

# What We Heard Report

## Wood Buffalo Safety and Social Well-Being Strategy

Feb 18, 2026



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF WOOD BUFFALO

In partnership with



The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is located within Treaty 8 territory, the traditional lands of the Cree and Dene peoples, and the unceded territory of the Métis.

We are grateful to live and work on these lands, learning from their teachings of resilience, respect, and reciprocity. In the spirit of maintaining good relations for future generations, we acknowledge our responsibility to care for these lands as long as the sun shines, the river flows, and the grass grows.



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  - D. Community partner interviews and focus groups
  - E. MACOY youth rural conversations
  - F. Community pop-ups
  - G. Dotmocracy board responses



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A 10-year strategy is being developed to strengthen safety and social well-being in the region. Feedback (collected June 16 – September 30) was gathered to identify what's working, where gaps remain, and how to improve access and connection.

Engagement included online, virtual, and in-person opportunities, with youth perspectives gathered through MACOY outreach in Conklin, Anzac, and Janvier. In total, 3,466 engagement actions were collected, providing a strong foundation to inform priorities and recommended next steps.



# KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



## Community Strengths and Assets

Across all demographics and locations, the region's greatest assets are its natural environment and social connectivity.

**Environmental and recreational assets:** Access to trails, parks, and green spaces is the primary source of well-being for both urban and rural residents. Facilities like MacDonald Island Park and the Wood Buffalo Regional Library are highlighted as critical community hubs.

**Cultural identity and heritage:** There is a profound value placed on traditional practices, including hunting, fishing, and Indigenous language. Events like the Métis Festival and outdoor festivals help residents feel more connected.

**Strong social fabric:** There are tight-knit social bonds. This is supported by high engagement in grassroots initiatives and a general sense of belonging.

**Effective collaborative networks:** There are strong working relationships existing between the RMWB, RCMP, and social agencies as a core strength for responding to complex social issues.



# KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



## Critical Gaps and Challenges

While residents feel a sense of belonging, they identified the disconnect between that feeling and the availability of essential resources.

**Healthcare deficiencies:** A major gap exists in specialized healthcare, particularly psychiatry, addiction treatment, and maternal care. There are residents who need to leave the region to access these services in urban centres, such as Edmonton.

**Infrastructure and rural safety:** Rural communities identify the critical need for emergency egress (two ways out) roads and local fire/medical services. Road and sidewalk maintenance was also flagged as a safety concern that impacts ease of movement.

**Veterinary service:** There is a lack of veterinary services in the region.



# KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



## Critical Gaps and Challenges (continued)

**Transportation barriers:** Transit remains a top-tier gap. Issues include a lack of medical transportation to Edmonton, limited rural connectivity, & a lack of accessible taxis for persons with disabilities.

**Economic strain:** High commercial rents have led to the closure of local family businesses. High fees are a primary barrier to accessing community programs.

**Service scarcity and funding cuts:** Focus groups highlighted that recent funding reductions have led to the closure of vital programs (e.g., Choices Association of Fort McMurray, which offered employment programs for the unemployed & underemployed) and have left remaining agencies stretched thin.



# KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



## Vulnerable Populations

Specific groups were identified as being underserved or falling through systemic gaps:

**Youth (ages 13 to 24):** Teens and young adults are noted as the most poorly supported group, receiving fewer resources than younger children. They lack safe youth-only spaces and face high unemployment.

**Persons with disabilities:** There is a severe lack of supported housing and a shortage of day programs for adults with complex needs.

**Seniors and Elders:** There is a strong desire for aging in place services to prevent seniors from being relocated to urban centres for care.

**Indigenous populations:** Despite strong cultural pride, Indigenous residents report higher rates of discrimination and a lack of culturally-led services in mainstream facilities like hospitals.

**Newcomers/Immigrants:** Residents face challenges with language, employment, and social isolation.



# KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



## Safety and Social Concerns

**Perceptions of safety:** There is a general sense of safety among the residents; however, there are locations (e.g., public transit and places) or instances (e.g., walking alone, particularly at night) that make them feel unsafe.

**Racism and discrimination:** Racism and discrimination exist in the community and are experienced primarily based on religion, race, or gender.

**Bylaw and enforcement:** Prominent concerns include OHV misuse on residential streets and perceived RCMP unresponsiveness to property crimes.



# KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



## Ideas and Opportunities

**Invest in prevention:** Transition from reactionary crisis response to long-term preventative approaches, including affordable housing, equitable access to health care and essential services, food security, and eviction prevention programs.

**Expand youth and specialized infrastructure:** Develop dedicated youth centres and increase the number of accessible housing units and specialized medical clinics.

**Improve regional connectivity:** Enhance medical travel supports and ensure rural communities have reliable emergency evacuation routes and essential local services.

**Strengthen cultural and social integration:** Incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing to guide and inform the CSSWB strategy; support the development of neighbourhood associations to strengthen inclusion, local leadership, and community connection.

**Create a one-stop shop/Central hub:** Forming a one-stop shop or central hub that can help combat misinformation, increase awareness of available supports, improve the referral network, and strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**Strategic priorities identified for the Wood Buffalo Safety and Social Well-Being Strategic Plan:**

1. Access to Health Care and Essential Services
2. Housing Stability and Homelessness Prevention
3. Supports for Children, Youth, and Young Adults
4. Inclusion, Anti-Racism and Social Connectivity
5. Rural Infrastructure, Safety, and Access
6. Animal Health and Safety



# MORE IN FINAL REPORT

- **Survey analysis** which summarizes the major themes & targeted needs for Council to focus on
- **Asset map** that identifies 442 assets in the RMWB region and their function in the regional ecosystem
- **Strategic plan framework** with recommended strategic activities for Council to consider
- **Evaluation framework to evaluate strategic plan** over the next 10 years as activities will evolve over time as strategic activities are completed and resident needs change
- **Evaluation framework to evaluate funding requests** against strategic plan and asset map to identify if programming is filling a gap in the regional ecosystem



# ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS

## Who did we talk to?

- Urban and rural RMWB residents
- Community support and outreach (faith-based, Francophone, newcomer supports, Interagency Network)
- Housing and homelessness-serving system (including Coordinated Access)
- Health and wellness services
- Justice and community corrections
- Indigenous partners
- Industry/private sector
- Community-based governance/service organizations
- Education partners
- Internal municipal partners
- Council-appointed committees & Part 9 corporations

## How did they participate?

- Survey
- Quick poll
- Gathering tool
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Dotmocracy boards
- MACOY youth rural conversations
- Community event pop-ups



# ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS

## aware

Ways people saw communications and advertisements.

- Radio listeners of local Rogers and Harvard Broadcasting stations
- Digital advertisement
- Rural and Participate Wood Buffalo newsletters
- Posters, pull up banners, and printed materials in key community spaces
- 37 Emails and/or phone calls to community partners
- 105,496 Social media impressions
- 2,375 Unique visitors to the project page
- 169,320 Meta ad impressions



# ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS

## engaged

Times people took action to provide feedback

- 441 Survey responses
- 341 Online quick poll responses
- 28 Gather online tool
- 38 Interviews
- 32 Focus groups participants
- 1013 Pop-up conversations
- 1450 Dotmocracy
- 106 Participants at MACOY rural youth conversations
- 2 Pulse inquiries



# NEXT STEPS

Engagement findings will inform a 10-year Safety and Social Well-Being Strategy and a region-wide asset map.

Both are anticipated to be presented to Council in Q2 2026. This interim update reflects back community input received to date and highlights how those insights are shaping the next phase of work.



# Thank You

For more information on this report contact [rmwb.ca/pulse](https://rmwb.ca/pulse).



# APPENDICES OVERVIEW

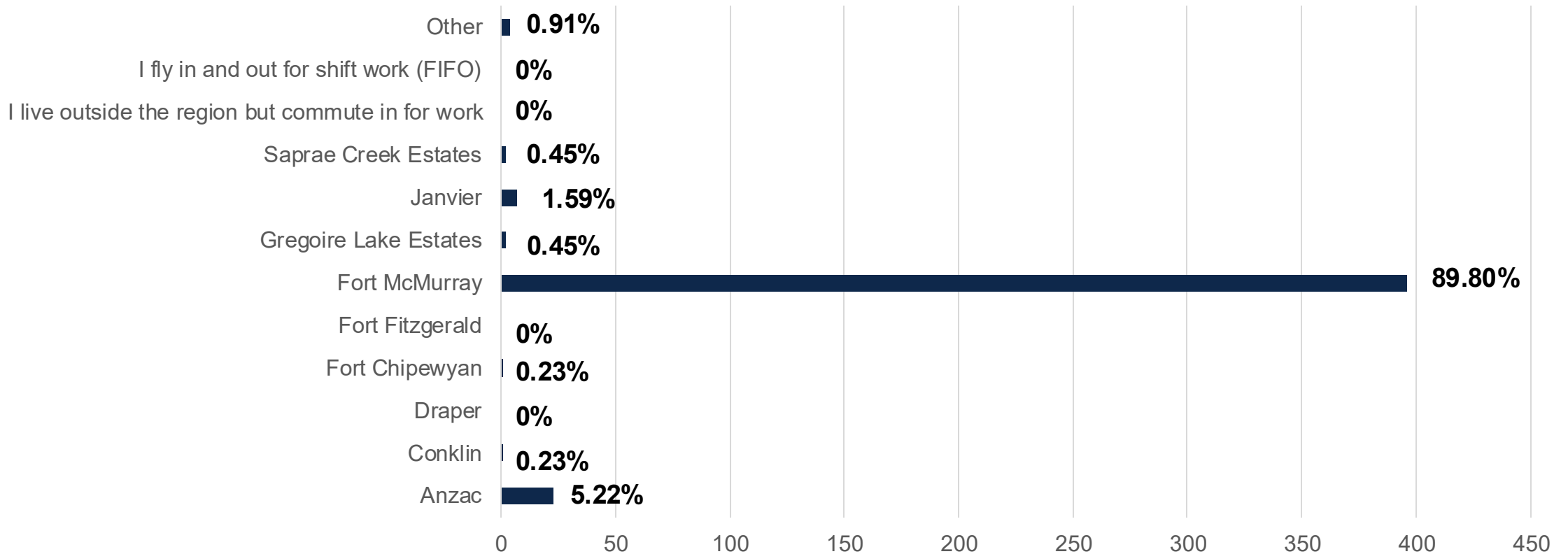
Jump to any of the following sections:

- A. Survey responses
- B. Quick poll responses
- C. Gathering tool responses
- D. Community partner interviews and focus groups
- E. MACOY youth rural conversations
- F. Community pop-ups
- G. Dotmocracy board responses

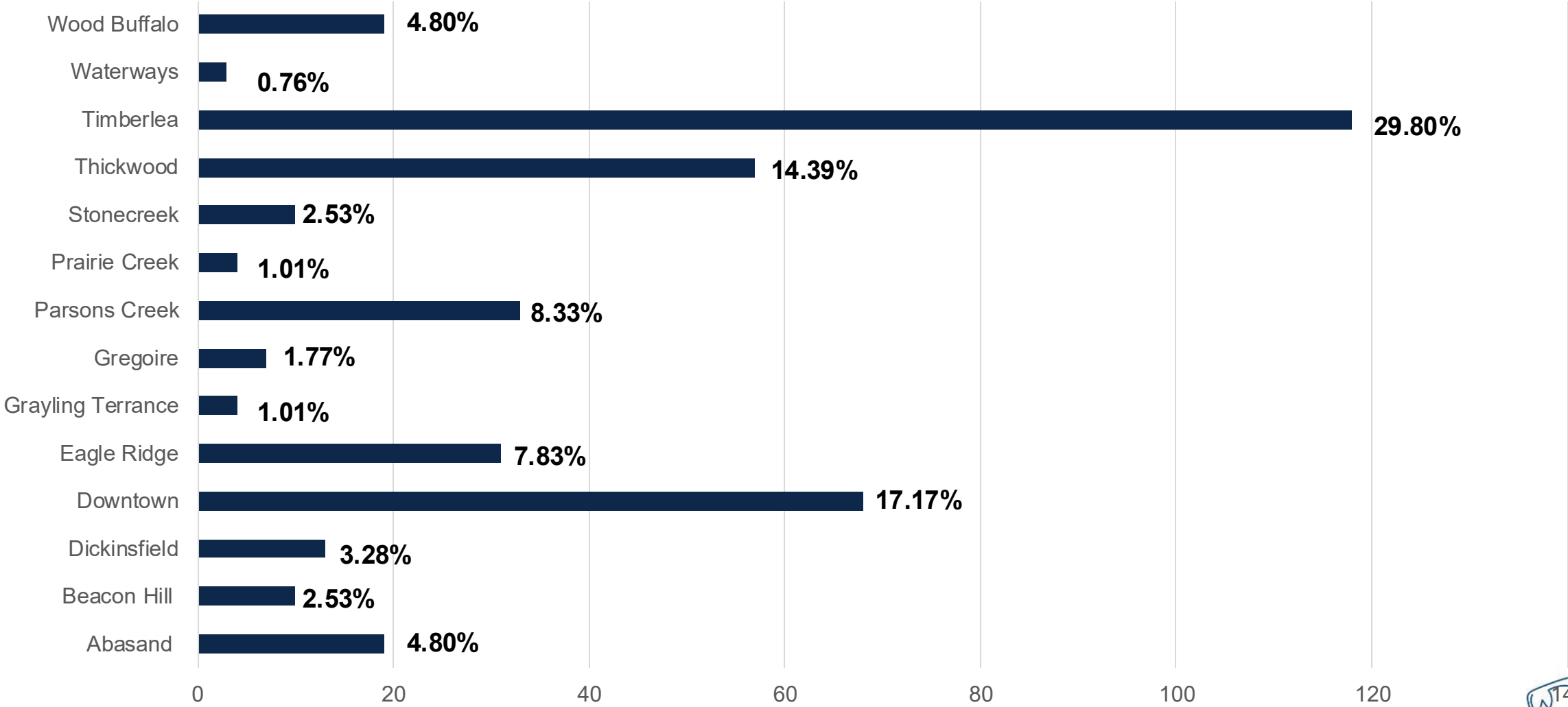
# APPENDIX A – SURVEY RESPONSES

(441 total survey responses)

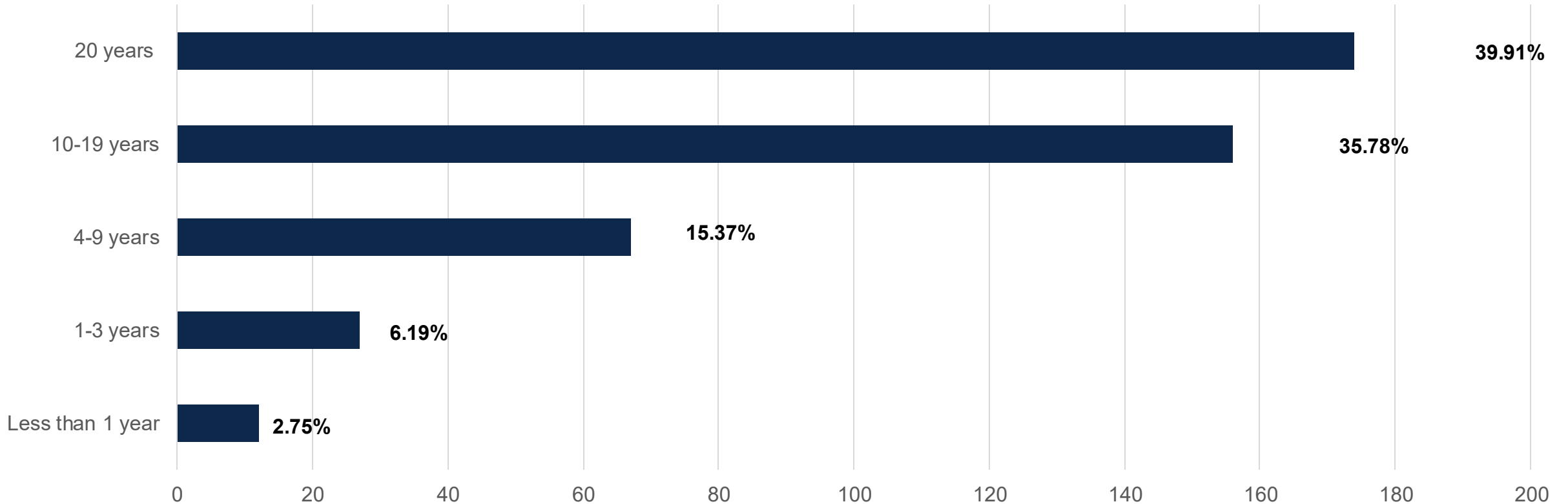
## Q1 – Where do you currently live (or which community do you live closest to)? Required



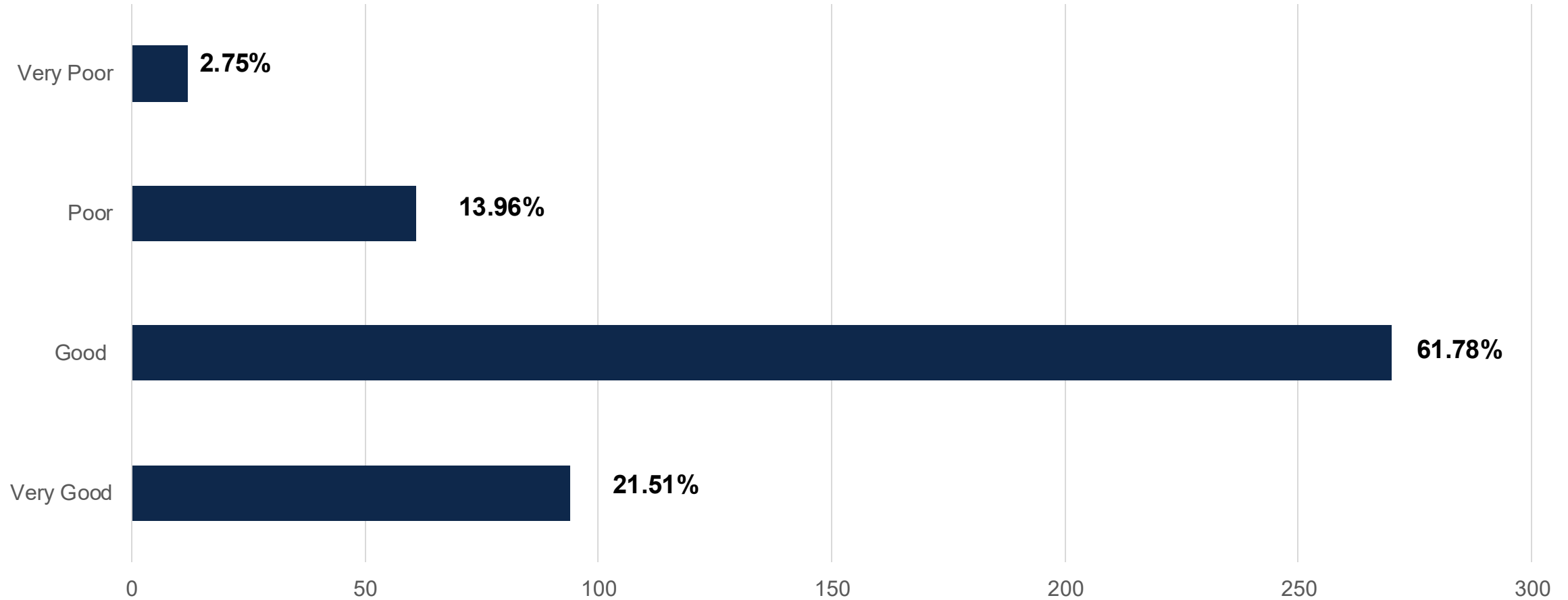
# Q2 – Which neighbourhood in Fort McMurray do you live in? Required (396 respondents, asked only of participants who indicated they live in Fort McMurray.)



