

What We Heard Report

EMS Experience

Dec 22, 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

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) asked residents to share their experiences with ambulance services through an online engagement. Community members were invited to share their perspectives on trust, response speed, communication, and cultural safety.

In total, 239 responses were received: 127 surveys and 112 quick polls. The feedback gathered through this engagement provides valuable insight into resident experiences and will help guide future improvements.



KEY FINDINGS/THEMES

These key themes emerged from online engagement activities, including a survey and quick poll.



Overall experience and confidence in EMS

- In the quick poll, a combined **84.82%** of respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their current EMS care.
- Over **60%** rated their trust at **100** on the slider scale and an overall **average trust score of 89.76**
- **38%** of long-answer respondents shared general satisfaction describing appreciation for paramedic care and professionalism.



Response time perceptions

- Residents reported that ambulance response times generally meet community needs, with an **average score of 80.50** on the response-time slider.
- A strong majority of quick poll respondents feel confident that EMS will respond quickly when needed, with **77%** selecting Yes and only **13%** indicating they do not feel confident.



KEY FINDINGS/THEMES



Respectful and clear patient care

- **82.68%** of survey respondents said they **always** feel their background, culture, or identity is respected when receiving EMS care.
- Communication scored strongly, with an **average rating of 88%** for how well staff explain what is happening.
- In the quick poll, **95%** said they feel respected and treated with care when using EMS

Opportunities for enhanced support

Only **19 of 127 participants (15%)** received the follow-up question on EMS improvements, and **46** residents shared suggestions in the open-ended survey question. These insights are summarized below.

- **Communication** was the most common theme, with **47%** wanting clearer explanations and **36.8%** requesting simpler or translated language.
- **26.3%** wanted more awareness of cultural or religious practices, with some long-answer comments also calling for cultural sensitivity.
- **31.6%** said involving family members in communication, when appropriate, would improve their experience.
- **33 long-answer respondents** suggested improvements such as cost and billing transparency, patient care concerns, staff training needs, ambulance availability, partner-organization interactions, and the need for more education on EMS and dispatch use.



ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS

Who did we talk to?

- Urban and rural RMWB residents

How did they participate?

- Online survey and quick poll



ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS

aware

Ways people saw communications and advertisements.

	Radio listeners of local Rogers and Harvard Broadcasting stations
	Digital advertisement
	Rural newsletter and posters at rural municipal offices
10	Email invitations to community groups
23,730	Instagram and Facebook post views
59,232	Social media impressions
1,279	Unique visitors to the project page
2,665	Recipients of Participate Wood Buffalo newsletter
84,923	Google and Meta ad impressions



ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS

engaged 

Times people took action to provide feedback

127 | Survey responses

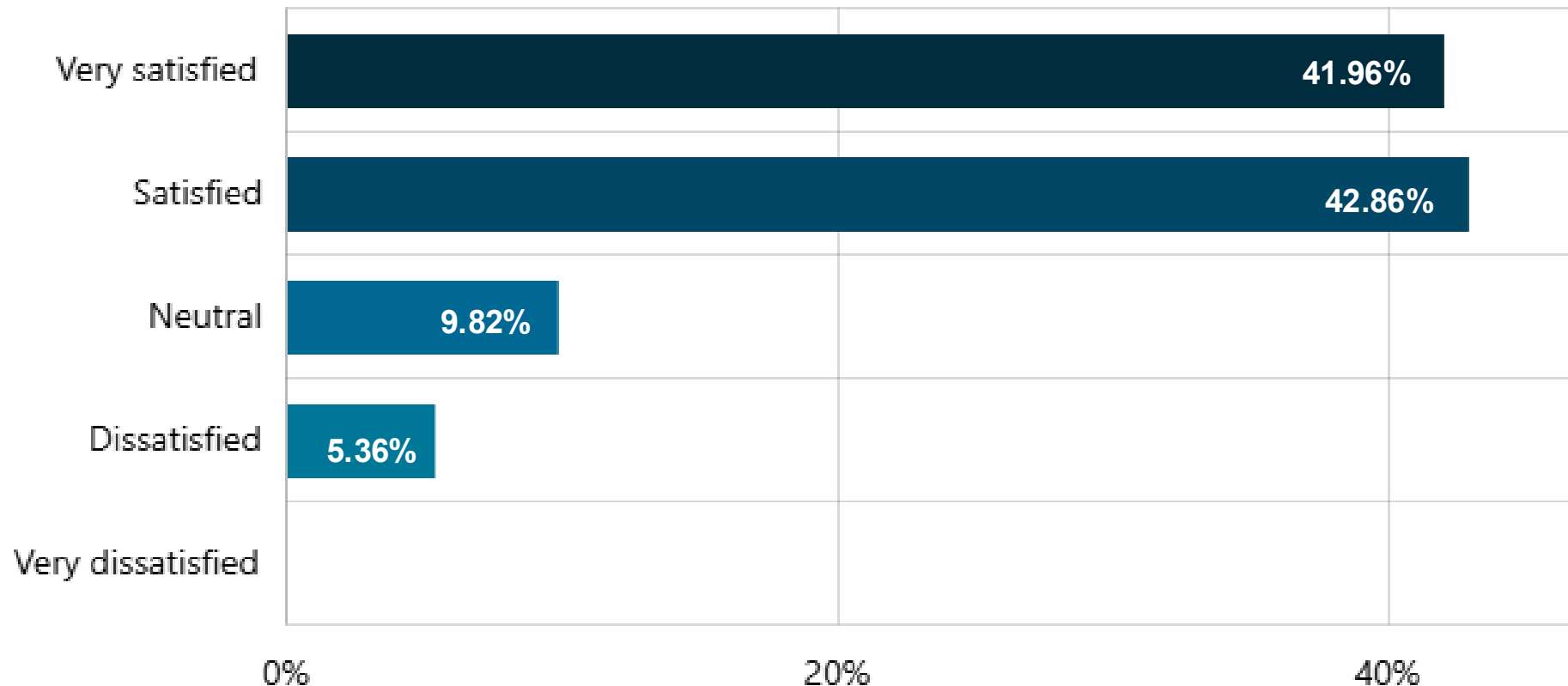
112 | Online quick poll responses



Online quick poll

Overall, how satisfied are you with EMS* services in the region?
(Total of 112 responses)

*Survey and the rest of the quick poll results are in the appendix



NEXT STEPS

Regional Emergency Services will review the feedback and consider how it can be incorporated into training, education and operations.

A summary of the engagement has also been shared with Council.



