23	30.89% 59	54.97% 105

Q10 – How important are these features in a future home? (Check one for each item) (Total of 191 responses)

Feature	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
A private balcony or outdoor space	2.62% 5	20.94% 40	31.94% 61	44.50% 85
Washer and dryer in the unit	2.62% 5	19.90% 38	30.37% 58	47.12% 90
A flexible room design (can change over time)	7.33% 14	30.37% 58	41.36% 79	20.94% 40
Space for couples to live together	1.05% 2	5.76% 11	21.99% 42	71.20% 136
Plenty of storage (e.g., closets, drawers, lockers, etc.)	1.59% 3	23.28% 44	41.27% 78	33.86% 64
Shared areas to visit and socialize	1.05% 2	15.18% 29	41.36% 79	42.41% 81
Lots of natural light and large windows	0.00% 0	4.76% 9	29.10% 55	66.14% 125
Air conditioning and fresh air circulation	0.00% 0	1.57% 3	22.51% 43	75.92% 145
Access to the internet	0.52% 1	6.28% 12	25.65% 49	67.54% 129
Units for visiting family to rent	15.71% 30	29.32% 56	26.70% 51	28.27% 54

Q11 – Would you support a multi-purpose, centrally located seniors' community that includes housing, retail, medical services and recreation all on one site? (Total of 191 responses)



Q12 – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors?

(Total of 186 responses by theme with sample responses)

1. **Homes with senior-friendly features: Close to amenities and services, dental services, pool, outdoor space, recreation, programs, pet-friendly, accessible, parking, safety, housekeeping, visiting areas, units for couples (these features were mentioned in 72 responses)**
   - "Easy access to essential services, safe outdoor spaces to enjoy."
   - "Space for visits with younger children, seniors' facilities with playgrounds and walkable / mobility friendly trails and multi generational activities and events."

2. **Access to variety of care: Support for seniors with disabilities, addictions and dementia; an aging in place facility; more respite units and hospice care; support for seniors to stay in their home longer (mentioned 33 times)**
   - "Transition units where families are able to trial respite care for seniors and also able to easily transition them to be able to settle them in a senior's facility that accommodates the care they need. We need a 24/7 respite care facility that doesn't need months or weeks to book for families that are over worked or burned out from caring for a loved one. Accessible support that offers more than what home care can offer, like an extended support program for families that are able to pay and have someone come in everyday and still be connected to AHS."
   - "Lack of aging in place options for those who would love to stay in Fort McMurray after retirement."

Q12 Continued – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors?

(Total of 186 responses by theme with sample responses)

3. Transitional living options: Single homes, more bungalows, 50+ independent living to assisted living (mentioned 30 times)

- “Independent living homes, that are self contained but with the ability to move (within the property) to other areas units that can provide progressive care. i.e. independent to assisted to special care (mobility, memory, maybe palliative)”

- “More transitional spots (like Rotary House) before Willow Square admittance.”

4. Not sure (mentioned 20 times)

- “Not sure as I have not look into seniors supports. Seniors need to feel needed and not forgotten, share there knowledge and stories with the schools. Able to volunteer if they wish.”

- “I'm not sure. I think seniors are well served by the existing housing. If those units could be adapted so people can stay there, that might be better. I'm not convinced that future seniors will want to buy into or rent in a seniors-only development next to the hospital and Willow Square. I think they will want to stay in their homes as long as they can. Perhaps the site could be developed into a family-oriented development with some smaller and more accessible units. That would provide a more neighborhood/village setting open to more people.”

Q12 Continued – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors?

(Total of 186 responses by theme with sample responses)

5. **Improved access to healthcare: Expand local access to specialists, assisted travel options for appointments both local and out-of-town (mentioned 19 times)**
   - "Not enough medical services as in specialists for seniors without having to travel to Edmonton."
   - "Safe transportation with a helper for medical trips to Edmonton, Calgary, etc."

6. **Affordable housing options: Choices that fit senior's budgets (mentioned 11 times)**
   - "Somewhere where seniors are not poor because all of their money is being spent on housing but something that is affordable to each individual need and still be able to do some extra curricular activities and have a social life."
   - "Affordable housing for both independent and semi supported living."

7. **Coordinated access to services: Resource centre for seniors, volunteer connections and support to navigate available programs and services (mentioned 6 times)**
   - "Letting seniors know what already here."
   - "A seniors resource Centre, the current considered service area is Golden years which we have hear over and over that its beyond its capacity and also considering that its membership based, they have also increased membership age requirement. regardless of this aging facility project we need seniors resource Centre/hub."

Q12 Continued – What do you feel is currently missing in the region when it comes to housing, support or options for seniors?

(Total of 186 responses by theme with sample responses)

8. Support for rural and cultural housing needs: More support for seniors in rural communities and Metis seniors housing (mentioned 3 times)

- “Home Care takes a long time to do RAI assessments, and then to properly complete the placement packages. This keeps residents in unsafe housing, or in acute care hospital beds longer than necessary. They need more staff and more training. There is not enough AHS home care funding available to keep people at home safely. More access to Smart Bus (very limited hours). More “field trips”. More age-appropriate recreation. Enhanced access to geriatricians as these consults take months. Easier and affordable access to appointments in Edmonton. Mental health services that gear toward seniors and their unique challenges severely lacks (mental health services in YMM are severely lacking properly trained individuals overall, let alone specializing in geriatrics). Limited services for seniors in outlying areas (especially Conklin).”

- “Housing for Metis peoples specifically”

Q13 – Are there any other thoughts, ideas, concerns or suggestions you would like to share? (Total of 96 responses by theme with sample responses)

1. Include key features in future housing (mentioned 37 times)

Ensure this potential new development meets a wide range of seniors' needs and preferences.