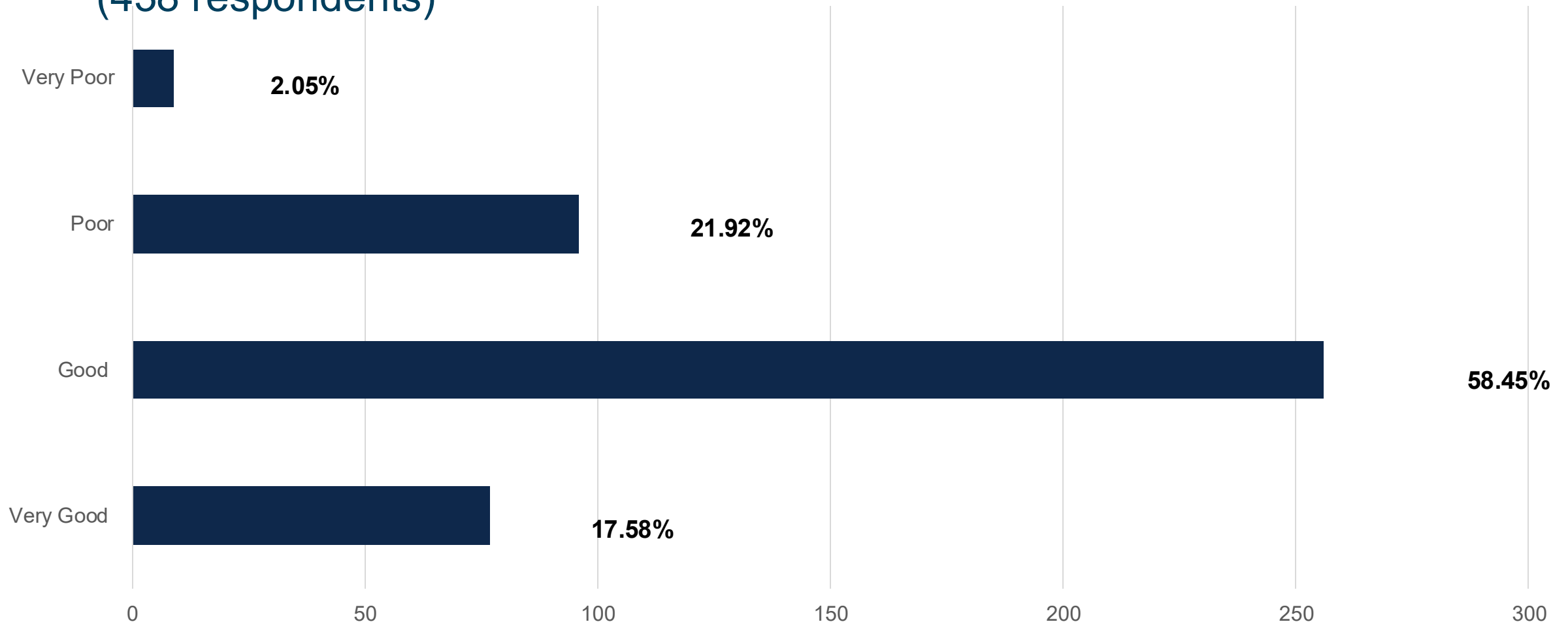
### Q3 – How long have you lived in the region? Required (436 respondents, asked only of participants who indicated they live in the region.)



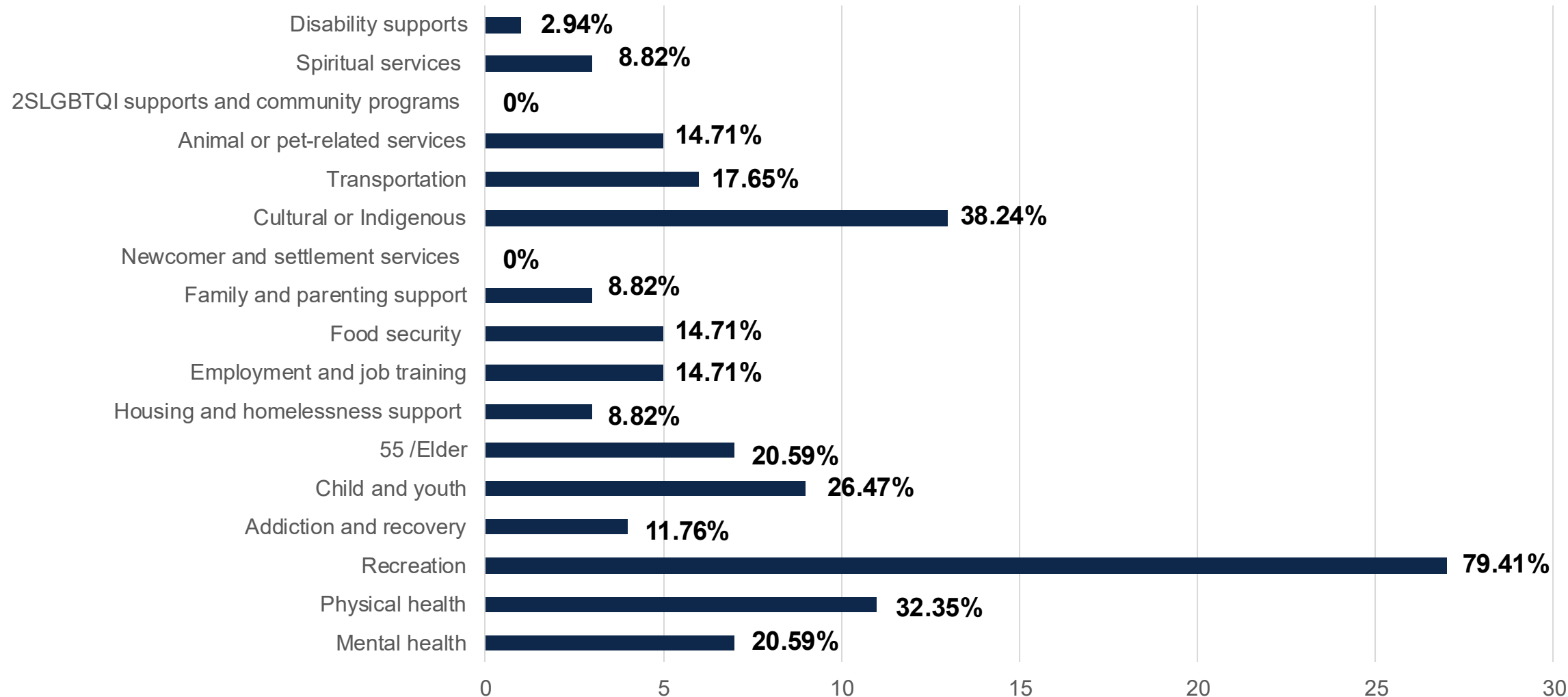
## Q4 – Overall, how would you describe your mental health?(437 respondents)



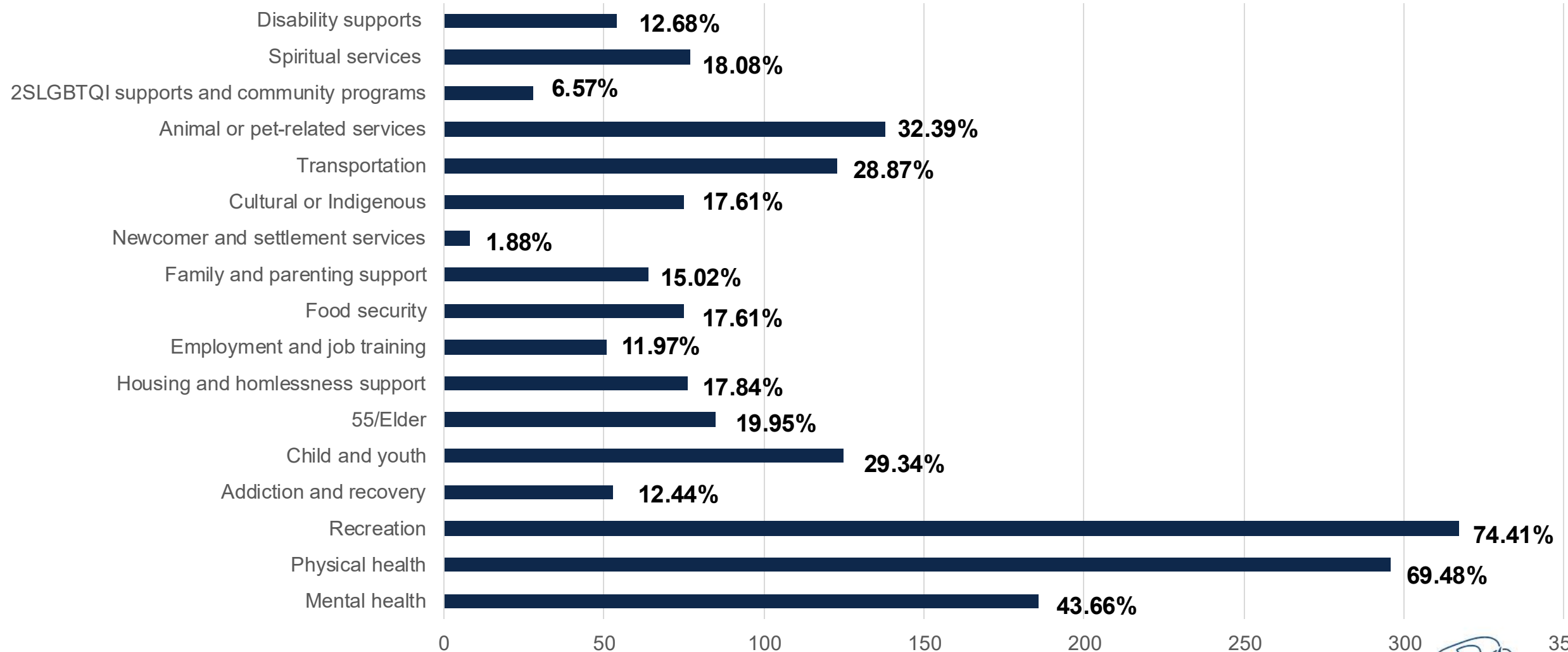
## Q5 – Overall, how would you describe your physical health? (438 respondents)



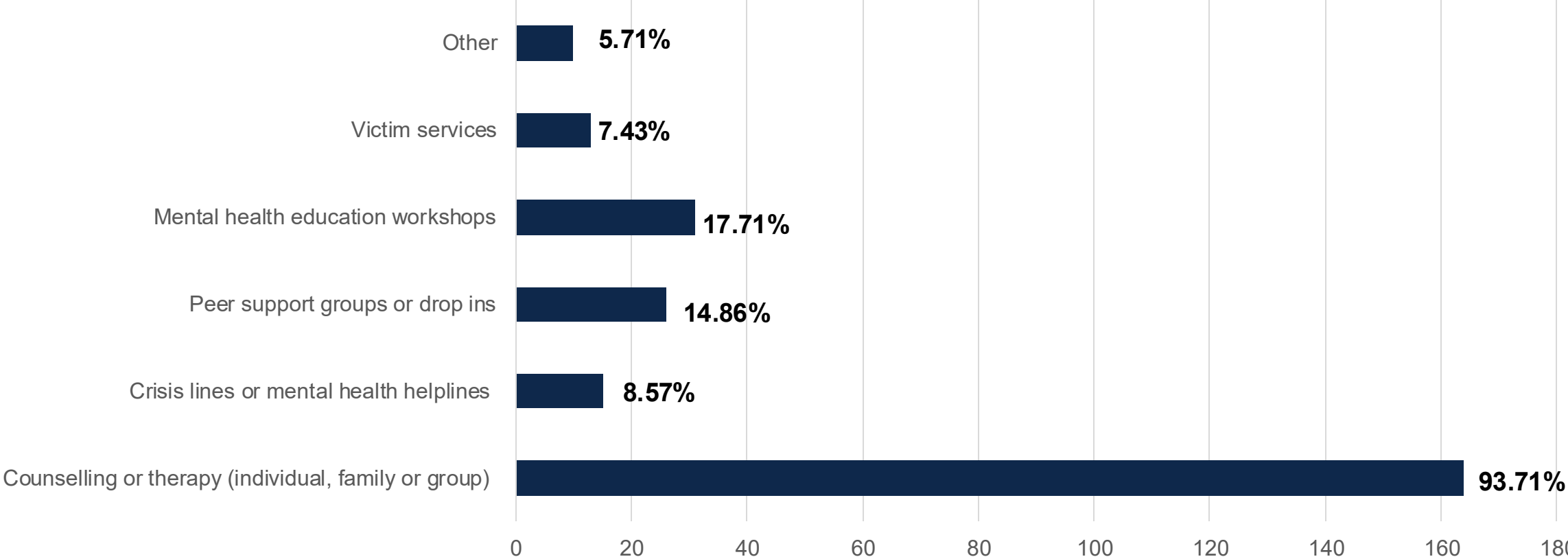
## Q6 – What types of services or programs do you or your household use in your rural hamlet? (34 respondents, asked only of rural residents)



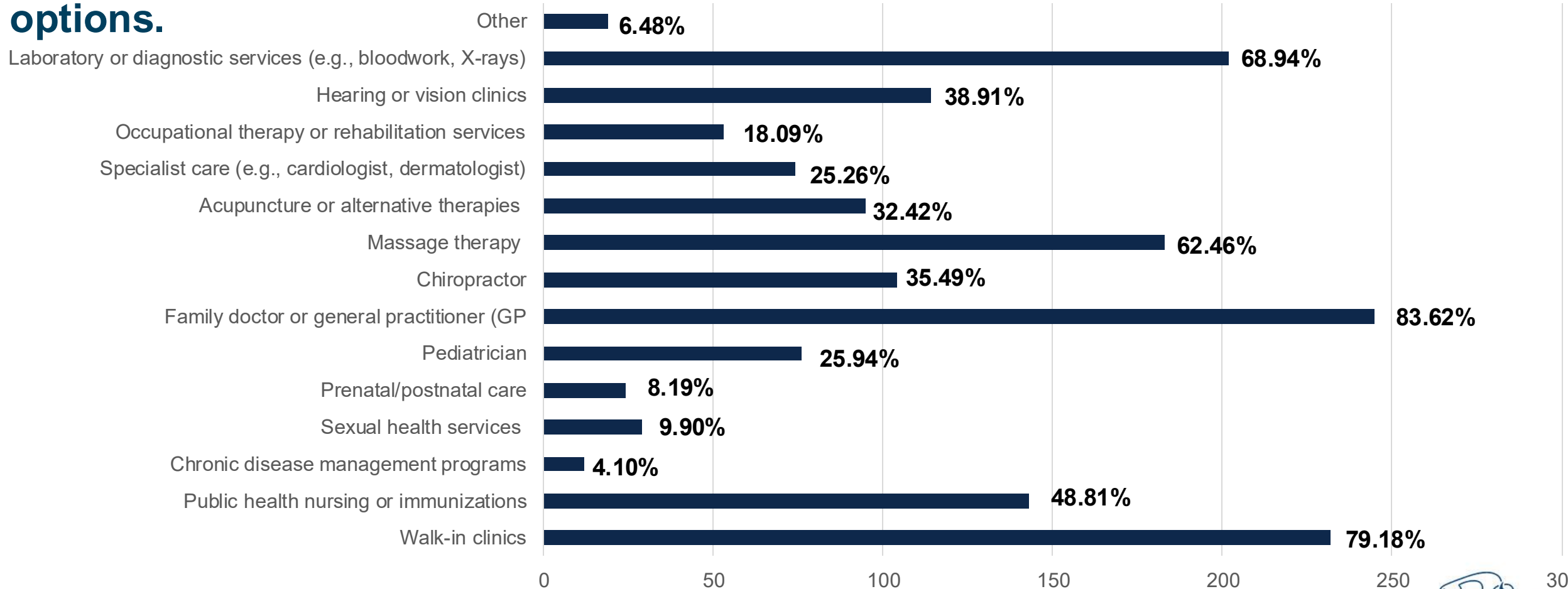
## Q7 – What types of services or programs do you or your household use in Fort McMurray? (426 respondents, asked only of Fort McMurray residents)