Thank You

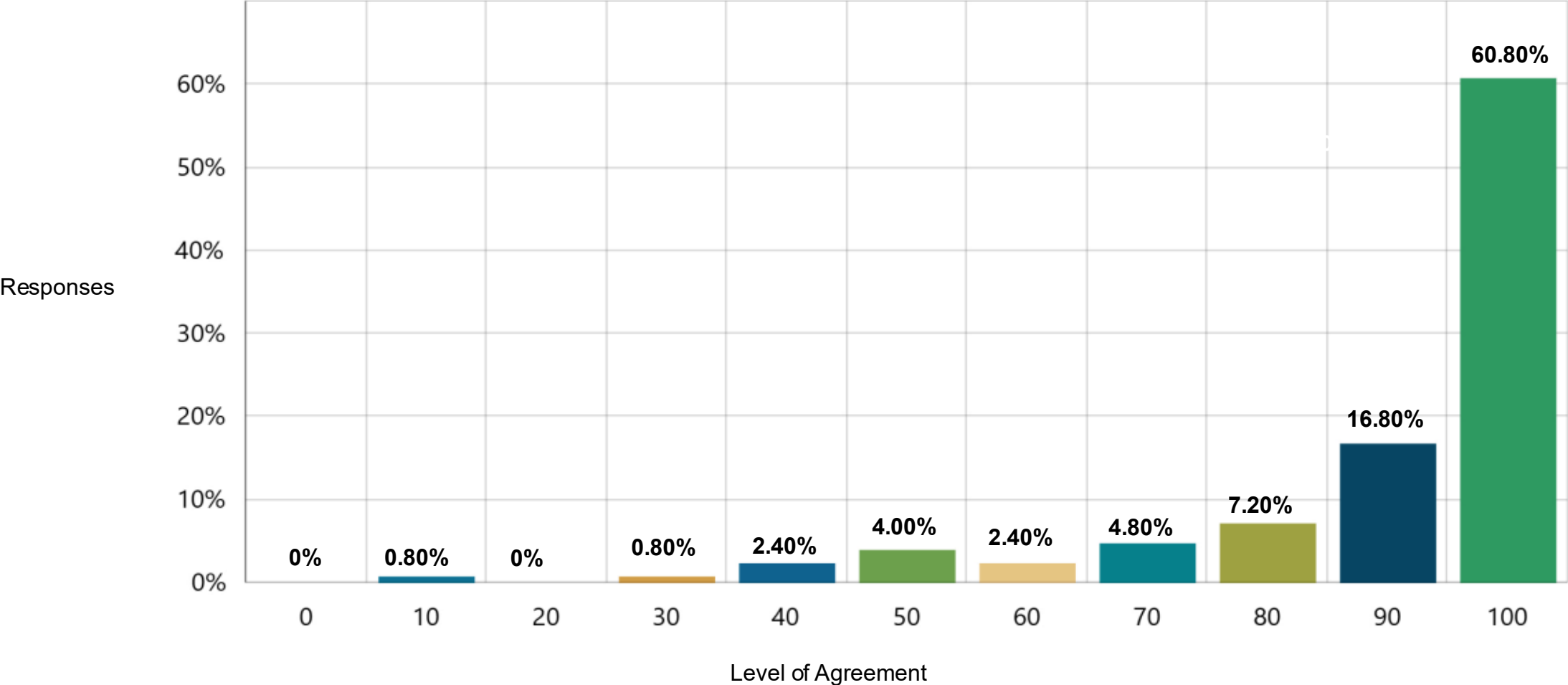
For more information on this report contact rmwb.ca/pulse.