Location & Access: Central location, easy access to transportation/Transit, facilities in multiple neighbourhoods with priority given to local residents

Building & Layout: Apartment layouts with retail on the ground floor, wide hallways and sound-proofing, sitting areas on each floor, scenic views, windows and natural light, safety features such as camera and fencing

Amenities & Recreation: Recreation spaces and programming, trails and gardens, exercise rooms, pool/hot tub, and theatre room, visiting areas and family rental units, pet-friendly options, plants and green spaces indoors

Health & Support: On-site support staff, palliative care facilities, community partner access and connection, pedway to the hospital

Parking & Infrastructure: Adequate parking availability

- "Create a facility that promotes quality of life, independence and socialization. Have a hair salon; seniors want to feel and look good! Have a restaurant or cafe, seniors want to socialize with friends and family who visit. Have recreational activities to support physical endurance; when they're left to lay in bed they decline rapidly. Have indoor and outdoor activities such as art classes, woodworking, gardening, etc. Again, these social activities benefit mental health as well as physical health. Let's create a facility that treats people as humans rather than literally leaving them to rot in a hospital bed because of our broken system."

Q13 Continued – Are there any other thoughts, ideas, concerns or suggestions you would like to share?

(Total of 96 responses by theme with sample responses)

2. Act now on a new Aging in Place facility (mentioned 21 times)

A new Aging in Place facility is a great idea for the region. Plans need to be in place now for the aging population with more options for 50+ living, available as soon as possible.

- "The ability to live somewhere that can adapt with me as I age, while still allowing as much independence as possible, would be a priority. A seniors complex with a community feel would be fantastic."

- "Such a great idea for our region as we need something between Rotary house and DSL4. Engaging seniors within school systems (like daycares, elementary schools etc). More opportunities for high school students to volunteer directly with seniors. Input from OT and PT in designing a centre would go a long way as Willow Square did not have insight from hands on health care professionals during development. A hospice program would be incredible. Provide tech support for seniors in the area to help access events, online booking, banking, zoom etc."

3. No additional comments (mentioned 18 times)

- "Nothing further"

Q13 Continued – Are there any other thoughts, ideas, concerns or suggestions you would like to share?

(Total of 96 responses by theme with sample responses)

4. Improve local services and support (mentioned 12 times)

Enhance prevention supports, expand local medical and healthcare services, improve senior transportation, strengthen mental health and addiction services and make better us of existing spaces such as the third floor of the Willow Square Continuing Care Centre.

- “Please put more money into getting doctors, medical facilities and upgrading medical facilities such as the hospital. This community has an aging population more than people realize and there is not enough help to go around.”

5. Expand seniors housing options (mentioned 5 times)

More supported living, independent living and a broader range of housing types available for seniors.

- “Our community is aging and we need more older adult (55+) senior living complexes that have all the social and personal care amenities. The options that are currently available (although great) are spread out and quite dated.”

- “How would this be any different from Rotary house. I understand that the need would be there to support our seniors however with guidelines put in place that restrict a lot of what seniors do within facilities how would this be any different then what we already have in place. Currently we struggle to house our people with dementia, we struggled to find a place for our people to die, we struggle for a place to for our homeless to live. Between Willow Square facility and Rotary there is no room for anybody to live or die.”

Q13 Continued – Are there any other thoughts, ideas, concerns or suggestions you would like to share?

(Total of 96 responses by theme with sample responses)

6. Ensure affordability (mentioned 2 times)

Keep costs manageable for housing and support services.

- “Affordability and cost should be considered for this project when the units are constructed as most seniors when they are aging their income is limited and fixed which in cost cases is not adjusted to inflationary tendencies.”

7. Support aging in place at home (mentioned 1 time)

Provide resources, services and modifications to help seniors remain their own homes longer.

- “Build more facilities like willow square and work with compassion care agencies to help seniors age well in their own home.”

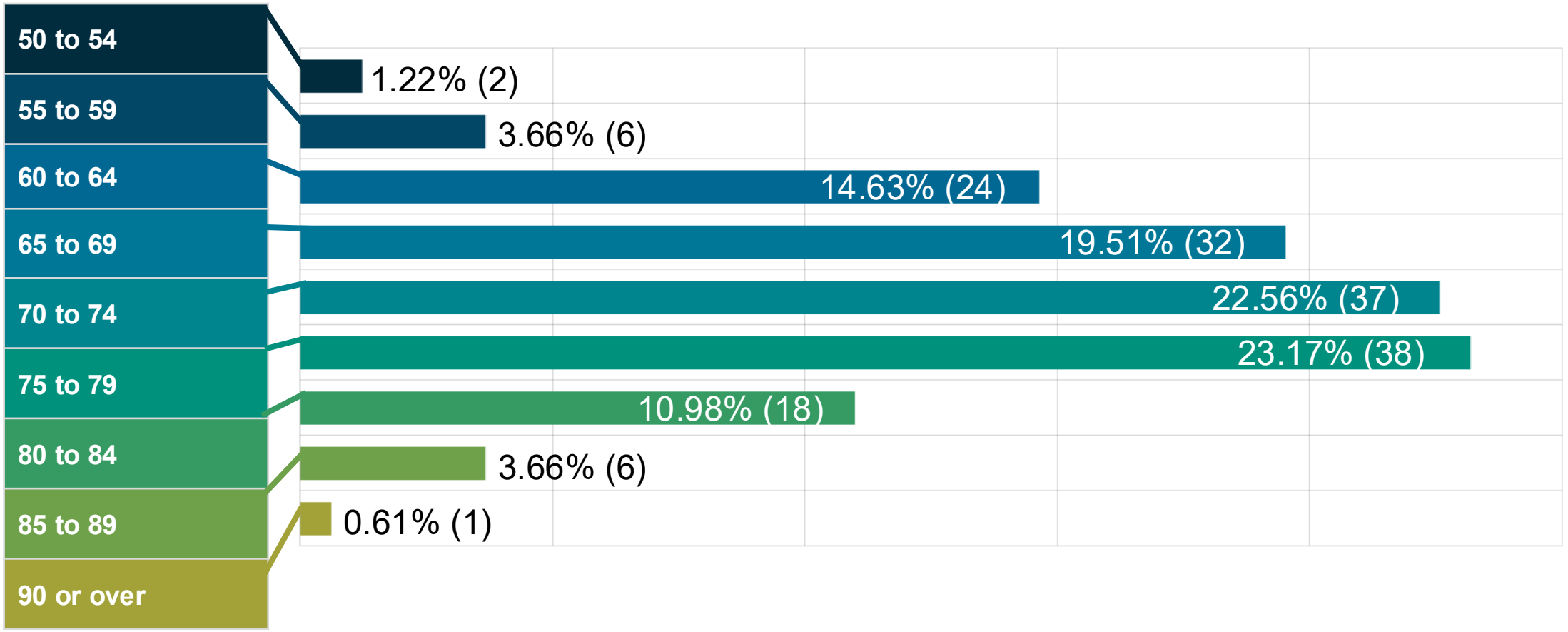
Appendix C
Aging Family Member survey responses

Have an aging family member?