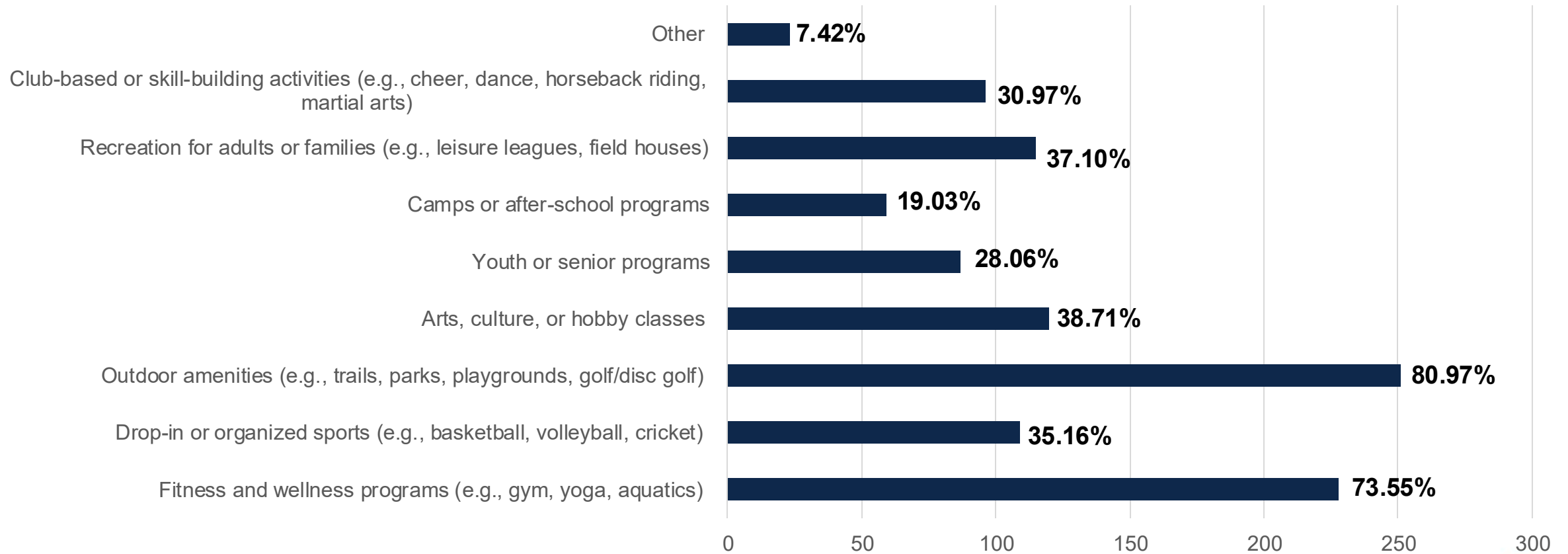
# Q8 – What type of mental health programs or services do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use mental health services. (175 respondents)



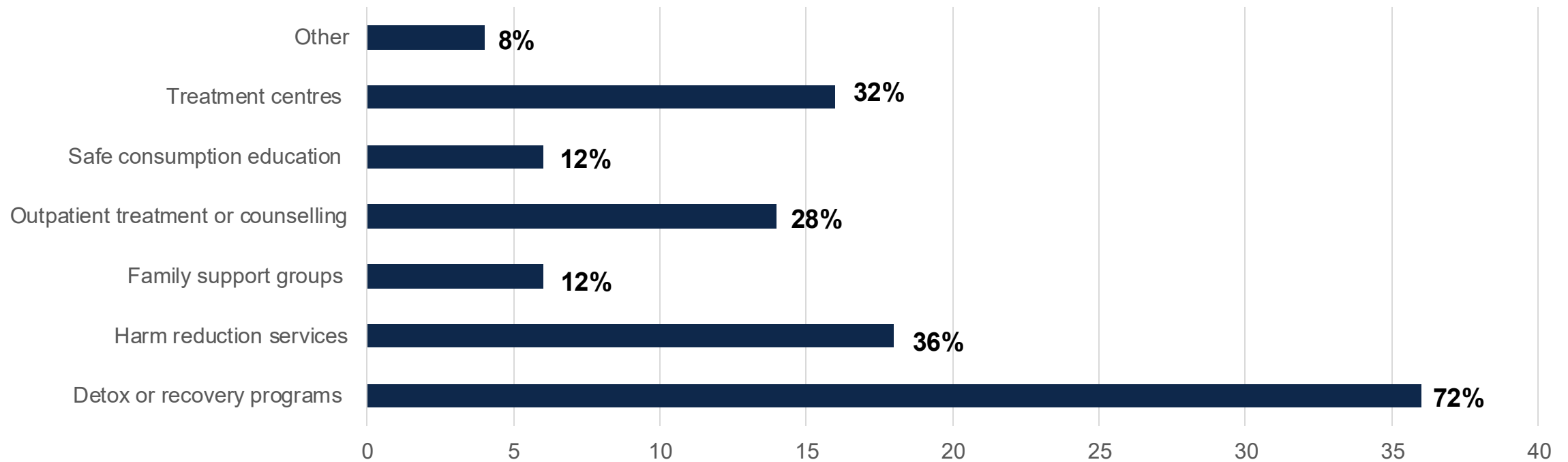
## Q9 – What type of physical health programs or services do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use physical health programs. (220 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



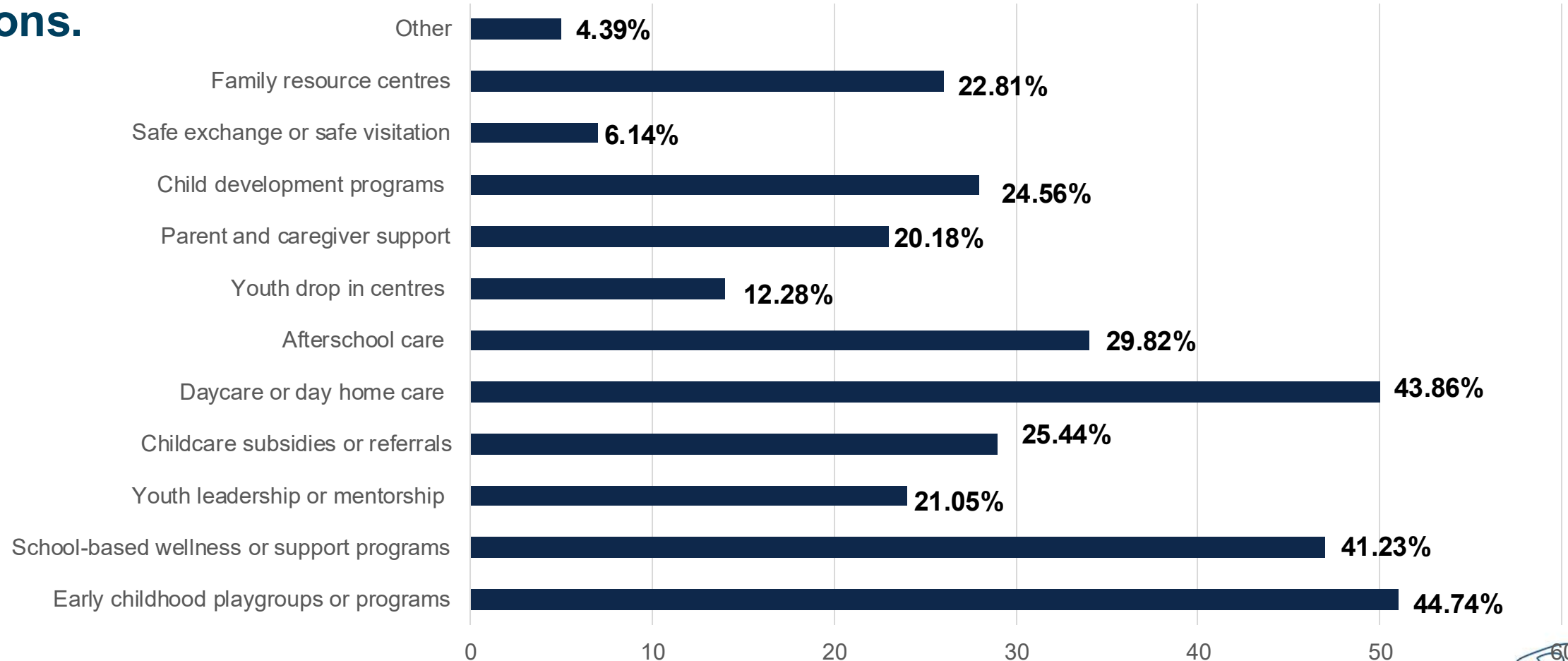
**Q10 – What type of recreation services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use recreation services. (310 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.**



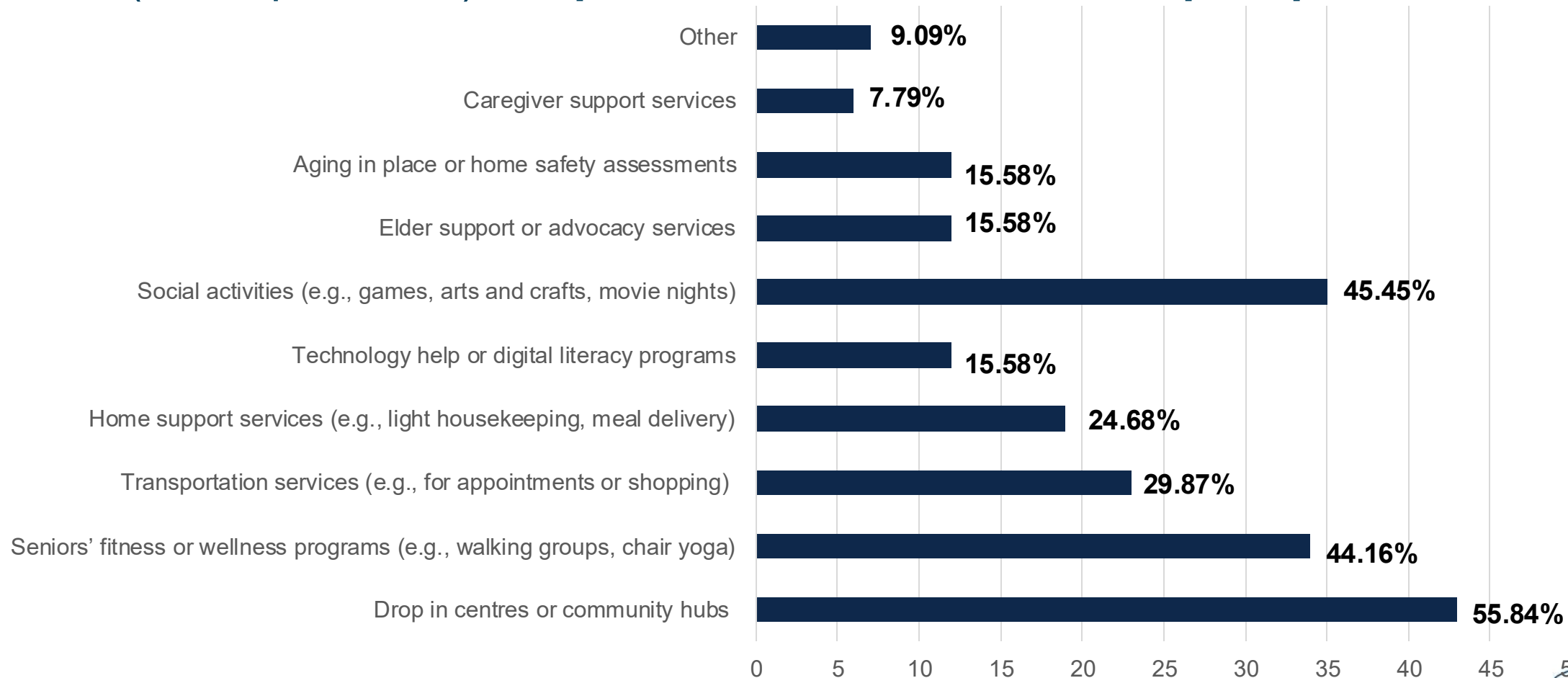
**Q11 – What types of addiction and recovery services or programs do you or your household use in the region?** This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use addiction or recovery services. (349 respondents) **Respondents could select multiple options.**



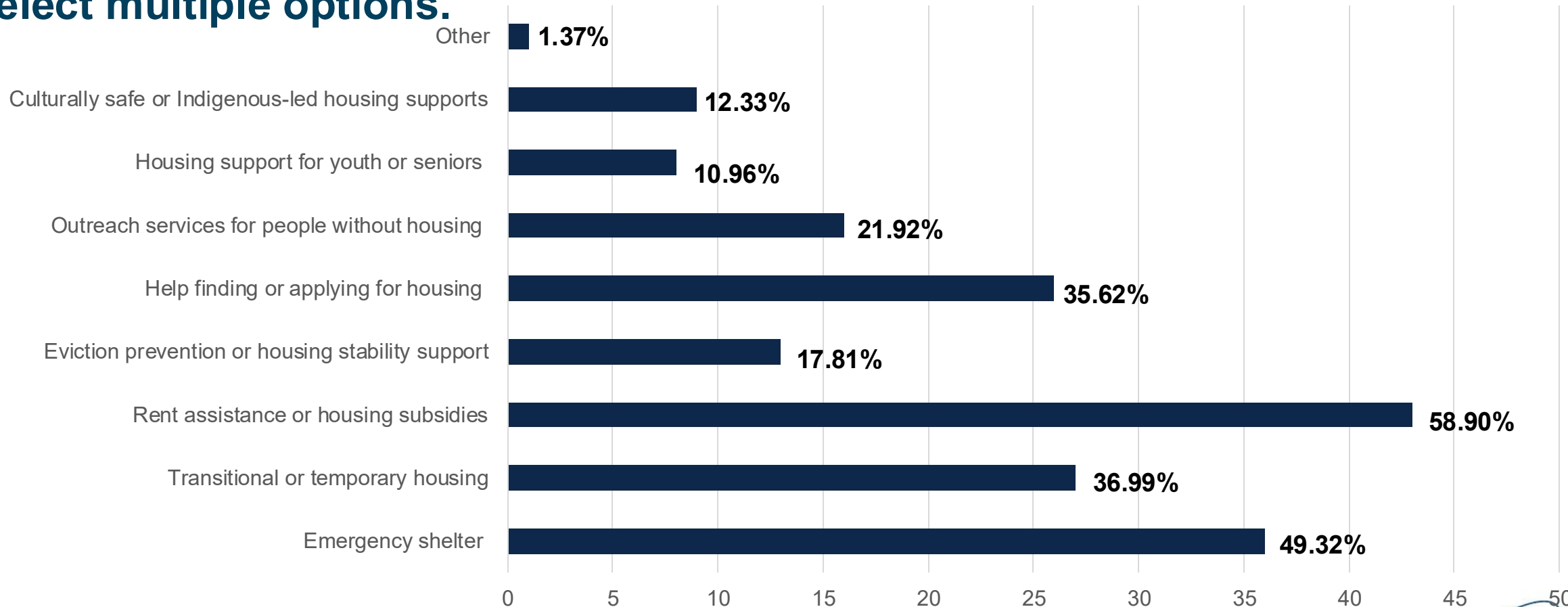
## Q12 – What type of child and youth services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use child and youth services. (114 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



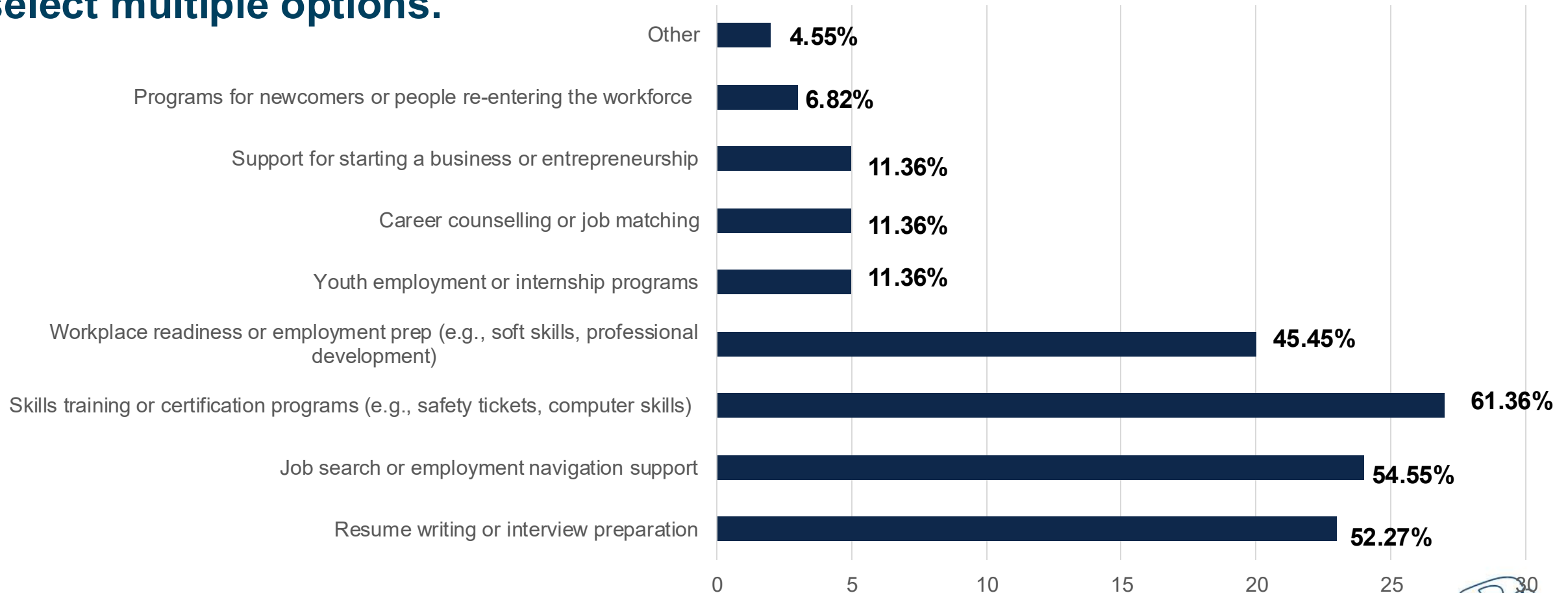
**Q13 – What types of 55+/Elder services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use 55+/Elder services. (77 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.**