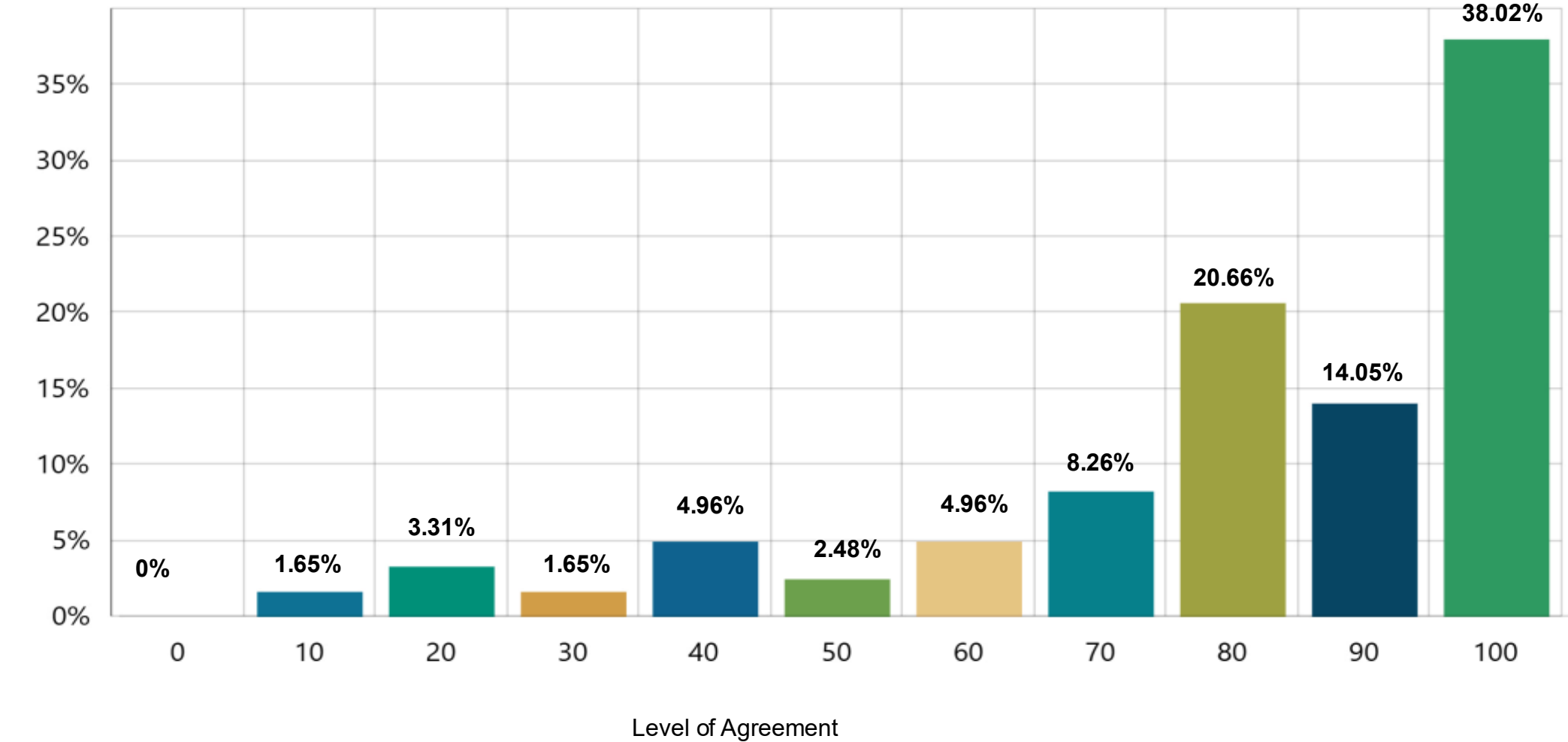
APPENDIX A – SURVEY RESPONSES

(127 total survey responses)

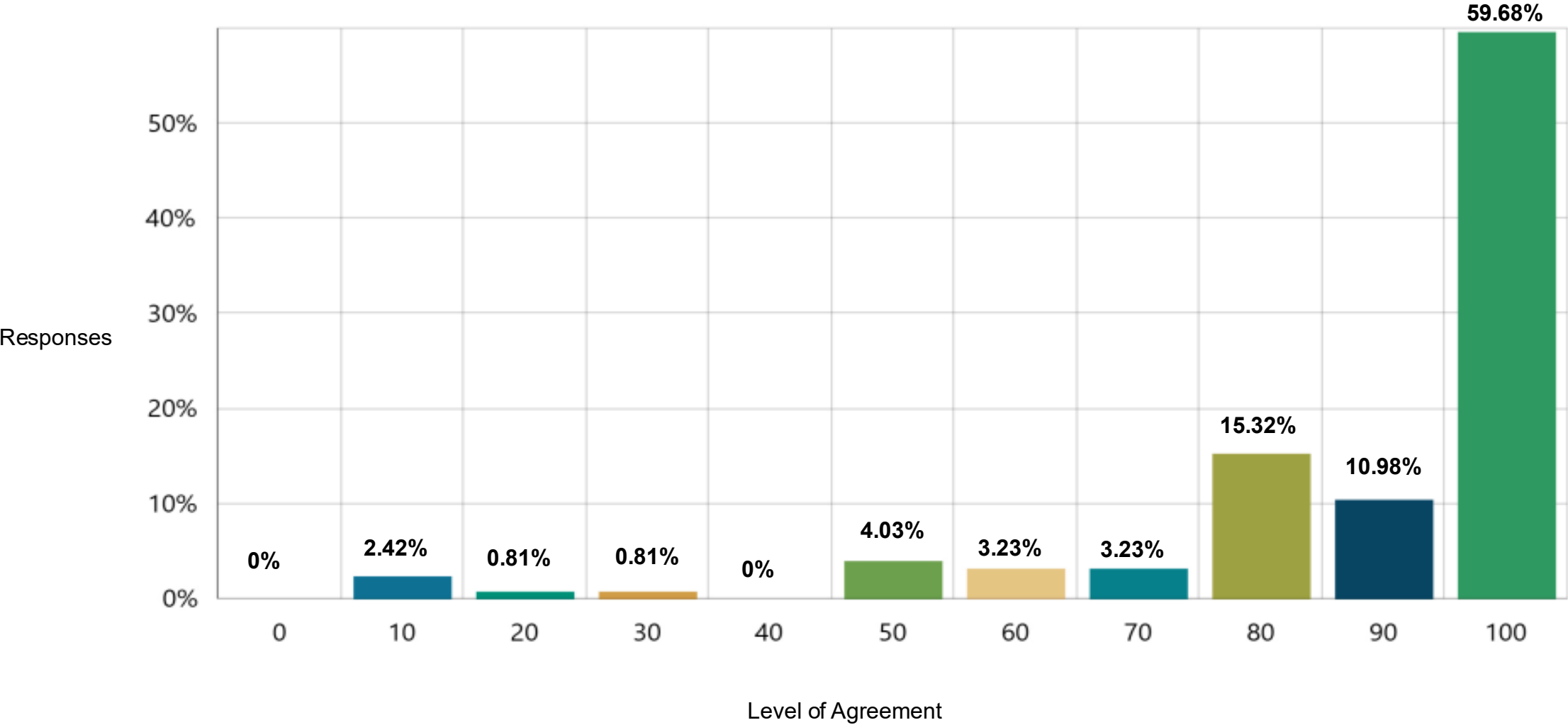
Q1 – I trust EMS to provide the right care when I need it