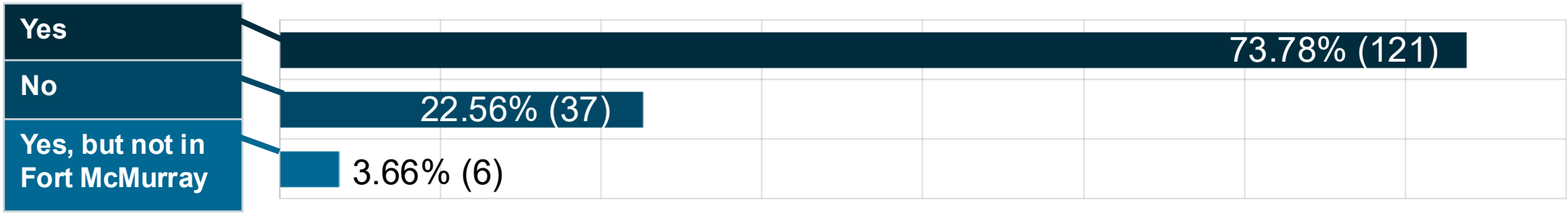
(Total of 164 responses)

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Q1 – How old is your aging family member? (Total of 164 responses)



Q2 – Do your aging family members currently reside in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo? (Total of 164 responses)



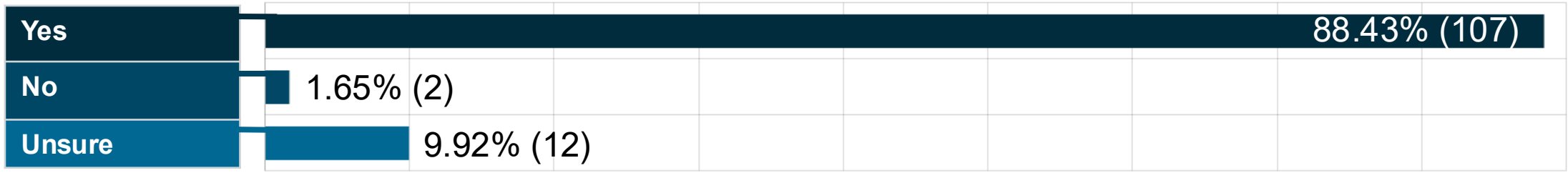
Q2a – Which rural community do they live in? (Total of 6 responses)

Fort Chipewyan	66.67% (4)
Anzac	33.33% (2)

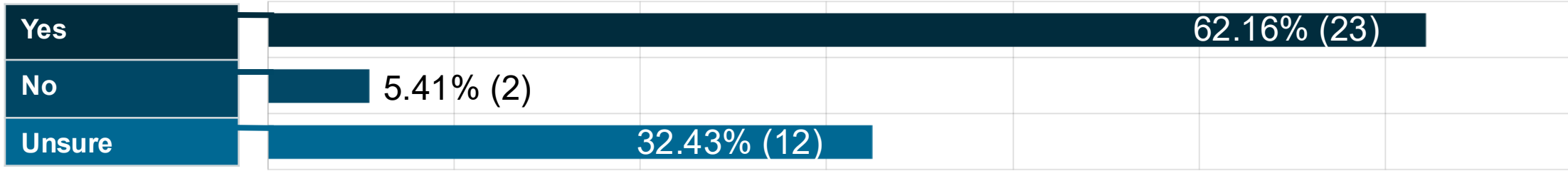
Q2b – Where do they live? (Total of 36 responses)

Alberta	38.89% (14)	Outside of Canada	5.56% (2)
British Columbia	13.89% (5)	Canada	2.78% (1)
Newfoundland and Labrador	13.89% (5)	Manitoba	2.78% (1)
Ontario	11.11% (4)	Prince Edward Island	2.78% (1)
New Brunswick	8.33% (3)		

Q3 – Would they like to stay in the region as they age?
(Total of 121 responses)

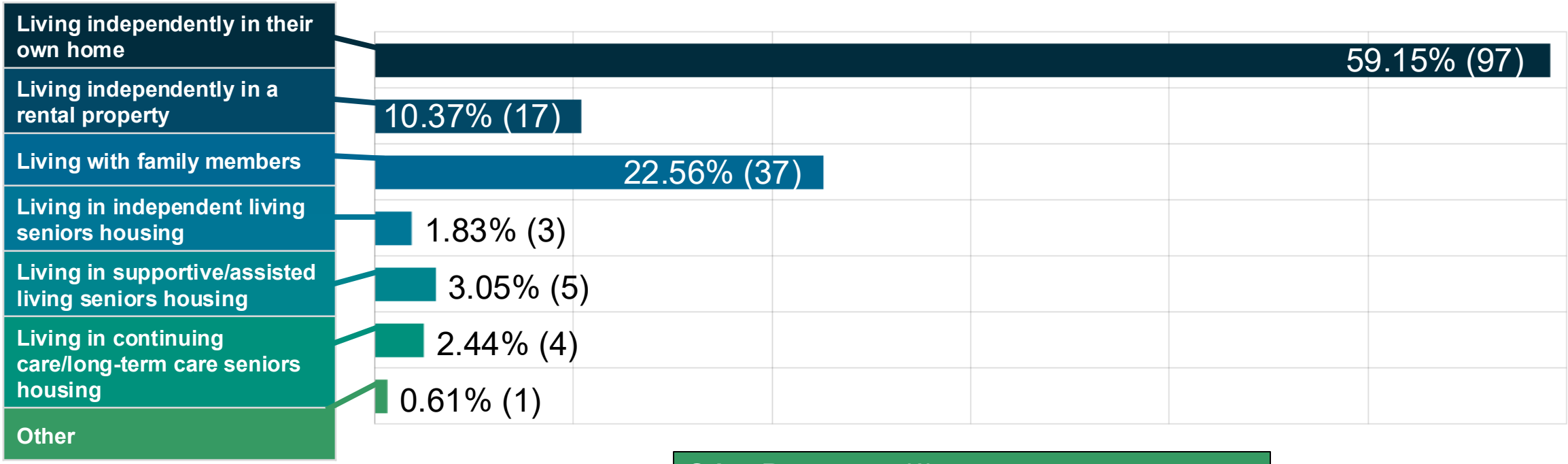


Q4 – Would they relocate to the region as they age if appropriate services and accommodations were available? (Total of 37 responses)



Q5 – What is your family member's current living situation?