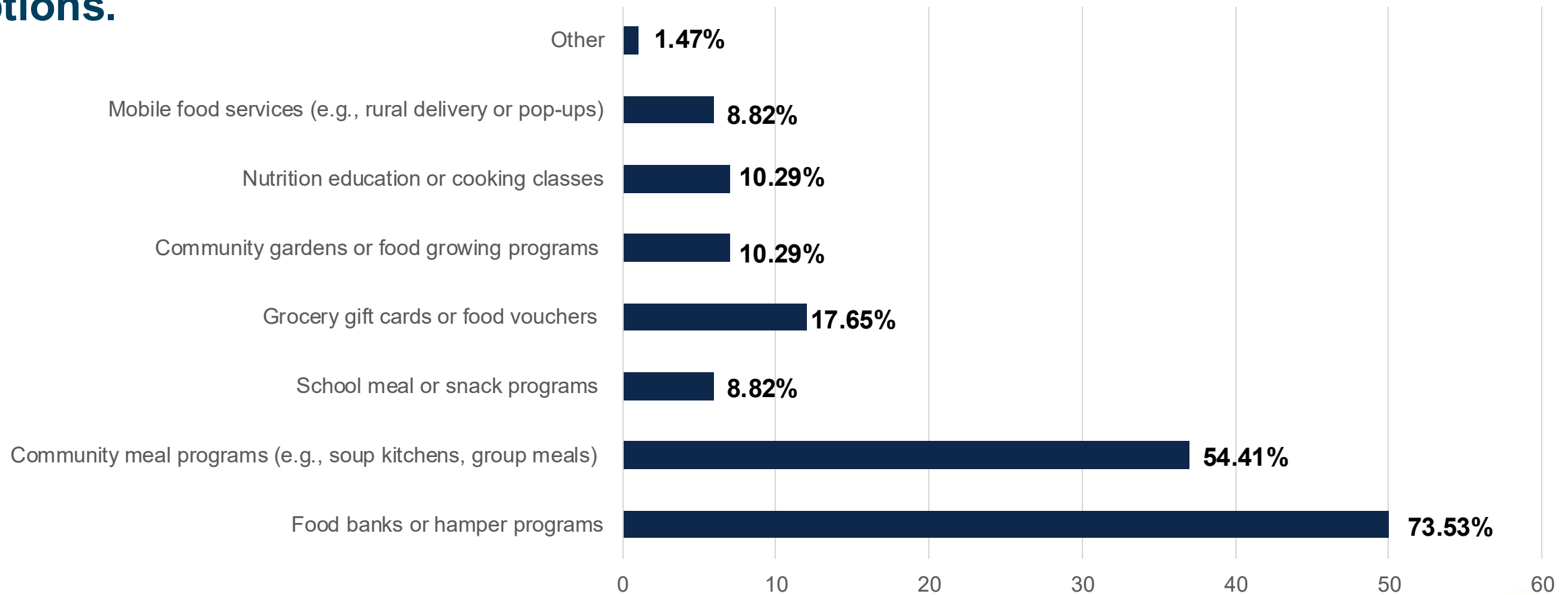
# Q14 – What types of housing and homelessness support do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they housing and homelessness supports. (73 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



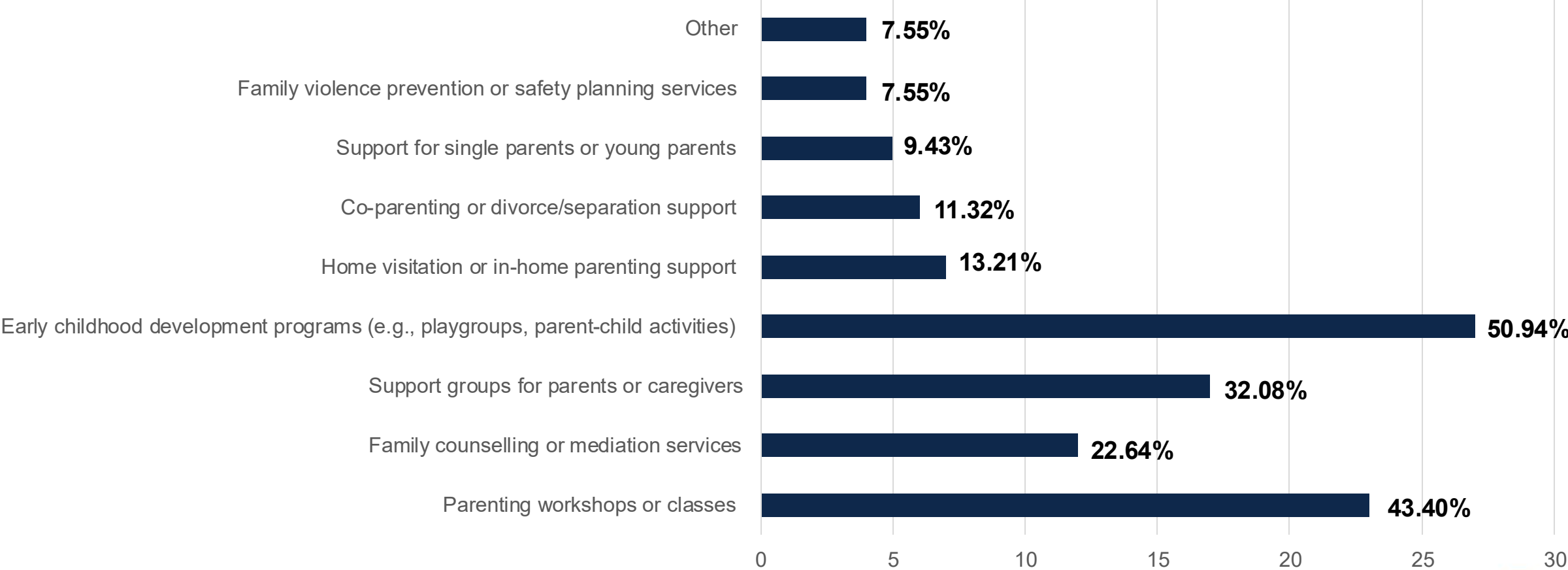
# Q15 – What type of employment and job training services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use employment and job training services. (44 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



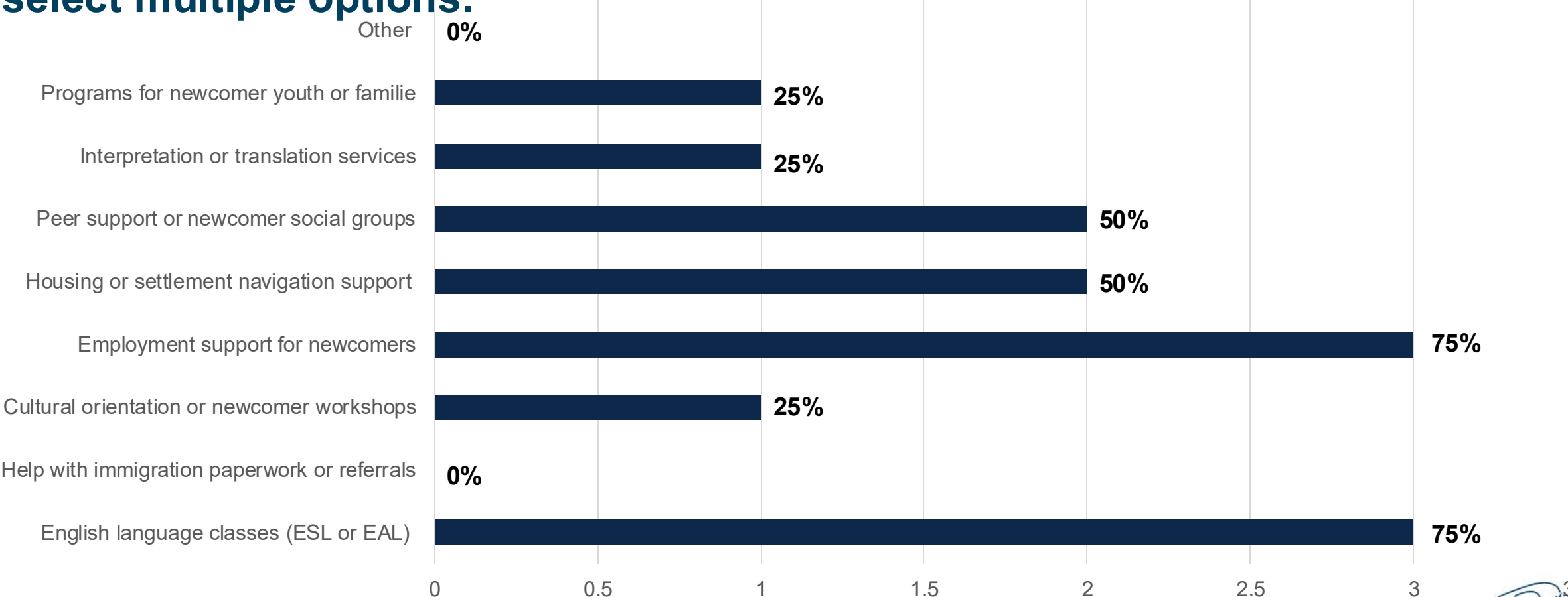
## Q16 - What type of food security services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use food security services. (68 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



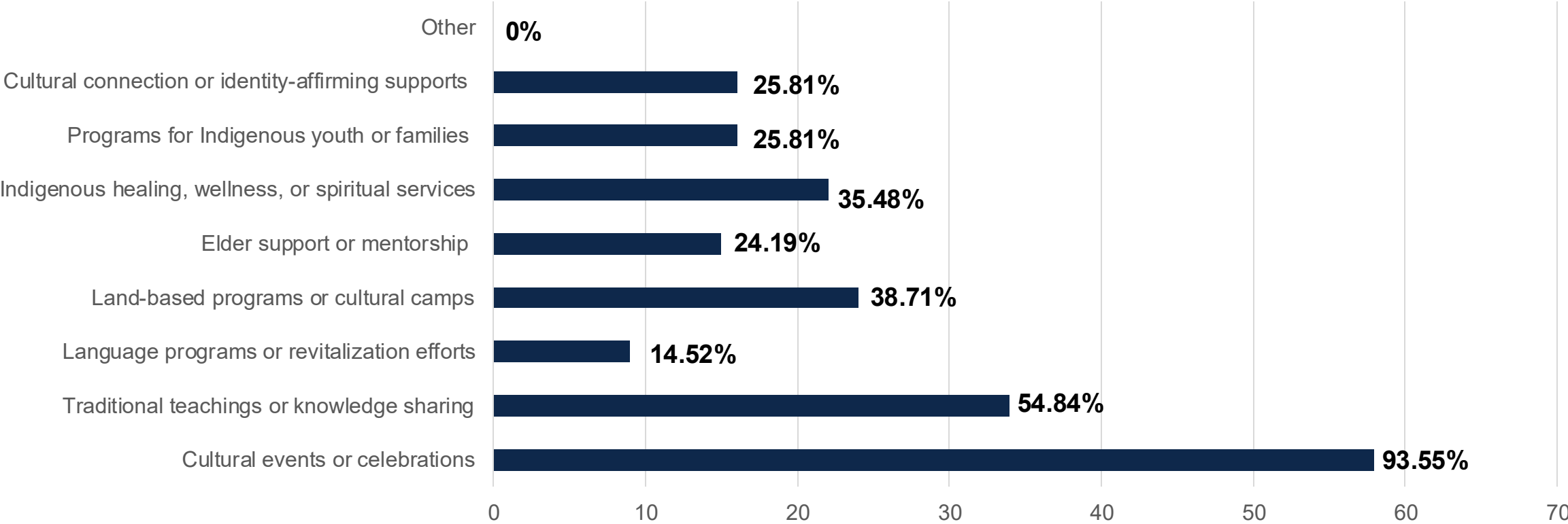
**Q17 – What type of family and parenting support do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use family and parenting supports. (53 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.**



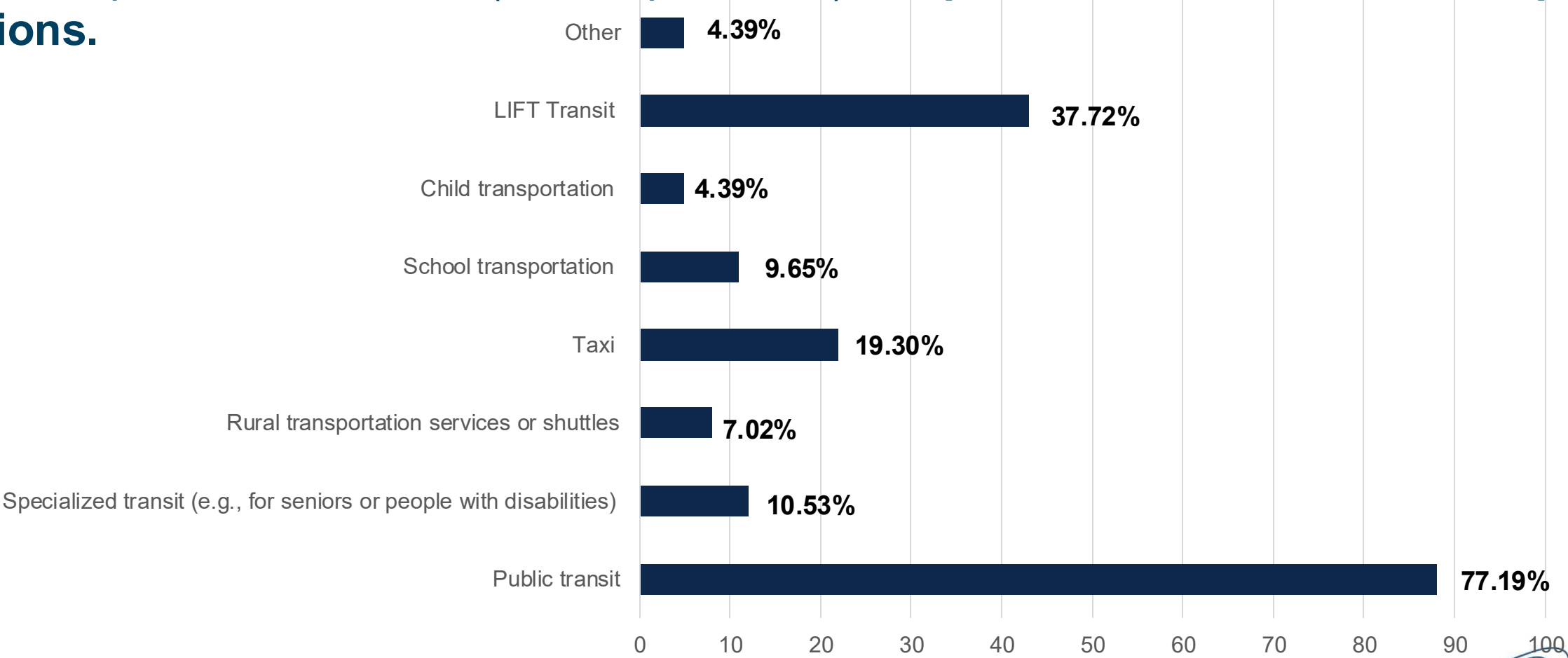
**Q18 – What type of newcomer and settlement services or programs do you or your household use?** This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use newcomer and settlement services. (4 respondents) **Respondents could select multiple options.**



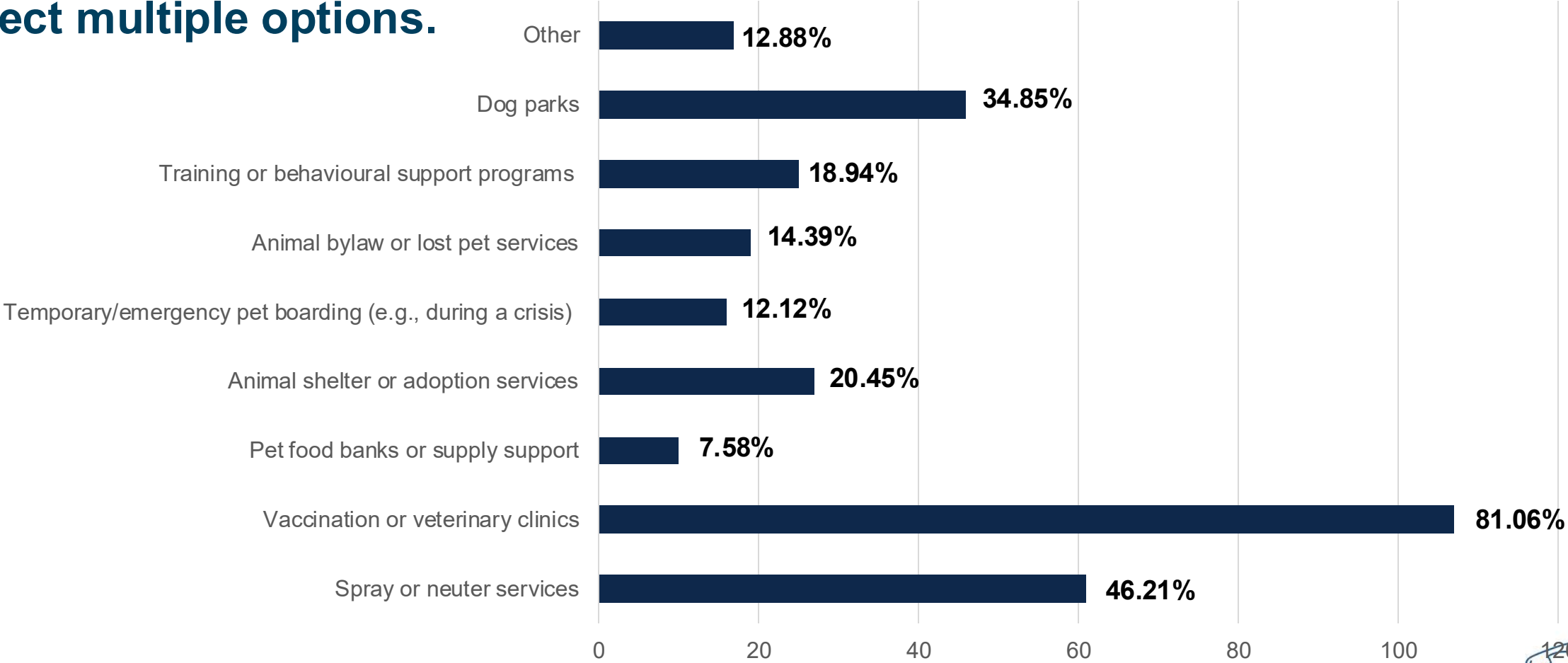
**Q19 – What type of cultural or Indigenous services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use cultural or Indigenous services. (62 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.**