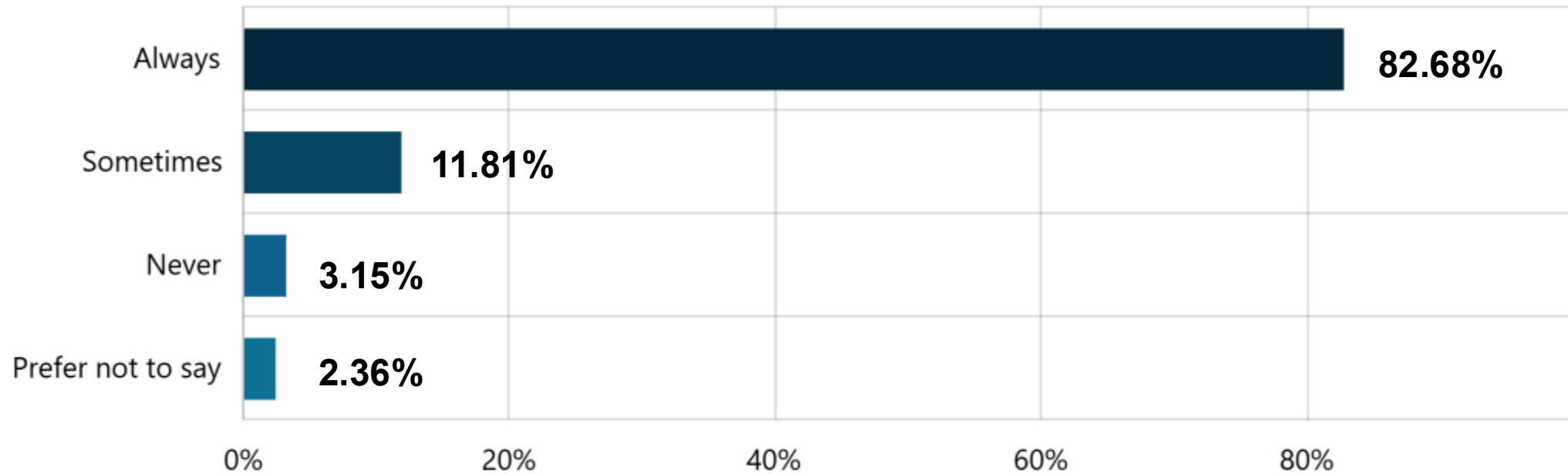
Q2 – Ambulance response times meet the needs of my community.
(121 respondents)