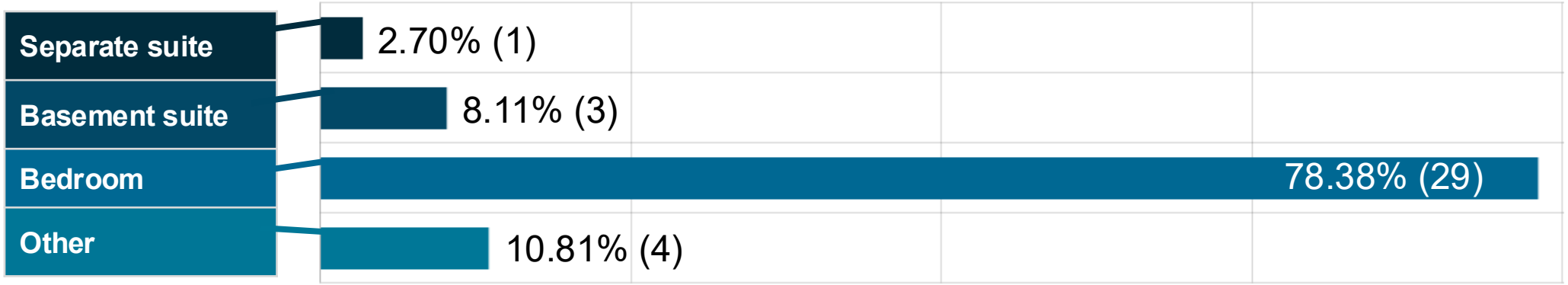
(Total of 164 responses)



Other Responses (1):

- **"Living in a rental apartment building"**

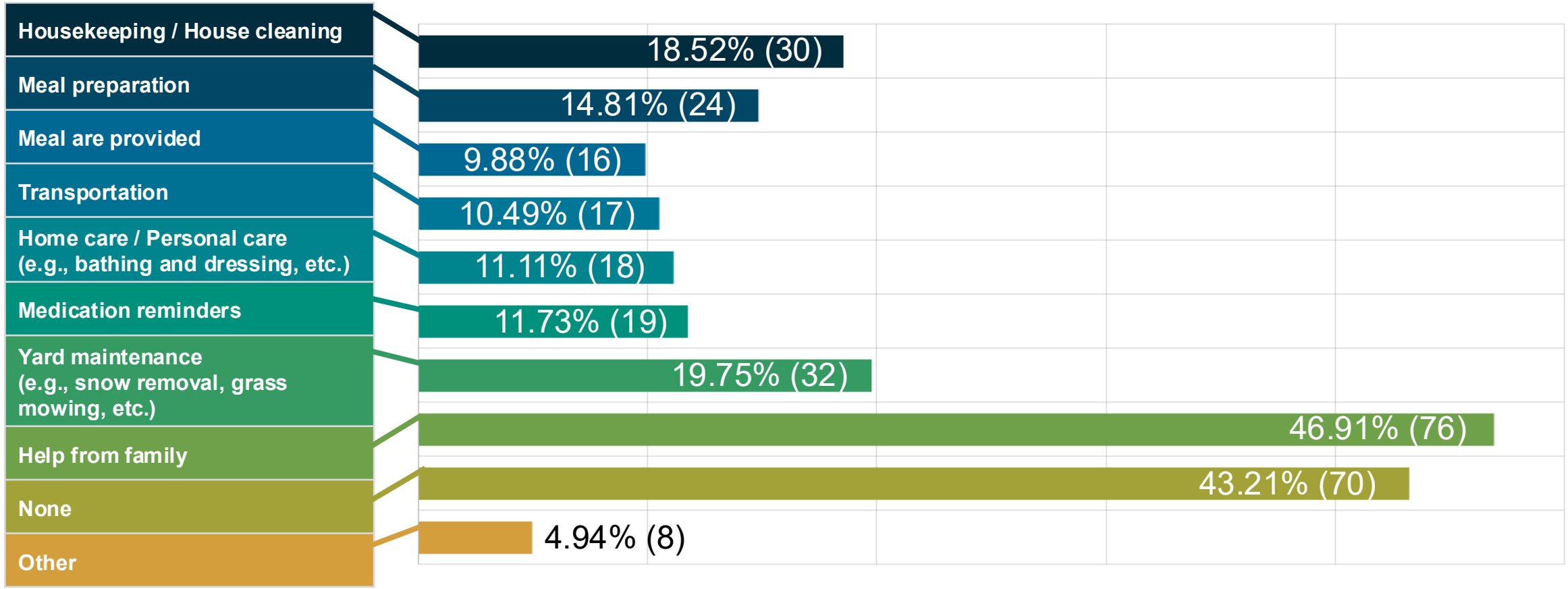
Q5a – They live with family members in a:
(Total of 37 responses)



Other Responses (4):

- **"One house"**
- **"House"**
- **"Their own home"**
- **"Own home"**

Q6 – Are your family members currently receiving support to help them live independently? (Check all that apply) (Total of 162 responses)