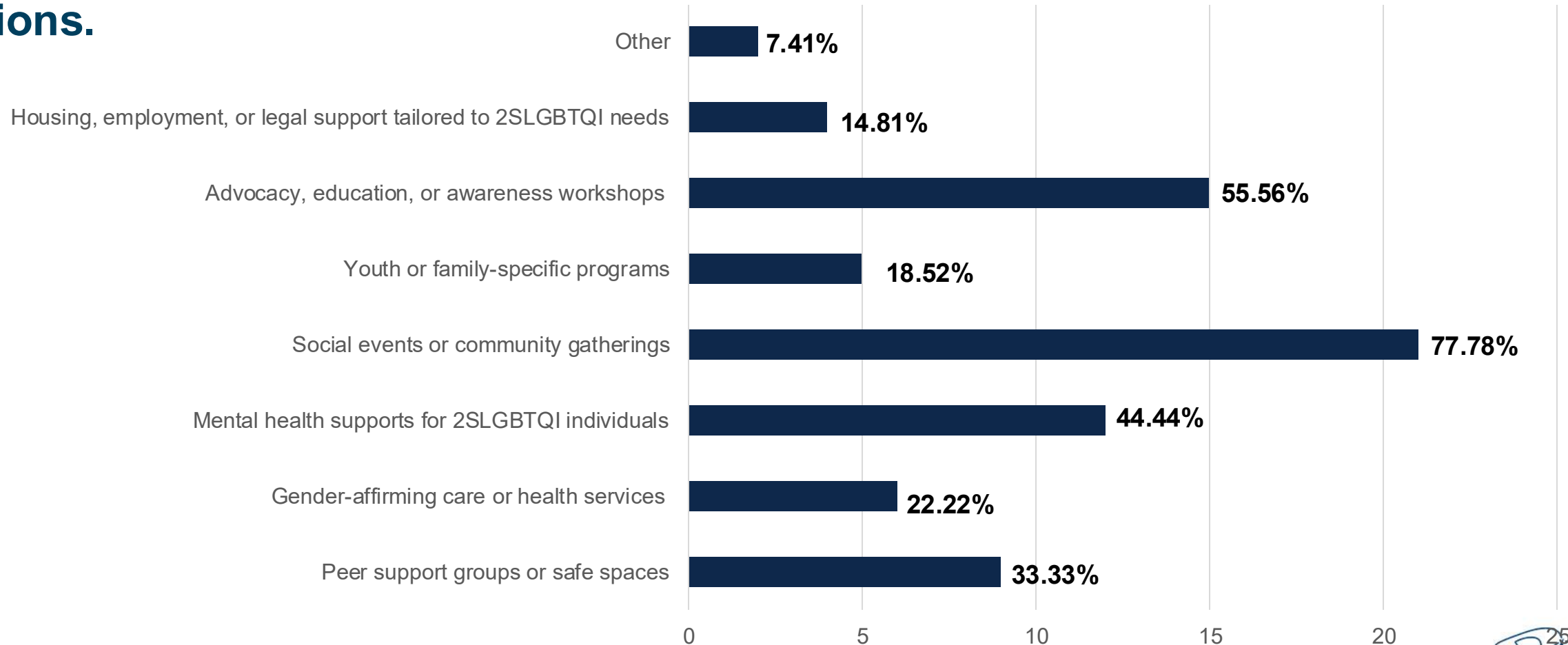
**Q20 – What type of transportation services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use transportation services. (114 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.**



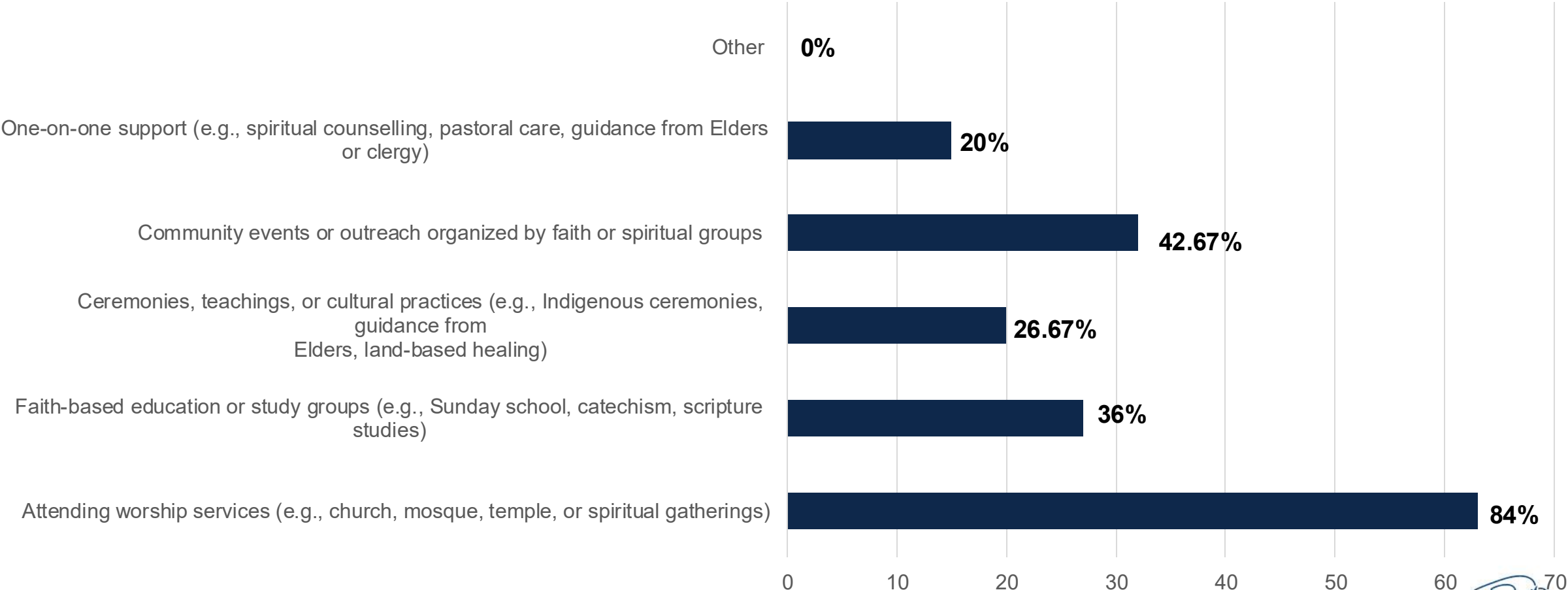
**Q21 – What type of animal or pet-related services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use animal or pet-related services. (132 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.**



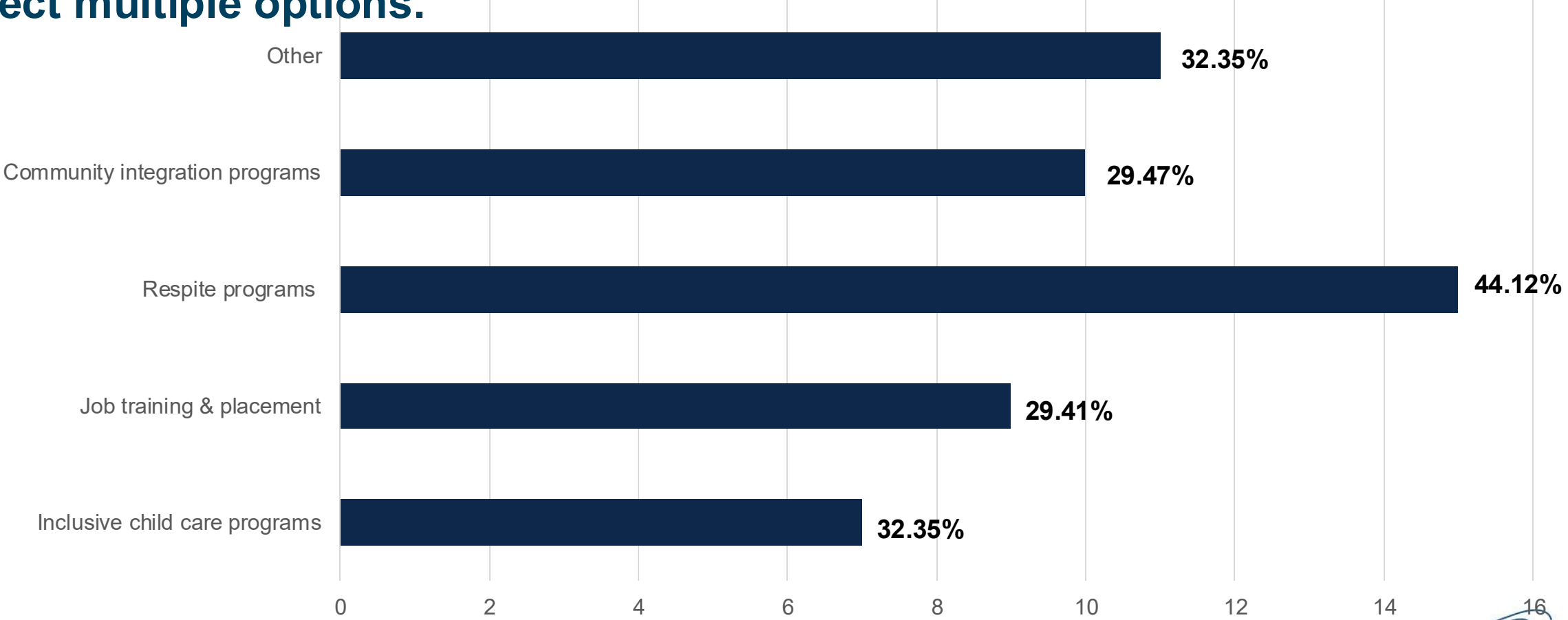
**Q22 – What type of 2SLGBTQI+ supports services or programs do you and your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use 2SLGBTQI+ supports services. (27 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.**



# Q23 – What type of spiritual services or programs do you or your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use spiritual services. (75 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



**Q24 – What type of disability supports services or programs do you and your household use? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use disability supports services. (34 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.**



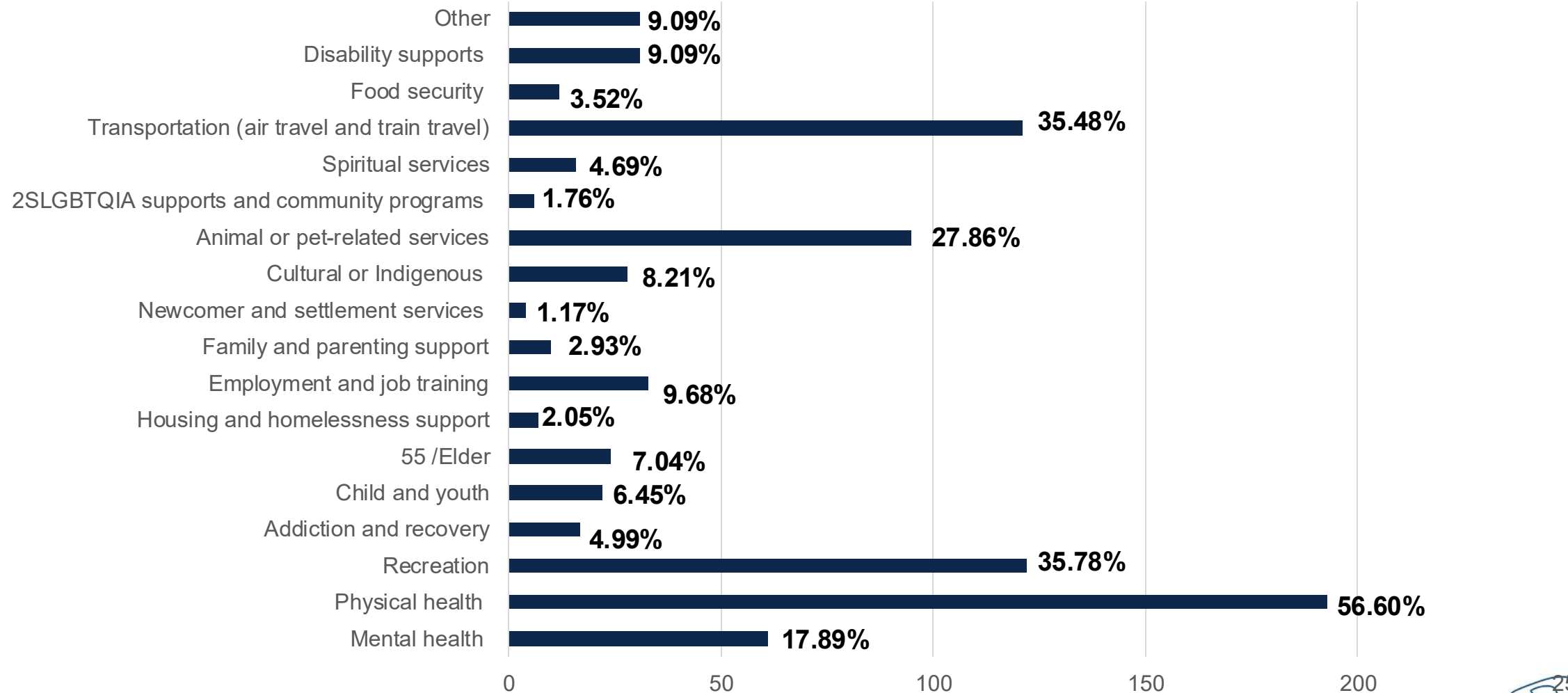
**Q25 – What is your faith, spiritual tradition, or belief system?** This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they use spiritual services. (51 respondents)

**Summarized response:**

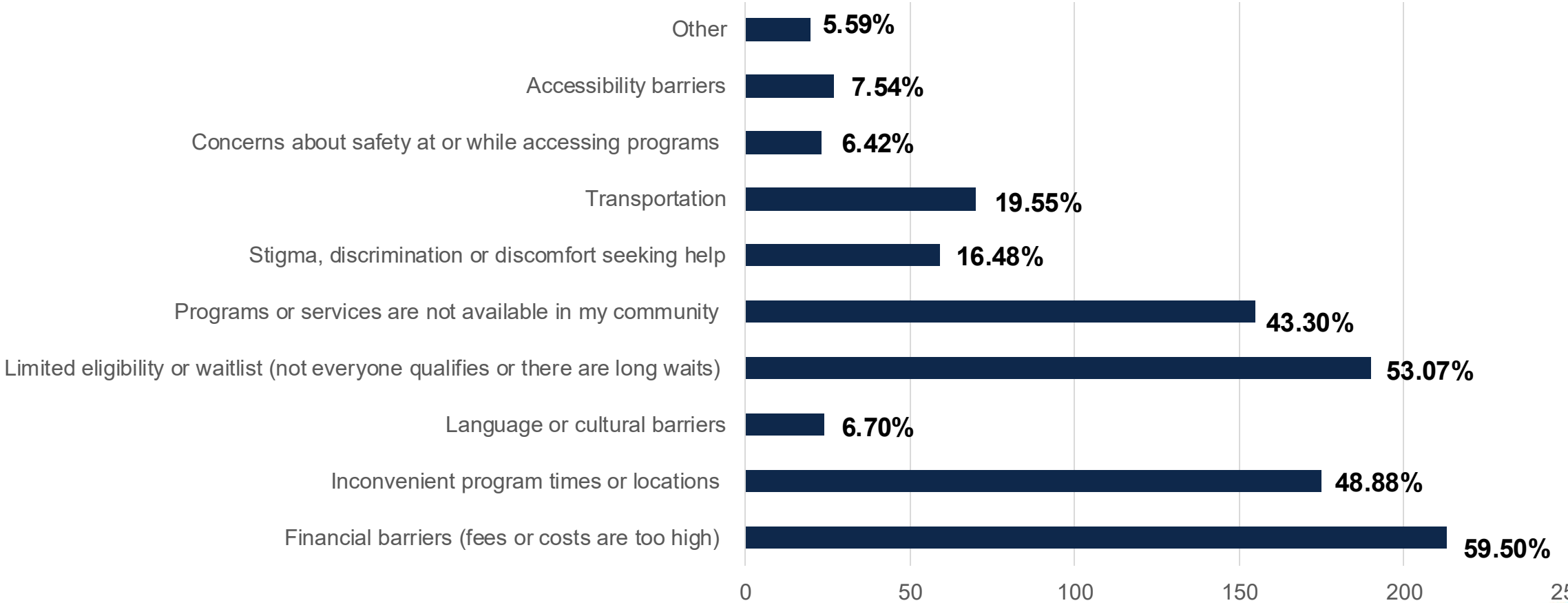
- Catholic
- Christian
- General spirituality
- Indigenous beliefs



## Q26 – What types of services or programs do you or your household leave the region to use? (341 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



# Q27 – In the past year, have you experienced any of the following barriers when accessing community programs or services? (358 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



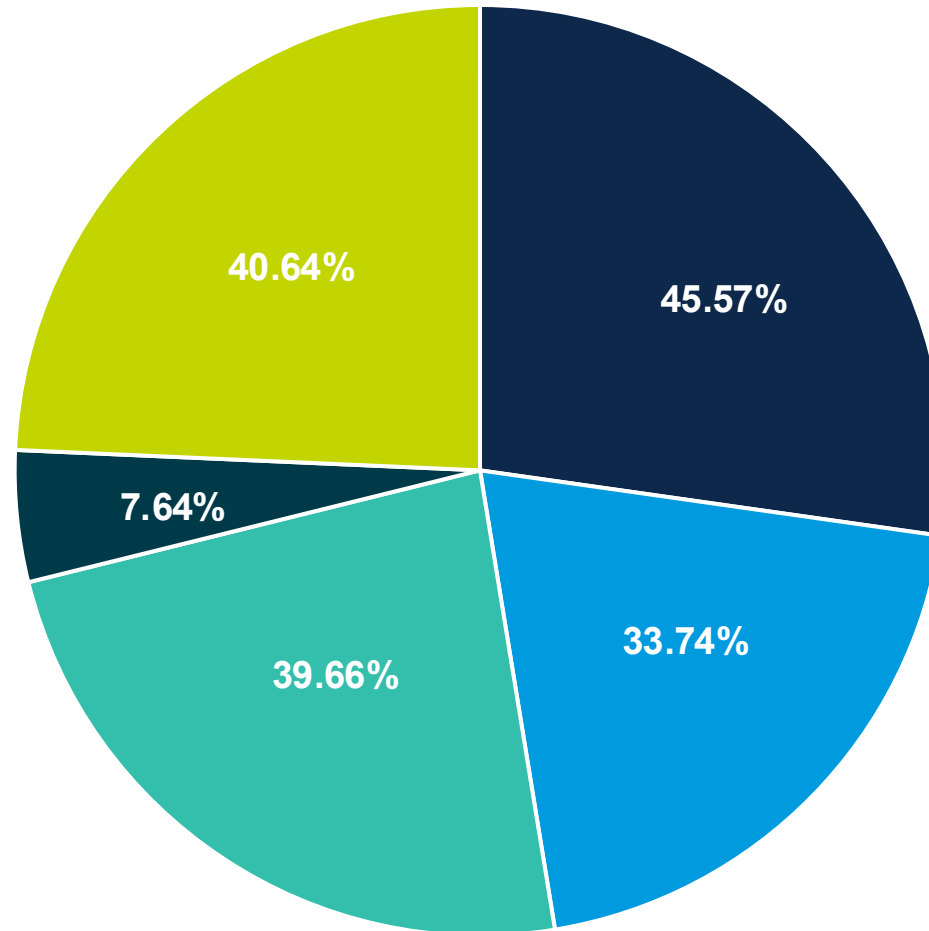
**Q28 – What type of transportation barriers are you facing?** This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they are facing transportation barriers. (2 respondents)