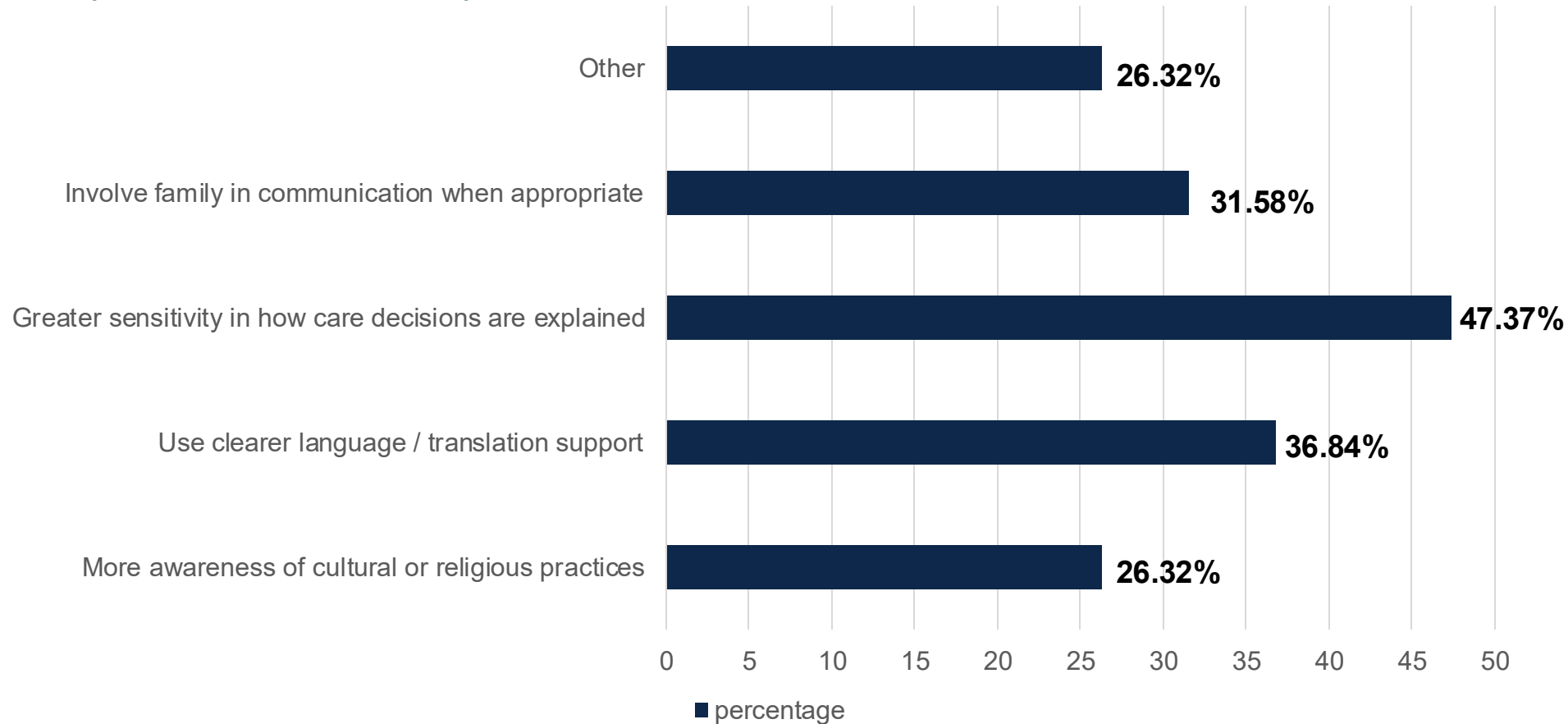
Q3 – EMS staff explain what is happening in a way I can understand.
(124 respondents)



Q4 – I feel my background, culture or identity is respected when I receive EMS care. (127 respondents)



Q5 – What could EMS do to make care feel more respectful and supportive for you, your family, or your community? (19 respondents)



Other - samples

Vast majority of the time they are wonderful.