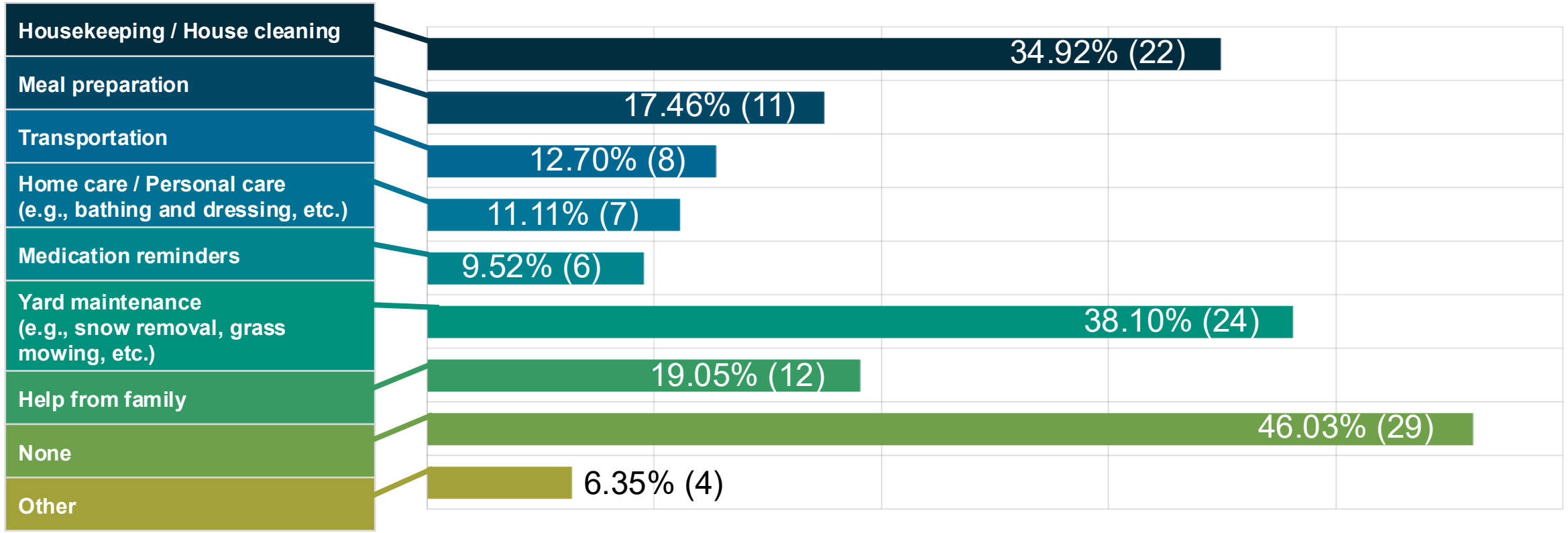
Q6 Continued – Are your family members currently receiving support to help them live independently? (Check all that apply) (Total of 162 responses)

Other Responses (8):

- **“Do it themselves”**
- **“Don’t have enough money to hire someone”**
- **“Federal government money”**
- **“They pay for services like cleaning not because they’re old but to buy their time and do what they enjoy.”**
- **“Home maintenance”**
- **“No but they could use extra support”**
- **“Personal financial supporting them”**
- **“Assistance from St. Aidens for programs”**

Q7 – Are there supports they would like to have? (Check all that apply)

(Total of 63 responses)



Q7 Continued – Are there supports they would like to have? (Check all that apply) (Total of 63 responses)

Other Responses (4):

- **“Dog walking”**
- **“Language interpreter”**
- **“More seniors program each month to keep them busy, fast healthcare service”**
- **“Financial management, physical fitness, healthy socialization & peer group development, continued learning”**

Q8 – If they would like support, can you briefly explain why they are not receiving support? (Total of 25 responses)

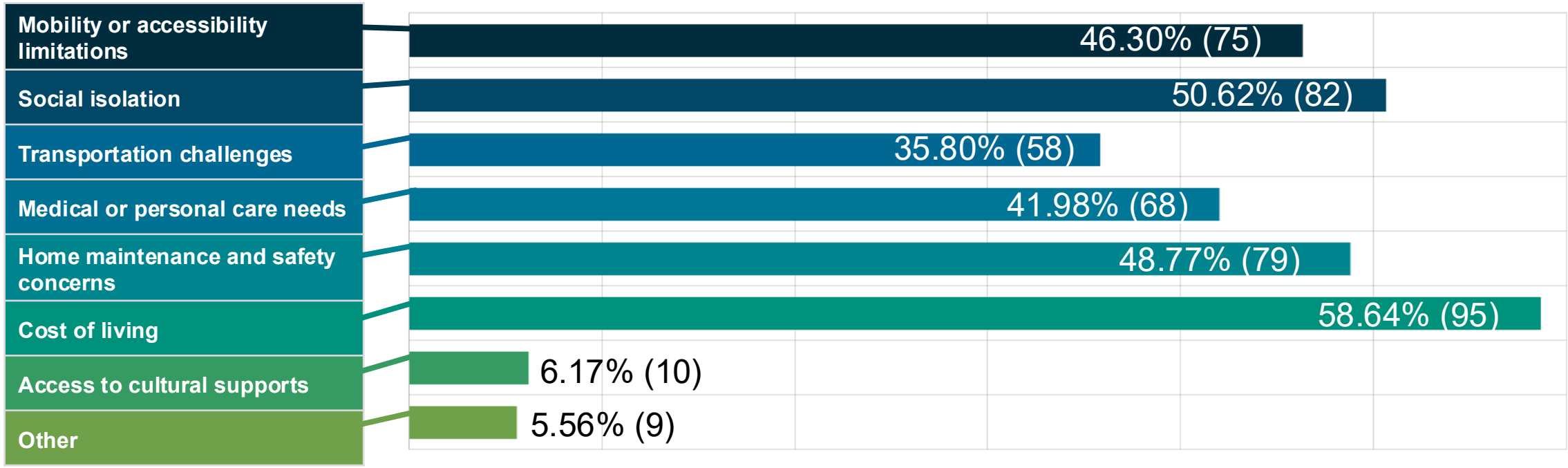
- “Have spouse that is currently taking care of needs”
- “Currently not needed, but if needed in the availability of services would be appreciated.
  Older adults live in Saprae Creek, would have been nice to have a rural consultation in the community”
- “I’m not sure. My mom needs help getting outside and being active as well cleaning”
- “Better hospital facility”
- “They notice it is becoming increasingly difficult to carry out these activities independently.”
- “Never asked before”
- “They can barely afford to keep food in the house, much less afford to hire help. Family around them work fulltime”
- “Aging family member foresees working to pay for housing/benefits for a number of years past retirement age.”
- “There is no family living near”
- “Don’t need it yet but will at some point”
- “Don’t know the process”
- “Not enough household budget”
- “N/A”
- “As my dad gets older shovelling and mowing is harder as well as landscaping needs”