**Summarized responses:**

1. Expensive to fly out of Fort McMurray
2. Inaccessible/inconvenient plane schedules



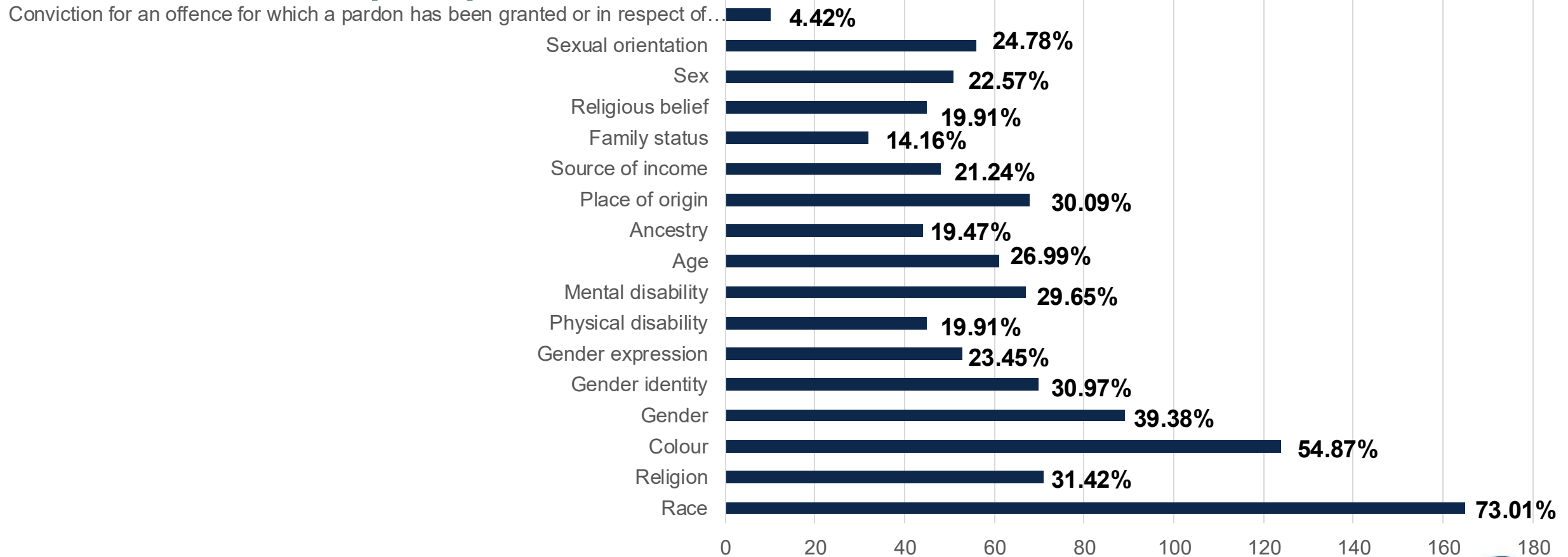
## Q29 – Have you witnessed or experienced discrimination, harassment, or racism? If yes, select all that apply. (406 respondents)



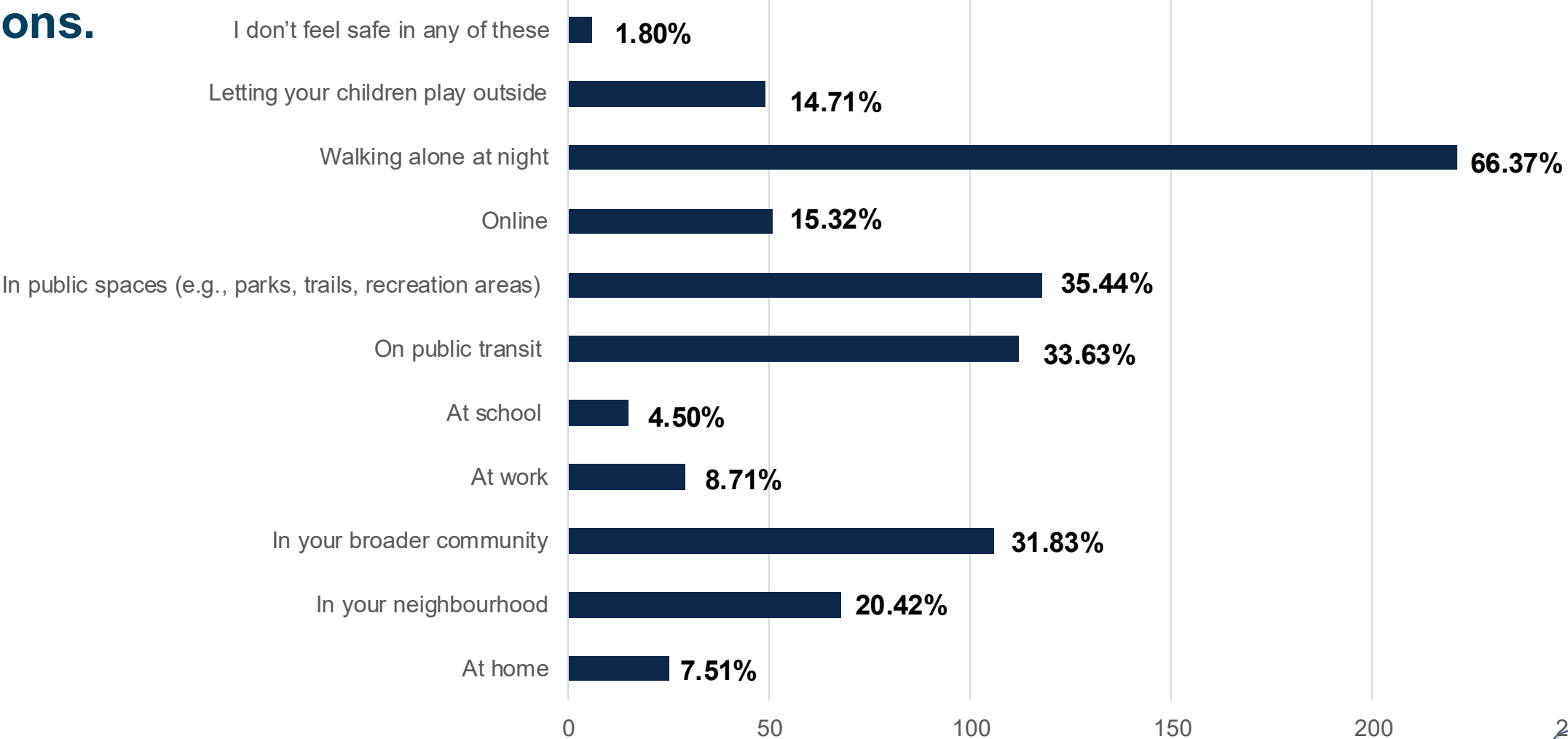
■ Discrimination ■ Harassment ■ Racism ■ Hate crime ■ I have not witnessed or experienced discrimination, harassment, or racism.



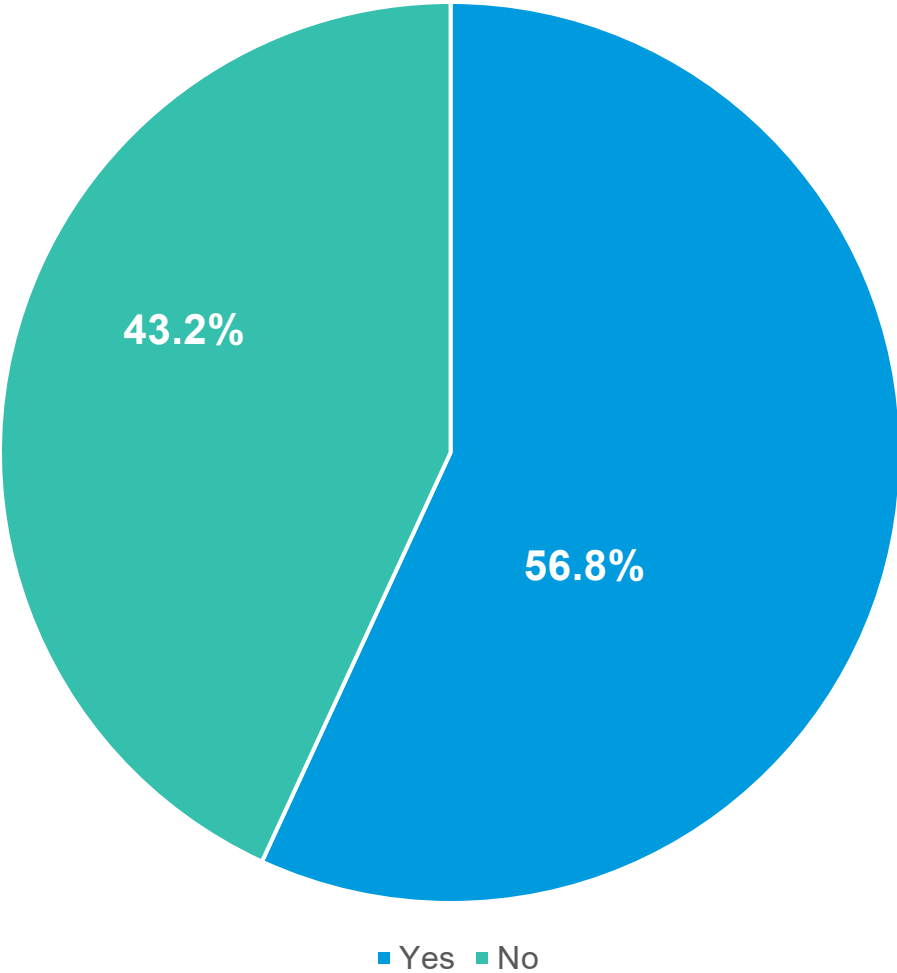
## Q30 – Under which of the 15 protected grounds under Alberta’s Human Rights Act? This question was asked only of respondents who indicated they witnessed or experienced discrimination, harassment, or racism. (226 respondents) **Respondents could select multiple options.**



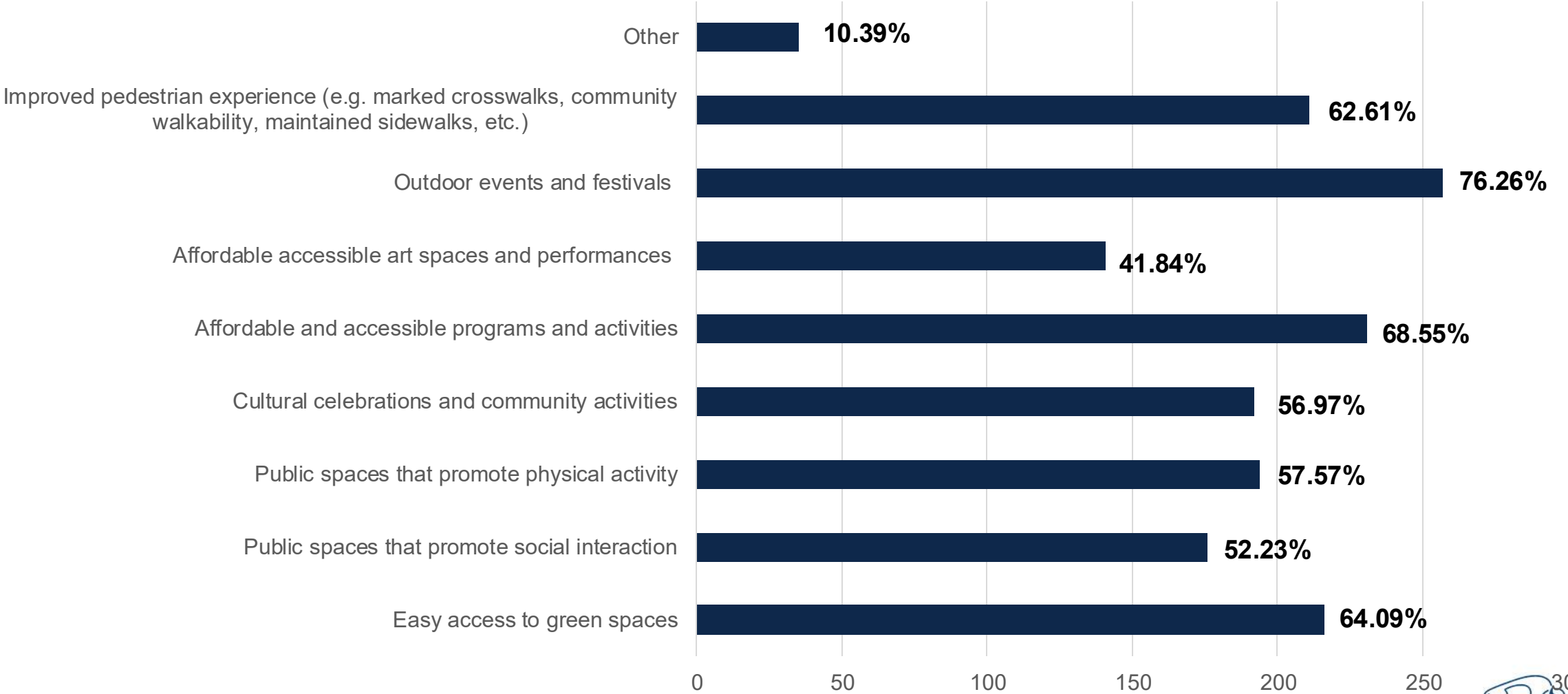
# Q31 – In which of the following places or situations do you or members of your household not feel safe? (333 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



# Q32 – Have you ever visited the Emergency Preparedness section of the RMWB website? (429 respondents)



# Q33 – What helps you feel more connected to your community? (337 respondents) Respondents could select multiple options.



## Q34 – If you could add one program or service to improve safety or social well-being in the region, what would it be? (228 respondents)

### Most respondents indicated programs and services that align with these themes:

- Health and wellness
- Safety and law enforcement
- Nature and recreation
- Transportation
- Animal/Pet
- Financial support
- Arts and culture
- Social and connection
- Senior support
- Inclusivity
- Education
- Disability support
- Community events
- Youth support
- Employment
- Newcomer
- Family and parenting
- Awareness hub
- Emergency shelter
- Housing
- Accessibility
- Library
- Political
- Commercial
- Spiritual



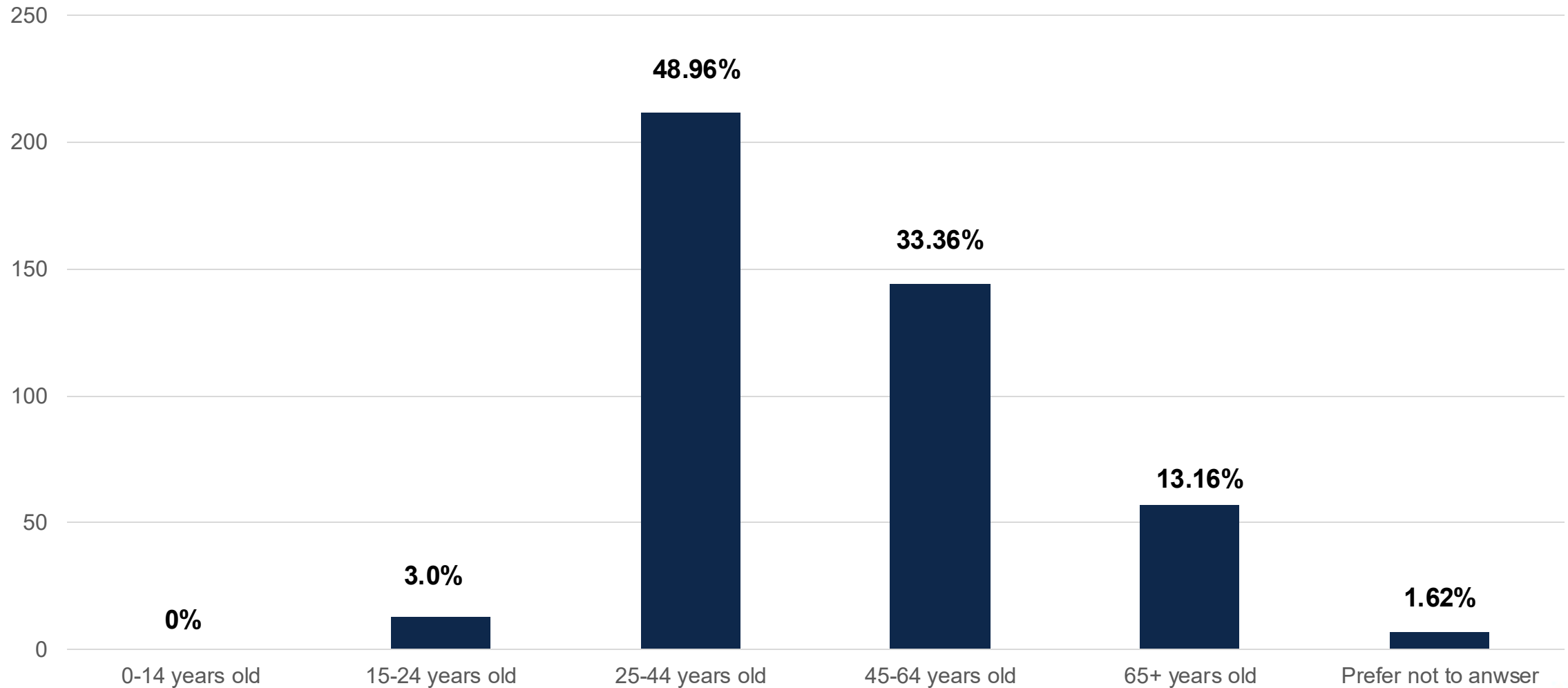
## Q35 – Is there anything else to share about safety and social well-being in the region? (171 respondents)