Refrain from judgement of illnesses they don't understand.

Listen to the patient. Don't judge based on size.

Don't assume everyone is a drug user.



Q6 – What is one thing EMS could do to improve your experience? (74 respondents)

Key themes from long answer responses:

Positive feedback and general satisfaction with paramedic performance (28 Responses)

This theme highlights residents' positive stories and experiences of being treated with care, respect and professionalism, as well as general expressions of satisfaction with paramedic performance.

Examples: "My personal experiences (several) with the EMS team in wood buffalo has always been amazing. Much better than in bigger cities. The team really cares!"

"I have not experienced anything besides dignity, respect and professionalism. I cannot offer a suggestion for improvement."

"Nothing they do their very best."



Q6 – What is one thing EMS could do to improve your experience? (continued)

Patient care concerns (12 Responses)

This theme reflects concerns about patient care, including issues with transport comfort, feeling dismissed or poorly treated, unprofessional or condescending interactions, not receiving needed attention, limited compassion, communication barriers, and situations where pain or symptoms did not feel taken seriously.

Examples: "To learn how to listen to their patients and believe their complaints."

"Better training on bedside manner and consequences for this kind of behaviour."

"Communicate in simplest language what's happening."



Q6 – What is one thing EMS could do to improve your experience? (continued)

Availability and response times (9 Responses)

This theme reflects residents' desire to increase ambulance availability, strengthen rural service support, improve response times, and add more ambulances to meet community needs.

Examples: "There have been long wait times for an ambulance."

"Have ambulance in Janvier."

"Have another ambulance to improve response times."



Q6 – What is one thing EMS could do to improve your experience? (continued)

Other themes from comments:

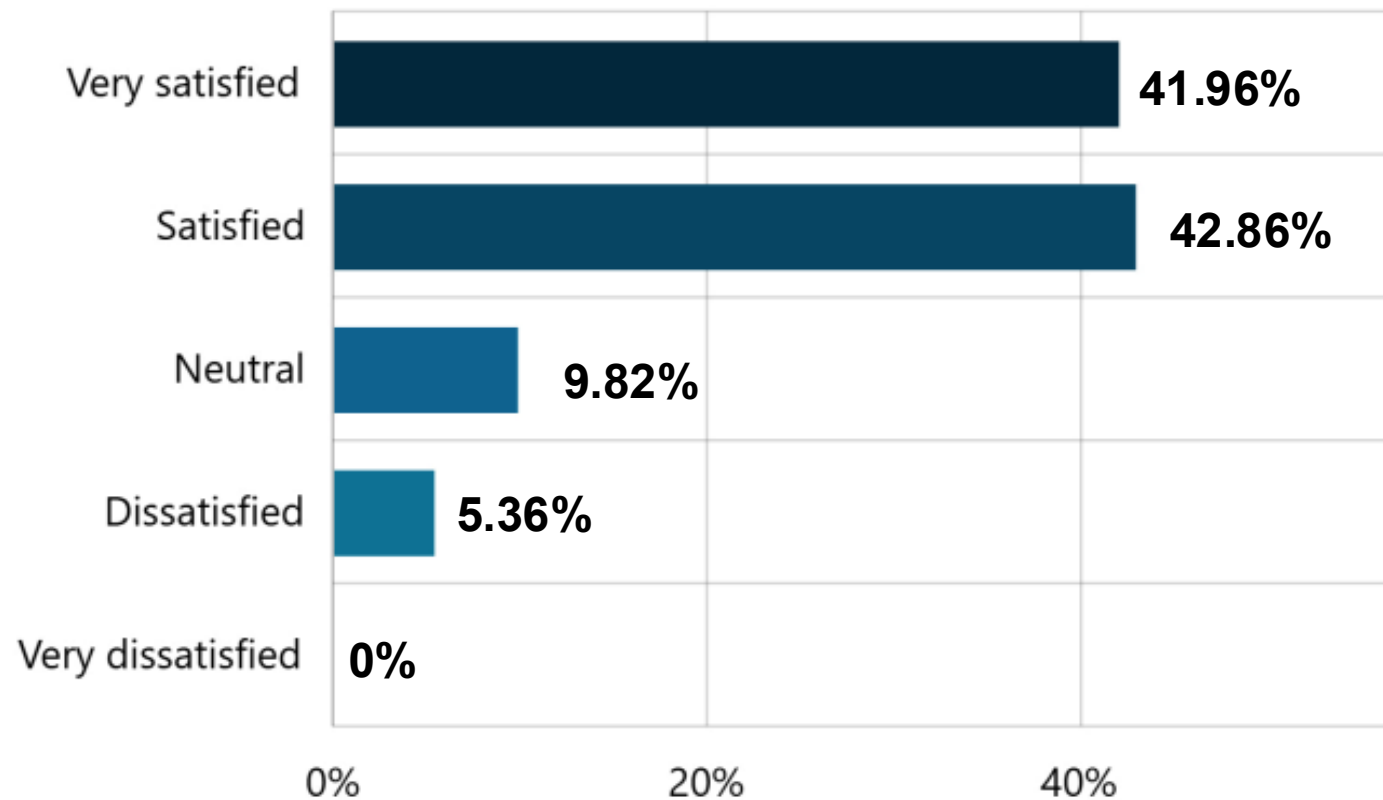
- Feedback for 911 dispatch
- Cost and billing transparency
- Education on EMS and dispatch use
- Specific staff training request
- Feedback related to Alberta Health processes
- Concerns about relationships with Alberta Health partner organizations