Q8 Continued – If they would like support, can you briefly explain why they are not receiving support? (Total of 25 responses)

- “They receive a free annual bus pass”
- “Specialist appointments in town”
- “Wait lists”
- “They are too humble to ask for it. We try to convince them that support is not weakness”
- “we help them clean the house and yard.”
- “Unwilling at this time”
- “Funding / Money”
- “Want to keep their independence while they can”
- “not aware of such support resources”
- “Unaware”
- “Cannot find home care, unsure of where to get subsidy or grants, cannot complete the paperwork independently so needs support doing so. This also requires external assistance, but unsure where to find this assistance. Does not use internet yet all resources are found on the internet. Social groups, and community activities are also on the internet & social media and so without the technical ability to navigate technology these opportunities are missed. A local facility where seniors can drop in to talk to some one who can print and help complete these forms would be monumental for aging persons who want to maintain their independence.”

Q9 – What challenges do your family members face while continuing to love independently or in their current environment? (Check all that apply)

(Total of 162 responses)

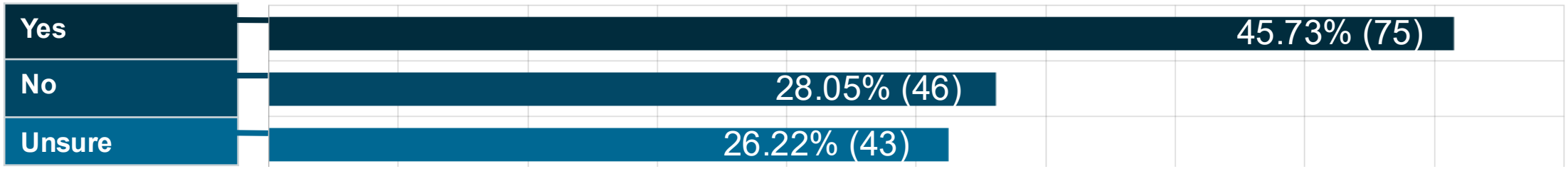


Q9 Continued – What challenges do your family members face while continuing to love independently or in their current environment? (Check all that apply) (Total of 162 responses)

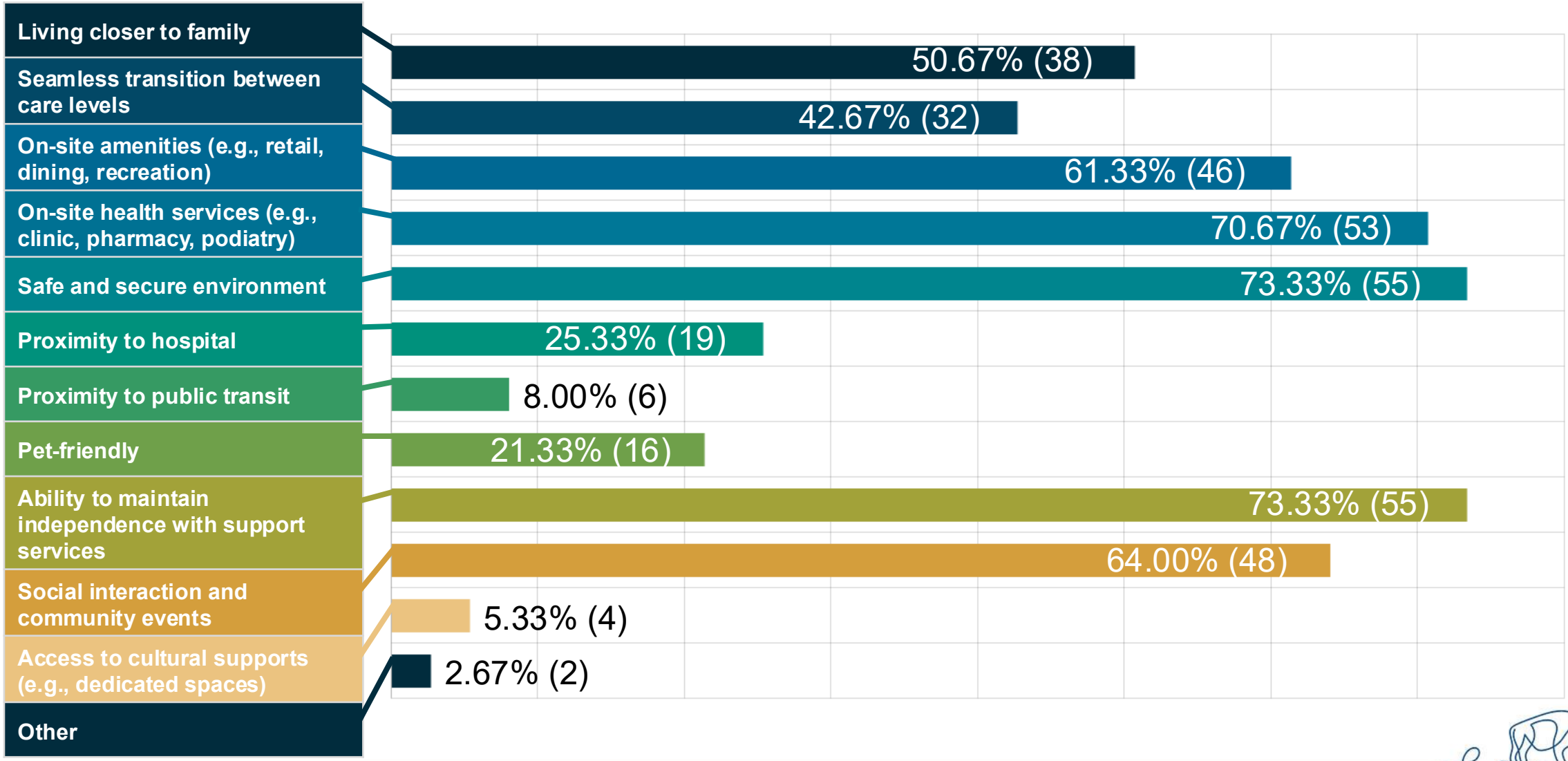
Other Responses (9):