### Most respondents indicated programs and services that align with these themes:

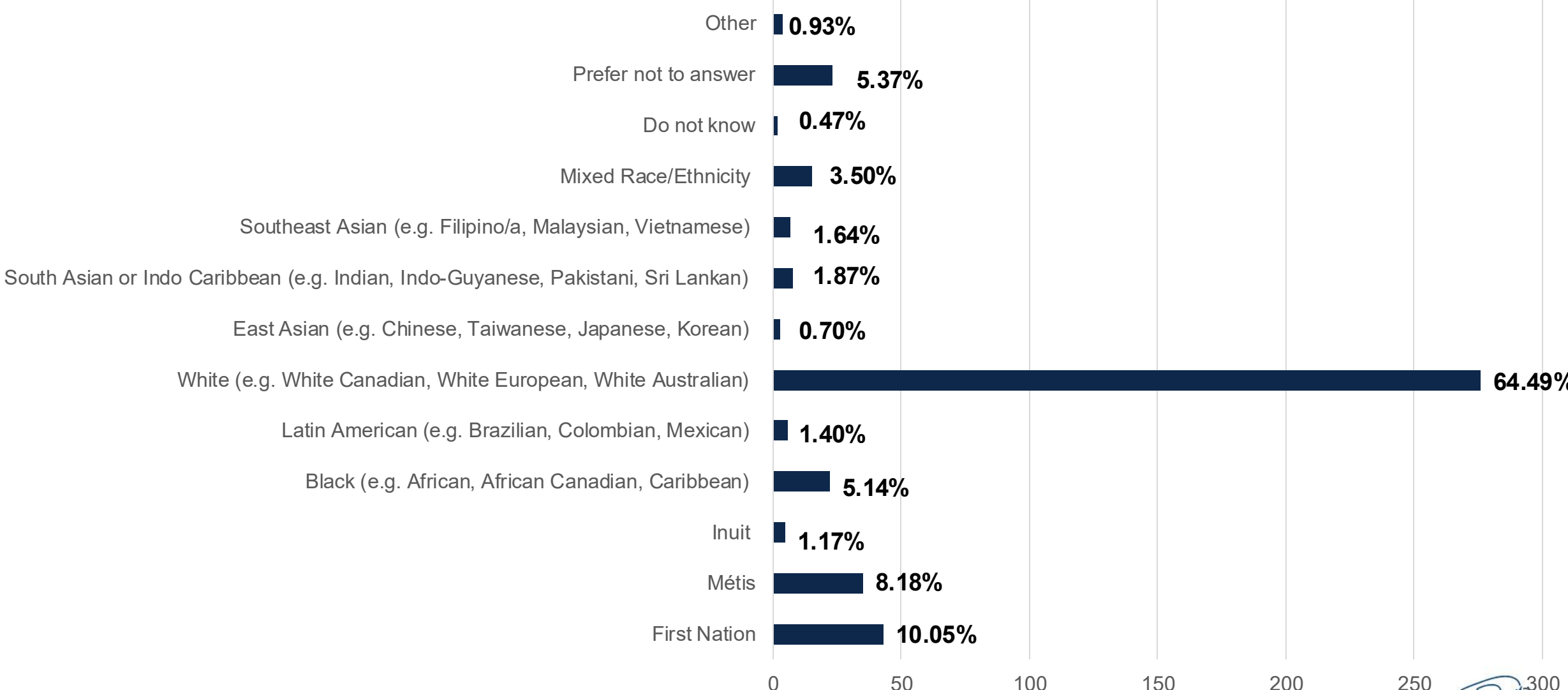
- Safety and law Enforcement
- Transportation
- Nature and recreation
- Accessibility
- Health and wellness
- Education
- Animal/Pet
- Inclusivity
- Senior support
- Political
- Community Engagement
- Social and connection
- Newcomer
- Awareness hub
- Disability support
- Equality
- Arts and culture
- Community events
- Housing
- Family and parenting
- Library



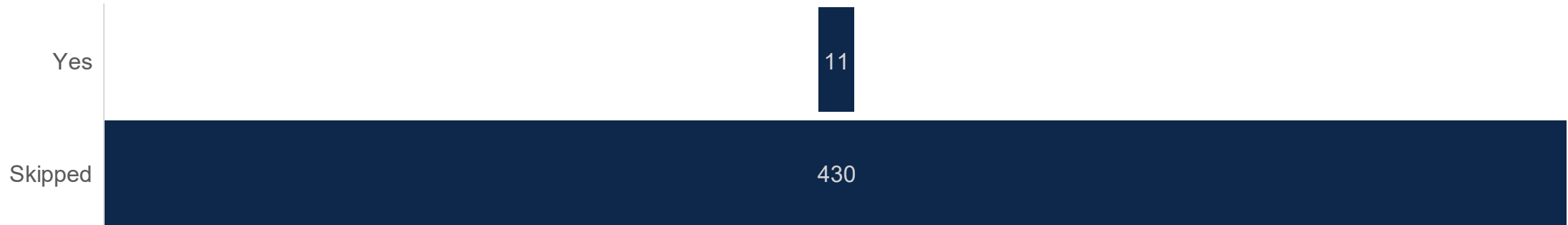
## Q36 – What is your age range? Required (433 respondents)



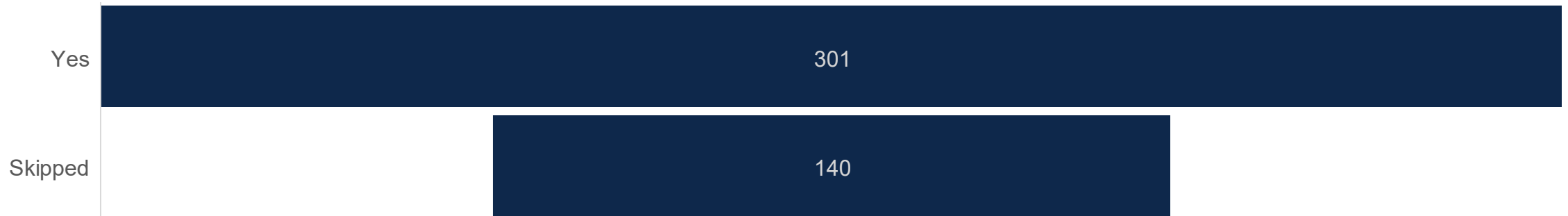
# Q37 – What is your racial or ethnic identity? (428 respondents)



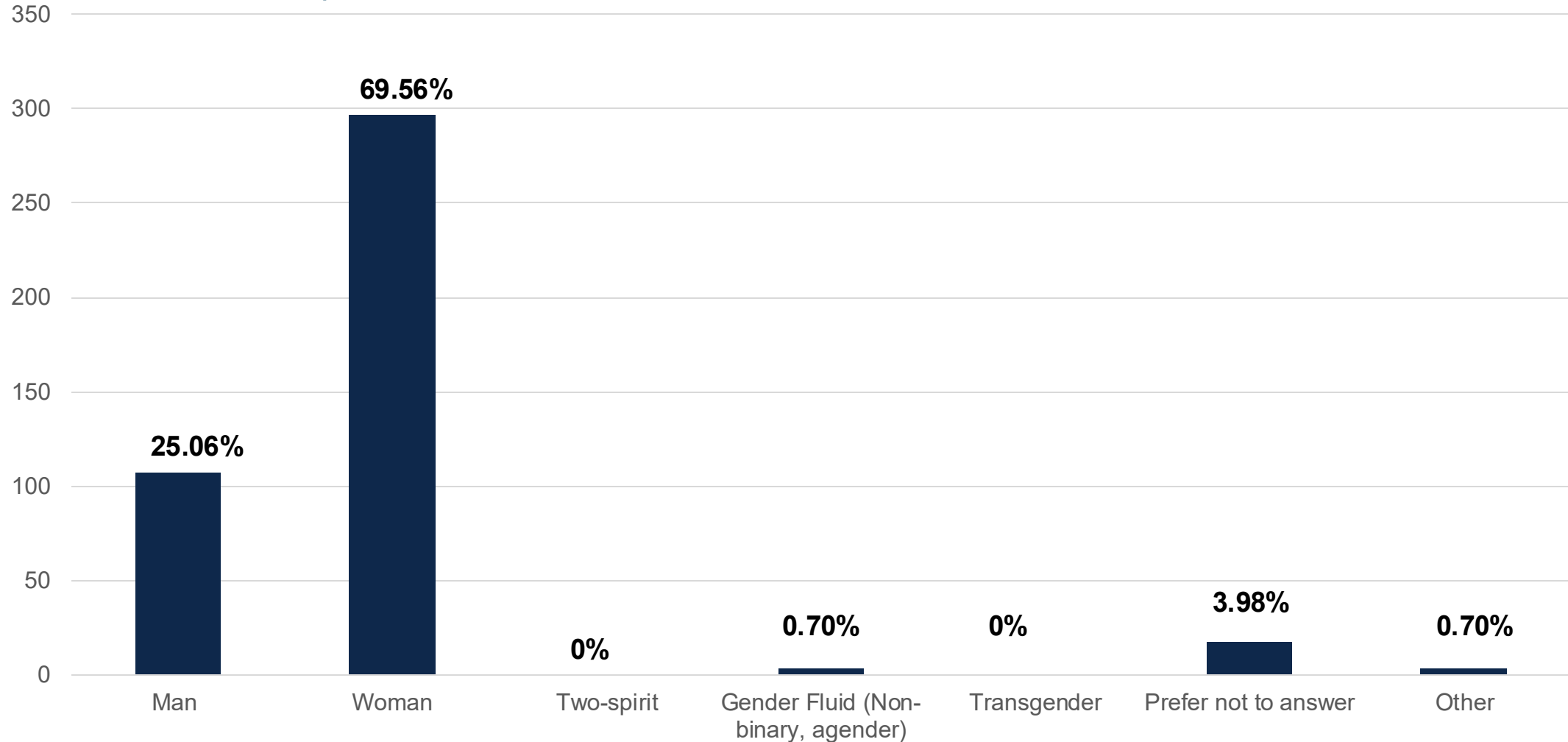
## Q38 – I've lived in Canada for 10 years or less: (11 respondents)



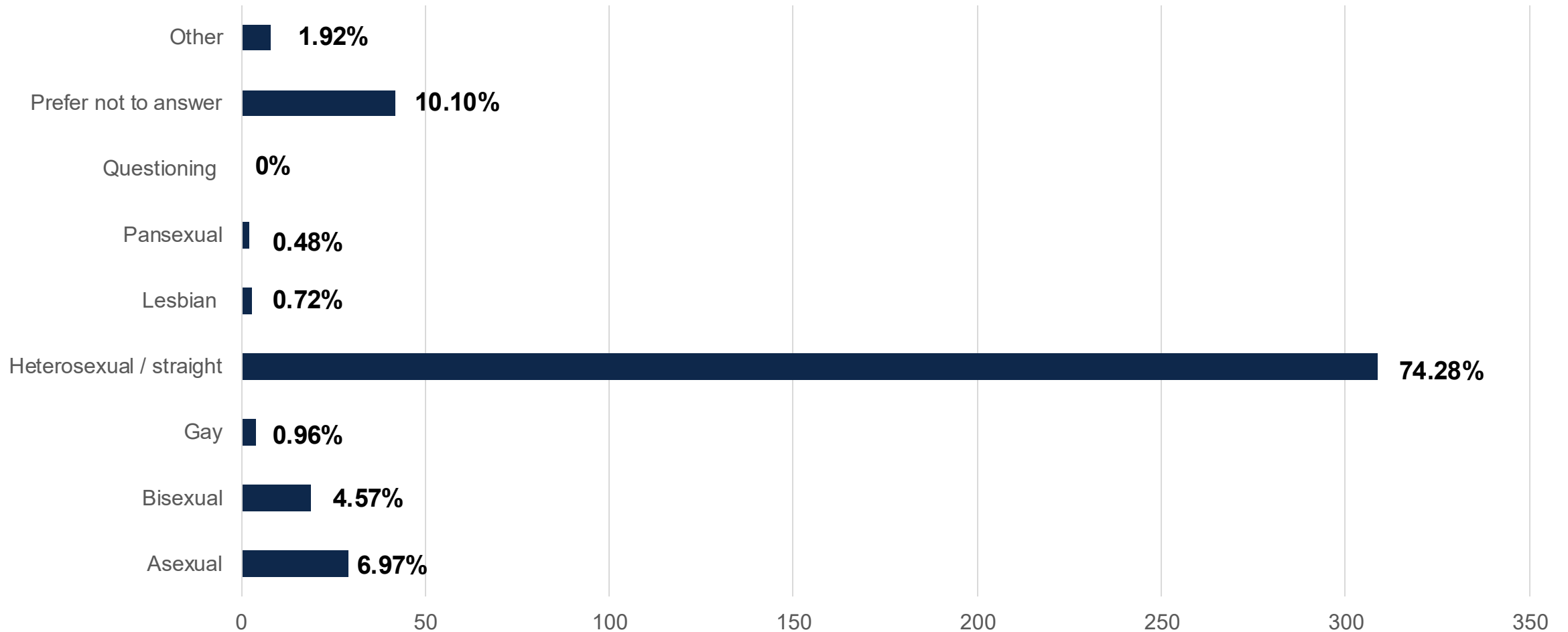
## Q39 – I've lived in Canada for more than 10 years: (301 respondents)