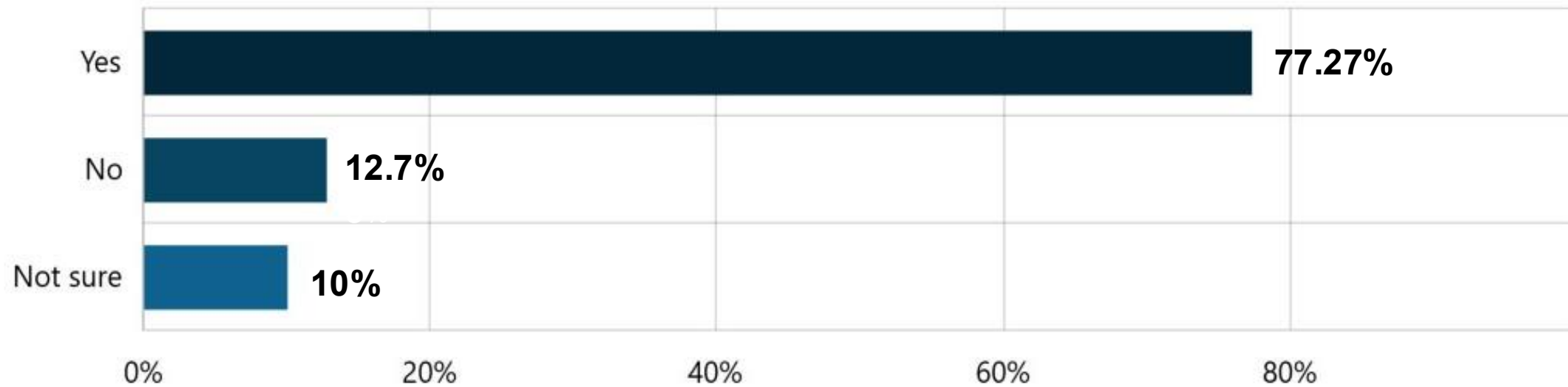
APPENDIX B – QUICK POLL RESPONSES

(112 Responses)

Q1 – Overall, how satisfied are you with EMS* services in the region?



Q2 – Do you feel confident that EMS* will respond quickly when you need them?



Q3 – Do you feel respected and treated with care when using EMS*?