- **"Nothing as of now"**
- **"None at the moment"**
- **"Bill payments, online/digital world, Alzheimer's"**
- **"Having to support their grown kids because the economy is meh!"**
- **"Need of more culturally competent programs considering the Mult-diversity of Wood Buffalo, not only St. Aidan's, Nistwayou legion and Golden years provide senior programs there is a diversity group of seniors not receiving supports considering the luck of cultural diversity of programs available for them."**
- **"Feeling stuck in house all day, constantly wanting to go back to work when they can't, not finding interest in any of the activities or socializing the region offers and calling it all "lonely old people hobbies"**
- **"use of technology to access all necessary resources. No TV channel to share local activities, & the only means of information access is through social media which is prohibitive for an elderly, less technology savy group"**
- **"Can't move into facility due to dog"**
- **"None"**

Q10 – Have you or your family members considered moving into a facility that offers integrated Aging in Place features? (Total of 164 responses)



Q10a – If yes, select the top 5 features that would make an aging in place facility appealing? (Choose 5) (Total of 75 responses)

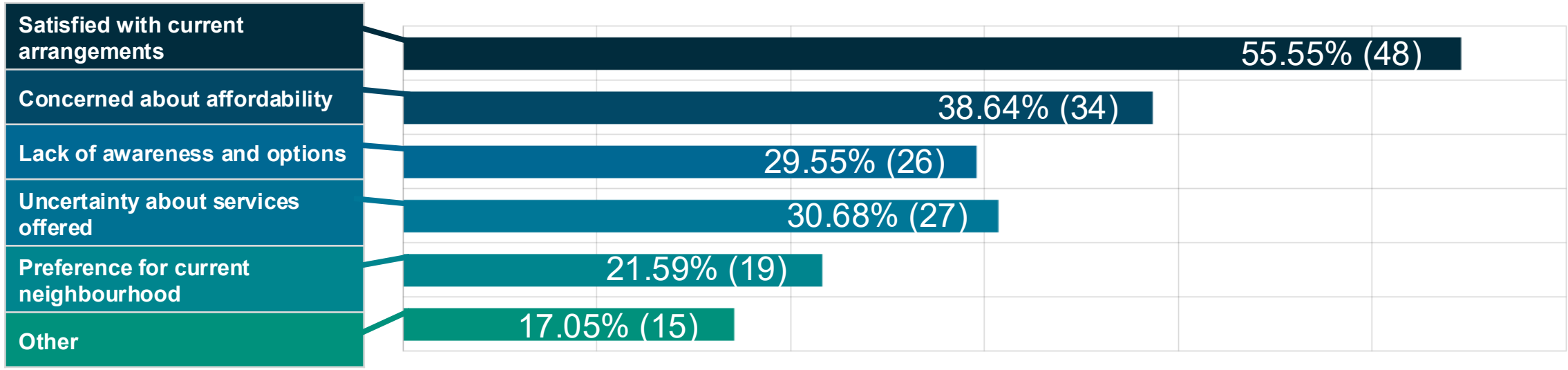


Q10a Continued – If yes, select the top 5 features that would make an aging in place facility appealing? (Choose 5) (Total of 75 responses)

Other Responses (2):

- **"On-site hair, massage and exercise classes. On-site social dining and space to host on-site entertainment."**
- **"Being able to continue to live with spouse."**

Q10b – If no or unsure, what are the reasons for not considering an Aging in Place facility? (Check all that apply) (Total of 88 responses)

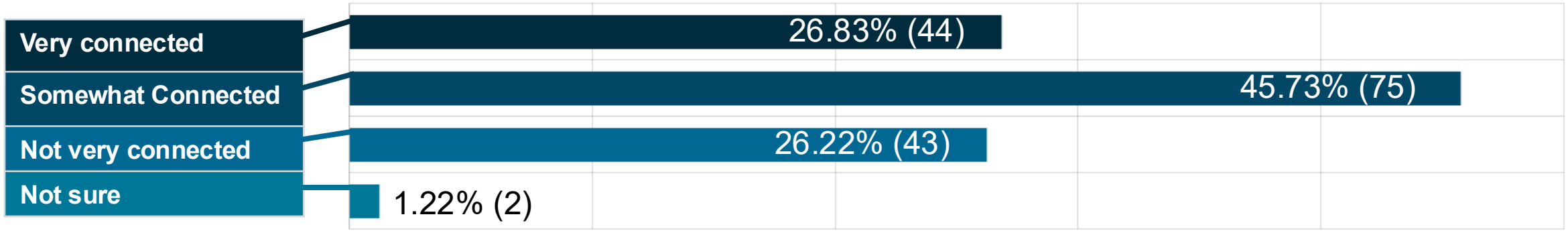


Q10b Continued – If no or unsure, what are the reasons for not considering an Aging in Place facility? (Check all that apply) (Total of 88 responses)

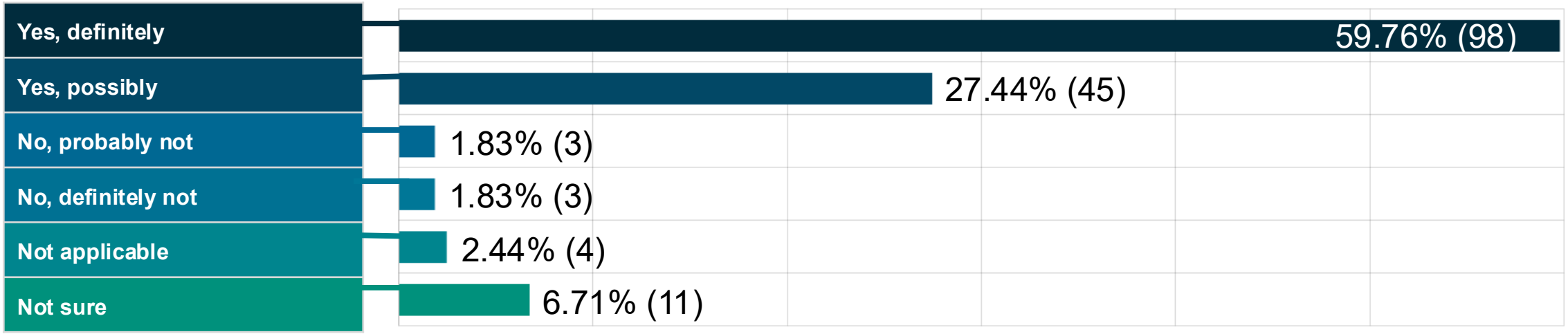
Other Responses (15):