# Q40 – Please select the gender identity that best represents you: (427 respondents)

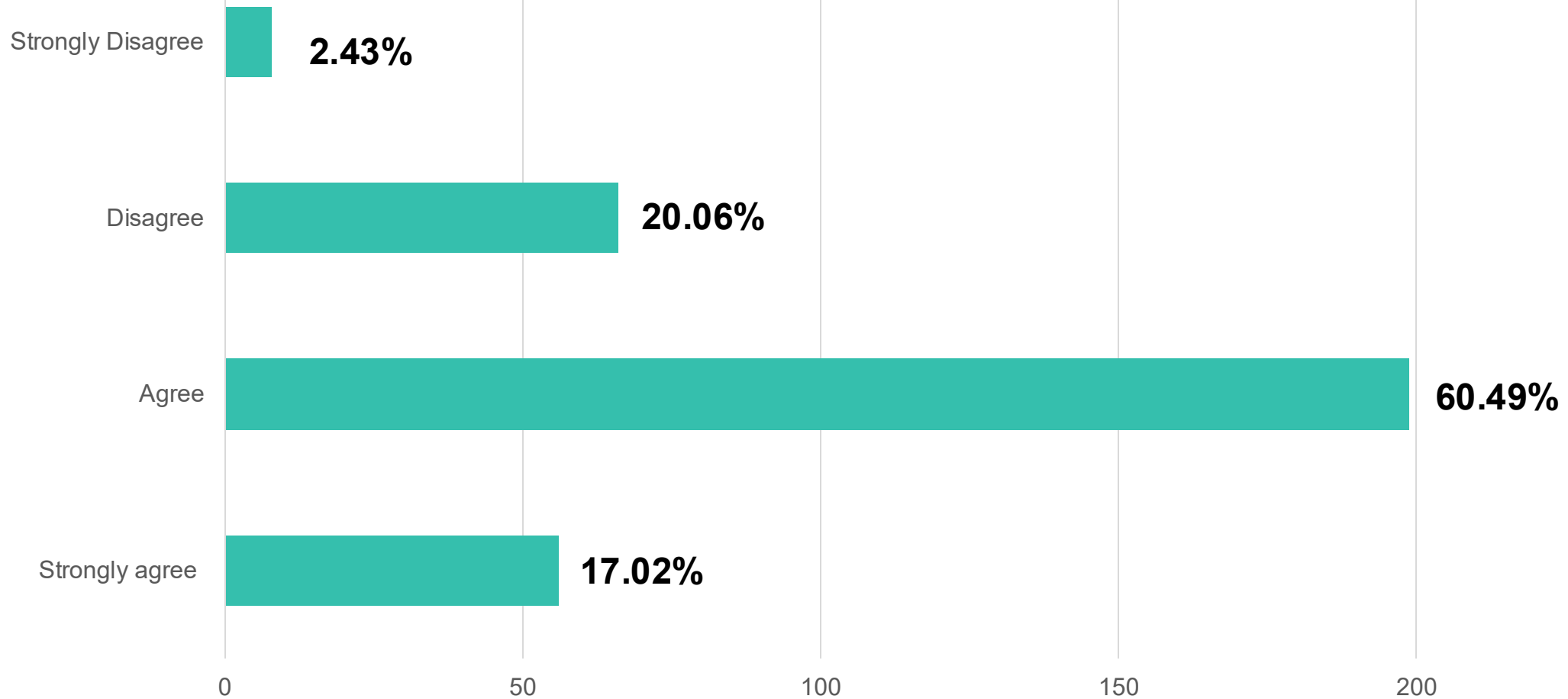


## Q41 – Please select the sexual orientation that best describes you: (416 respondents)

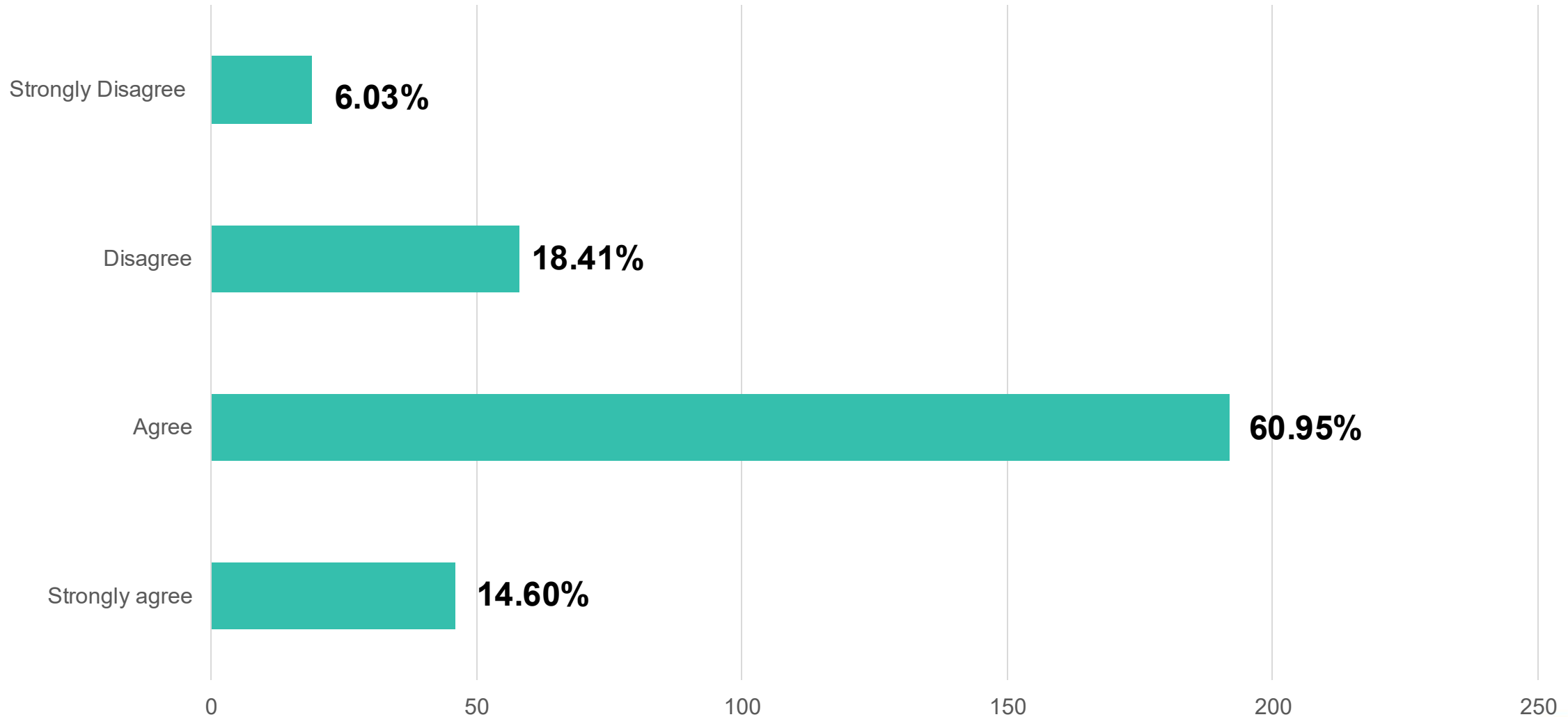


# APPENDIX B – QUICK POLL RESPONSES

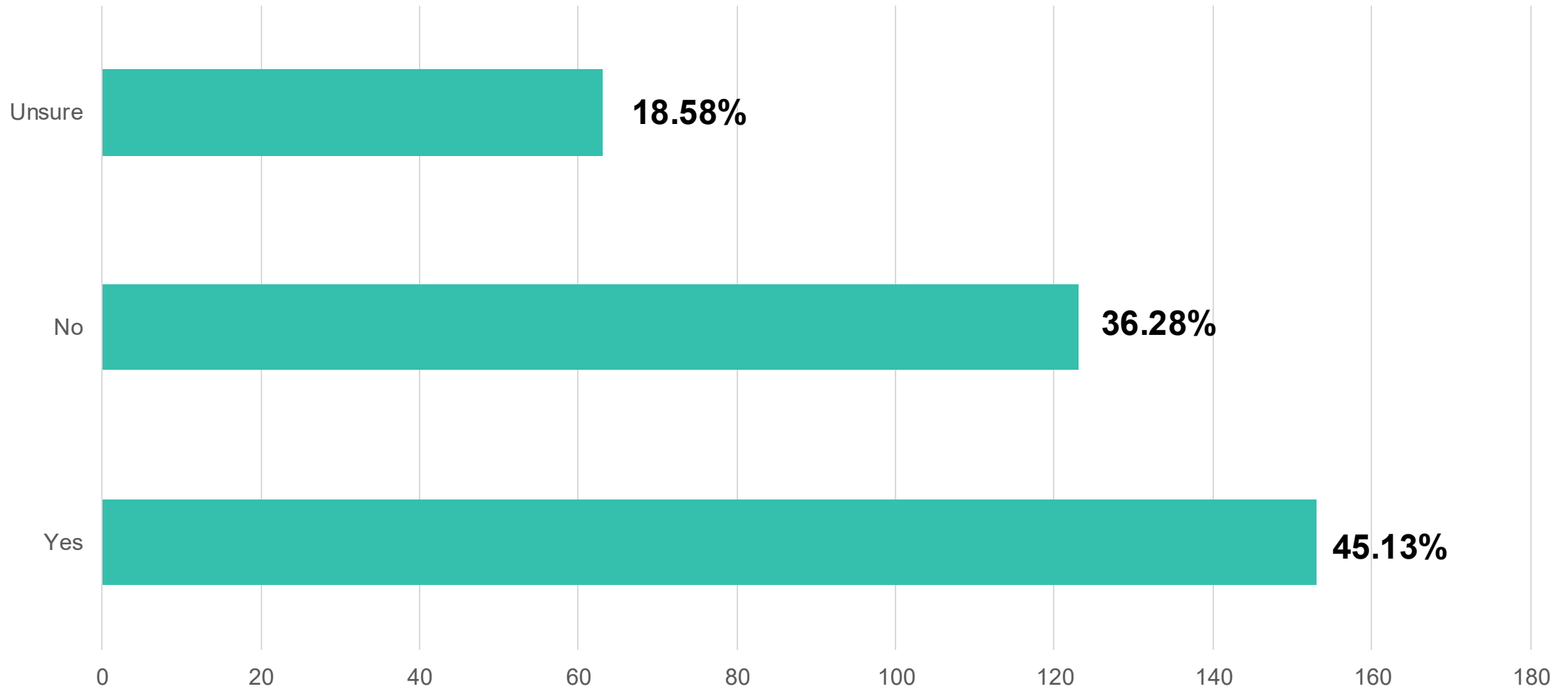
## Q1 – I feel a sense of belonging in my community. (329 Responses)



## Q2 – I feel safe in my community. (315 Responses)



### Q3 – Do you feel the region has the services and supports you need to live well socially, physically, and emotionally? (339 Responses)



## Q4 – What's missing? (105 Responses)

**Most respondents indicated programs and services that align with these themes:**

- Health and wellness
- Safety and law enforcement
- Arts and culture
- Commercial
- Transportation
- Education
- Newcomer
- Family and parenting
- Spiritual/Religion
- Social and connection
- Disability support
- Youth support
- Employment
- Accessibility
- Housing
- Animal/Pet
- Inclusivity
- Awareness hub
- Community events
- Emergency shelter
- Political
- Senior support
- Financial support

# APPENDIX C – GATHERING TOOL RESPONSES

Residents were asked: “What fills your cup—or what’s missing to feel connected and well?” Participants shared ideas using text, photos, and video (28 responses). Examples are shown below. All responses are available at [rmwb.ca/safetyandsocialwellbeing](https://rmwb.ca/safetyandsocialwellbeing).



## Community events

Posted by Anonymous | 6 months ago

I feel connected when I can drop into an event and run into someone I know. This is the beauty of Fort McMurray. We need more events - the downtown outdoor farmer's market, music in the ark, etc. - to create opportunities for these things to happen. I think the RMWB needs to pivot to providing more of this and less of the big ticket items.

WHAT'S MISSING

## The Library

Posted by Anonymous | 6 months ago

There's nowhere like the public library. Where else can you access so many resources and programs? And for free?! Wood Buffalo Regional Library is a welcoming space to visit for everyone, and is so valuable for our community.

WHAT FILLS MY CUP

## Wonders of the world granted by Mother Nature

Posted by Anonymous | 6 months ago

Wood Buffalo's peaceful beauty of nature is like watching geese and their young glide across calm waters. It's a natural moment that reminds me of the peace, safety, and sense of belonging that our natural surroundings provide. In Wood Buffalo, the...

WHAT FILLS MY CUP

## Outdoor Activities for Adults

Posted by Anonymous | 6 months ago

Local groups like Parkrun, Hike More Worry Less, and the Borealis Paddling Club help me feel safe and supported trying new things and getting out in nature with others.

WHAT FILLS MY CUP



## Lost Family Businesses

Posted by Anonymous | 4 months ago

It is so sad to see many family, local or independent businesses closing in the past few years. Places like Mitchells, Chocolates and Candlelight, Paddy's, Blue Mountain Bistro, Hair Affair, and Kathy's Fibre Arts are just a few of the places that...

WHAT'S MISSING



## Community Gardens

Posted by Anonymous | 4 months ago

I have been gardening at a community garden for 5 years now. It has been a wonderful experience. I enjoy adding a bit of beauty to the neighbourhood, growing my own veggies, and connecting with the other community gardeners. I live in a townhouse...

WHAT FILLS MY CUP

# APPENDIX E – INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUPS

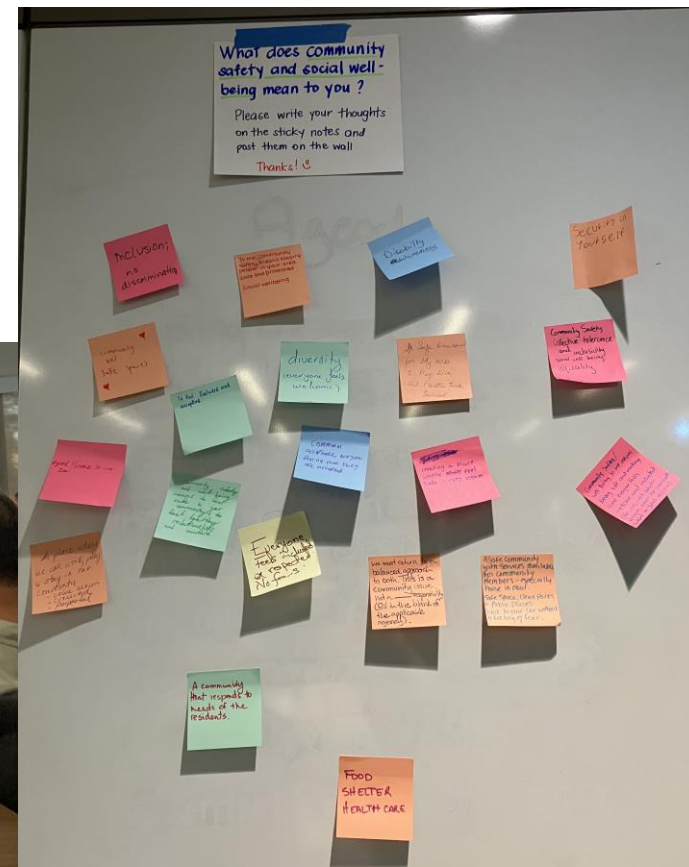
Rural Development Network (RDN) gathered regional perspectives through 38 interview and 47 focus group participants. The following slides summarize key findings.

## Interviews included partners from:

- Community support and outreach (faith-based, Francophone, newcomer supports)
- Housing and homelessness-serving system (including coordinated access)
- Health and wellness services
- Justice and community corrections
- Indigenous partner
- Industry/private sector
- Community-based governance/service organizations
- Part 9 corporations

## Focus groups included partners from:

- Interagency networks
- Education partners
- Council-appointed committees
- Internal municipal partners



# Community Assets/Strengths



**Partnerships,  
strong  
collaboration  
among  
agencies**



**Recreation  
facilities,  
parks,  
playgrounds**



**Safety and  
emergency  
services**



**Diverse range  
of services,  
many non-  
profits**



**College and  
schools**

# Challenges and Barriers



## **Accessing services and programs**

- Transportation barriers impede access to services and prevent outreach; residents need to travel to Edmonton for specialized healthcare
- Lacking awareness of available supports, programs
- Racism, stigma, and prejudice cause people to avoid or withdraw from programs
- Long wait times for programs and services
- High cost of living impedes participation in programs

# Challenges and Barriers



## **Financial Strain**

- High cost of living impedes participation in programs
- The inability to afford basic needs often leads to isolation
- Business closures



## **Housing and homelessness**

- Lacking affordable social/transitional housing
- Lacking prevention programs (e.g., eviction program, shelter diversion, outreach program)

# Challenges and Barriers



## **Mental Health and Addictions**

- Lacking addictions and mental health supports
- Need more counsellors, post-treatment supports outside of self-help
- Mental health issues are often enhanced by drug and alcohol use



## **Funding and Capacity**

- Funding cuts force service providers to "do more with less"
- Reliance on short-term, year-to-year funding creates instability and makes it difficult to sustain programs
- Staff are stretched with capacity, leading to long hours, burnout, and staff turnover

# Challenges and Barriers



## **Rural and Remote Challenges**

- Less connection between rural and urban counterparts, with rural voices participating less in important conversations
- Unreliable internet creates barriers to accessing virtual services
- Staffing shortages and travel costs limit non-profit organizations' ability to reach rural communities
- Rural communities value trust-building and relationships for effective information-sharing



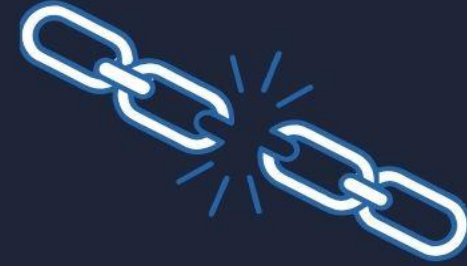
## **Crime, Vandalism, Breaking and Entering** – still a concern



## **Bear and Wild Animals** – wildlife encroaching on human spaces



# Gaps in Services



## **Seniors and Pre-seniors (55–64 years old)**

Intersections Identified in Community Engagements:

*medical/mobility issues, mental health and cognitive challenges, rural residents, newcomers, Indigenous Peoples*

- Affordable and accessible housing
  - Pre-seniors (55–64 years old) not eligible for senior housing
- Addiction and mental health services
- Support with daily living (housekeeping, meals, transportation to medical appointments)
- English language support
- Healthcare and specialized care

# Gaps in Services



## **Youth (age 13–17) and Young Adults (age 18 – 29)**

### Intersections Identified in Community Engagements:

*medical/mobility issues, mental health and cognitive challenges, rural residents, newcomers, individuals with criminal charges, Indigenous Peoples*

- Affordable and accessible housing
- Health-related supports – medical, mental health, and addiction services require travel to Edmonton, removing people from family and community support
- Apprenticeship and mentorship opportunities
- Employment supports and youth employment opportunities
- English language support
- Affordable recreation – activities and sports
- Volunteer opportunities

# Gaps in Services



## **Female**

### Intersections Identified in Community Engagements:

*Indigenous Peoples, single moms, teen moms, newcomers, lived experience with domestic violence*

- Affordable and accessible housing
- Addiction and mental health service
- English language support
- Healthcare and specialized care
- Child care
- Employment supports

# Gaps in Services



## **Male**

### Intersections Identified in Community Engagements:

*Indigenous Peoples, single fathers, newcomers, lived experience with domestic violence*

- Affordable and accessible housing
- Addiction and mental health service
- English language support
- Healthcare and specialized care
- Child care
- Employment supports
- Supports to prevent intimate partner violence



# APPENDIX F – MACOY RURAL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT CONVERSATIONS

Through MACOY’s year-end project, students met with youth in Conklin, Anzac, Janvier, and Fort McKay (approx. 106 participants) to understand rural experiences; feedback summarized into themes.

**Participants:** Conklin (~20) | Anzac (~50) | Janvier (~16) | Fort McKay (~20)

## Highlights by theme:

### Culture, land and identity

- Youth deeply value traditions like hunting, fishing, dancing, and language.
- They want others (especially urban youth) to understand and respect their way of life.

### Community strengths and togetherness

- Communities are described as "like family."
- Many enjoy bonding through events, group outings, and shared activities.



## Highlights by theme continued:

### Desire for more infrastructure

- Strong demand for recreation centres, pools, skate parks, stores, and fast food.
- Transportation and accessibility is an issue as roads and sidewalks are often in poor shape; youth ask for safer, better spaces.

### Safe, Youth-Centered Spaces

- Young people want places where they feel comfortable, away from adults or danger.
- Dream spaces often include fun (arcades, sports), safety, and creative outlets.

### Outdoor Fun & Freedom

- Quadding, dirt biking, fishing, and walking trails are important parts of their lifestyle.
- Rural life offers a sense of independence and adventure.

### Expression & Play

- Activities like drawing, music, crafting, and sports are keyways youth connect.
- They also want unique experiences: slime-making, seafood boils, trips.

### Challenges & Misunderstandings

- Youth report feeling judged or stereotyped by others, especially from Fort McMurray.
- Drug use, lack of rec spaces, and isolation are common issues mentioned.



# APPENDIX G – COMMUNITY POP-UPS

Community Services hosted pop-up engagement opportunities at meetings and community events across the region to gather input on what a safe and socially well community looks like; staff connected with **1,013 residents** who shared feedback through conversations or by voting on a dotmocracy board.

## Pop-up locations:



- Afro-Canadian
- Voice of Albertans with Disabilities-VAD presentation
- Survive, Thrive, Create opening reception
- Conklin Seniors Lunch
- Fort McKay Wood Buffalo Seniors Social
- Fall Trade Show
- Mosque
- Janvier Luncheon
- Seniors Expo
- Newcomers Week
- Conklin lunch
- Family Fun Day
- Anzac Daze
- Seniors Resource Committee meeting
- Newcomer Interagency meeting
- Health fair in Janvier
- Elders and seniors super and bingo
- Rural Sharing Network meeting
- Keyano 60th Anniversary celebration



## Key themes

**Health and medical access in rural communities:** medical transportation; need for expanded local care (e.g., permanent nurse); gaps in dental/mortuary services

**Addiction, recovery and wellness:** strong call for supports; preference for culturally grounded and on-the-land approaches

**Transportation and connectivity:** rural–urban travel barriers; transportation for elders; limited cell service results in desire for more landlines options in Janvier

**Education, youth and recreation in rural communities:** post-secondary supports; Indigenous curriculum; affordable recreation; activities to keep youth engaged and concerns raised about the amount of children in care and family supports

**Community safety and emergency readiness:** justice system concerns; restorative options; evacuation readiness and reliable routes (two ways out).

**Basic needs and local services:** groceries access; water service concerns; need for veterinary services; interest in a year-round urban market

**Trust and accountability:** hiring local; consistent reporting back with timelines

### Place-based notes

While engagement location was tracked, participants' home communities were not consistently captured. Unless specified, themes are therefore presented as region-wide.



# APPENDIX D – DOTMOCRACY RESPONSES

**Q – What types of services or programs do you or your household see as missing in Fort McMurray? (1450 Responses)**

This is a compilation of results from all dotmocracy boards, including those used at pop-ups and those left with community partners.