- **"There is no current need, however would like to have this option in the future."**
- **"Waiting lists for Legion Manor and Arubasca House."**
- **"Can't take pet with them to any available facilities. Pets are like family to those that are widowed or widows."**
- **"Does not want to go into a care facility."**
- **"When the time comes, they will move in with me"**
- **"Stubborn"**
- **"Father unwilling"**
- **"Sponsored permanent resident. We are responsible for them for 20 years without accessing financial support from the government. However, the cost of living has gone up astronomically in the past year."**
- **"Would like to live with Family"**
- **"Not available in Labrador"**
- **"Not yet as they do not need additional support. But have looked at the options for the next decade as they age or if health concerns present unexpectedly."**
- **"We are simply not quite there yet, but want to ensure there are viable options for when it becomes necessary"**
- **"My parents have not moved to Canada yet"**
- **"Other primary caregiver refuses to no matter what even when it feels needed"**
- **"Independence has been shown to be a clear indicator of longevity & quality of living. Maintaining independence would be easier if more resources existed in the community for this population."**

Q11 – How connected do your family members feel to the community around them? (Total of 164 responses)



Q12 – Would a more complete range of housing and services (beyond long-term care) encourage your family members to remain in the region or encourage them to move to the region? (Total of 164 responses)



Q13 – What types of housing or services are currently missing or needed to support seniors aging in place in Fort McMurray?

(Total of 162 responses by theme with sample responses)

1. Include key features in future housing (mentioned 41 times)

Location and access: Underground parking, wide doorways, accessible bathrooms, storage, pedway/connections to nearby facilities, community connection and accessible design for couples and people with dementia.

Amenities: Pool, exercise room, hobby room, social spaces, visitor suites, full kitchens, 2- and 3-bedroom unit options, pet-friendly housing and green spaces.

Programs and services: Medical services, counselling, dementia care, respite options, cultural programs, wellness checks, pet care, on-sire staff, personal shoppers and activity programming.

- “Meals, Laundry/Cleaning, Advocacy to landlords around senior safety (wall mounted supports for bathing and other safety requirements), Personal Shopping. Senior housing apartments that have 2-3 bedrooms.”

2. Independent and transitional living options (mentioned 39 times)

Respondents expressed interest in more independent living choices, such as single homes, transitional housing that offers independent and assisted living options (55+ and senior-only), with suggestions for locations in Parsons Creek North or Timberlea, and facilities designed to support activities and events and partnerships with care providers.

- “Independent townhouse-style living (small maintained grassy area/yard) with meals, cleaning, and nursing/general assistance available.”

Q13 Continued – What types of housing or services are currently missing or needed to support seniors aging in place in Fort McMurray?

(Total of 162 responses by theme with sample responses)

3. Affordable housing and services (mentioned 30 times)

Survey participants emphasized affordability, asking about financial supports such as tax breaks and subsidies to reduce the cost of both housing and related services.

- "Everything is just so expensive for them from their electricity and gas bills to property taxes, city utilities, home insurance. It all adds up with such a low income."

4. Availability (mentioned 23 times)

Respondents noted the need for more housing availability, condos, apartments or single-level homes.

- "Fort McMurray has some good facilities but there is no availability. There are more seniors needing facilities than what is available and the number of seniors living in Fort McMurray continues to grow."

5. Not Sure (mentioned 19 times)

Some participants indicated they were unsure or did not provide specific suggestions.

- "I don't have any personal experience yet so not sure."

Q13 Continued – What types of housing or services are currently missing or needed to support seniors aging in place in Fort McMurray?

(Total of 162 responses by theme)

6. Aging in Place facility needed (mentioned 13 times)

Several participants expressed support for new aging in place facilities that include independent living options, to ensure seniors have more choices as their needs change.

- “We need another facility for seniors to live. Rotary house is not enough!”

7. Improved local healthcare (mentioned 9 times)

Survey participants voiced concern about limited local healthcare services and stressed the need for both expanded care in the community and improved support for medical travel to out-of-town appointments.

- “Increased medical services in FMM, increased access to home care / support services so they can live at home for as long as possible, decreased cost of services (property taxes, access to free travel support (SMART bus has a fee!)”

Q13 Continued – What types of housing or services are currently missing or needed to support seniors aging in place in Fort McMurray?

(Total of 162 responses by theme)

8. Support for seniors to stay at home (mentioned 8 times)

Participants highlighted the need for vetted supports that help seniors remain in their own homes, including home maintenance assistance and transition supports for when a move into a facility becomes necessary.

- “My family enjoys their own home, having a garage, a large deck/backyard space. One parent requires significantly more care than the other and they do not want to be split up. They want something where they can remain independent, have their own space including garage and outdoor (Deck or patio to sit in the sun), but also require help ensuring pills are taken, bathing etc.”

9. Improved transportation (mentioned 6 times)

Respondents pointed to the importance of reliable transportation options for seniors with the suggestion of a shuttle service.

- “More shuttle services between the rotary house and the grocery stores or the pharmacy. Seminars with the seniors to prepare them for this stage in life, how to maintain health and prep for a decline, and death.”

Q13 Continued – What types of housing or services are currently missing or needed to support seniors aging in place in Fort McMurray?
(Total of 162 responses by theme)

10. Caregiver support (mentioned 3 times)

Two respondents mentioned the need for more resources and assistance for caregivers as they support their senior family members.

- “Financial supports for caregivers to support them while taking care of older adults to aging in place,
  Need for more culturally competent programs and community investment to support cultural groups through grants for example the food bank humper does not accommodate cultural sensitiveness.”

11. Support for rural communities (mentioned 2 times)

The importance of providing aging in place services and dedicated facilities for Elders in rural areas was mentioned in two responses.

- “Many Older adults and seniors live in Saprae Creek, would be nice to have various aging in place supports available to that rural community.”

- “A living facility for elders who are capable of living on there own with no care needed! And somewhere with other elders around that’s not Like your living in a hospital.”