



# Immigrant Health Outcome Survey 2021 Summary of Findings

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  - Self-report of health
  - Experience accessing and receiving health care services
  - Barriers accessing and receiving health care services
  - Possible improvements to healthcare experience
  - COVID-19 related data
- Recommendations from the Data



# Introduction

- **Purpose:** collect information from foreign-born individuals on their health care status and experiences in Simcoe County
  - Permanent Residents;
  - Canadian Citizens;
  - Foreign students; and,
  - Recent graduates on a work visa.
- **Objectives:**
  1. Accessing and receiving health care
  2. Barriers faced
  3. Self-perception of their physical and mental wellbeing
  4. Recommendations to improve their healthcare experience
  5. A demographic profile of the survey respondents
  6. How health care experiences may have been affected by COVID-19

# Methodology

- **Questionnaire Development**

- Steering committee
  - Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
  - Barrie Community Health Centre
  - Simcoe Muskoka YMCA
  - Lakehead University
  - Georgian College
  - Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County
- Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS)
  - Responses from similar questions from the 2015-2016 survey were compared to a few questions from the Immigrant Health Outcome Survey in order to explore any differences in responses between immigrants and non-immigrants



# Methodology

- **Ethics Approvals**

- County of Simcoe's Research Ethics Subcommittee
- Lakehead University Research Ethics Board
- Georgian College Research Ethics Boards

- **Checkbox**

- Survey was translated into 6 languages in addition to the official languages: English and French
  - Arabic
  - Farsi
  - Portuguese
  - Russian
  - Simplified Chinese
  - Spanish
- Created in Checkbox
- Re-submitted to translators for verification



# Methodology

- **Questionnaire Link Distribution**

- Postcards
  - Staff news post (Georgian College)
  - Student portal post (Georgian College)
  - Student newsletters (Lakehead University)
  - Social media post
  - Email distribution
- Open from March 8<sup>th</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021



# Methodology

## **Organizations that received the links:**

- The Simcoe County Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Council
- The Simcoe County (LIP) Settlement Sub-council
- The Immigrant Health Outcome survey steering committee
- Ethnic Mosaic Alliance
- The Child Youth and Family Services Coalition (CYFS) of Simcoe County
- The South Simcoe Community Action Network (SSCAN)
- The Non-Profit Network of South Georgian Bay
- The Simcoe County Library Co-operative
- COMPASS South Western Simcoe County
- Bradford COMPASS
- Georgian College
- Lakehead University
- Ethnocultural and Faith Based Organizations



# Methodology

- **Response**

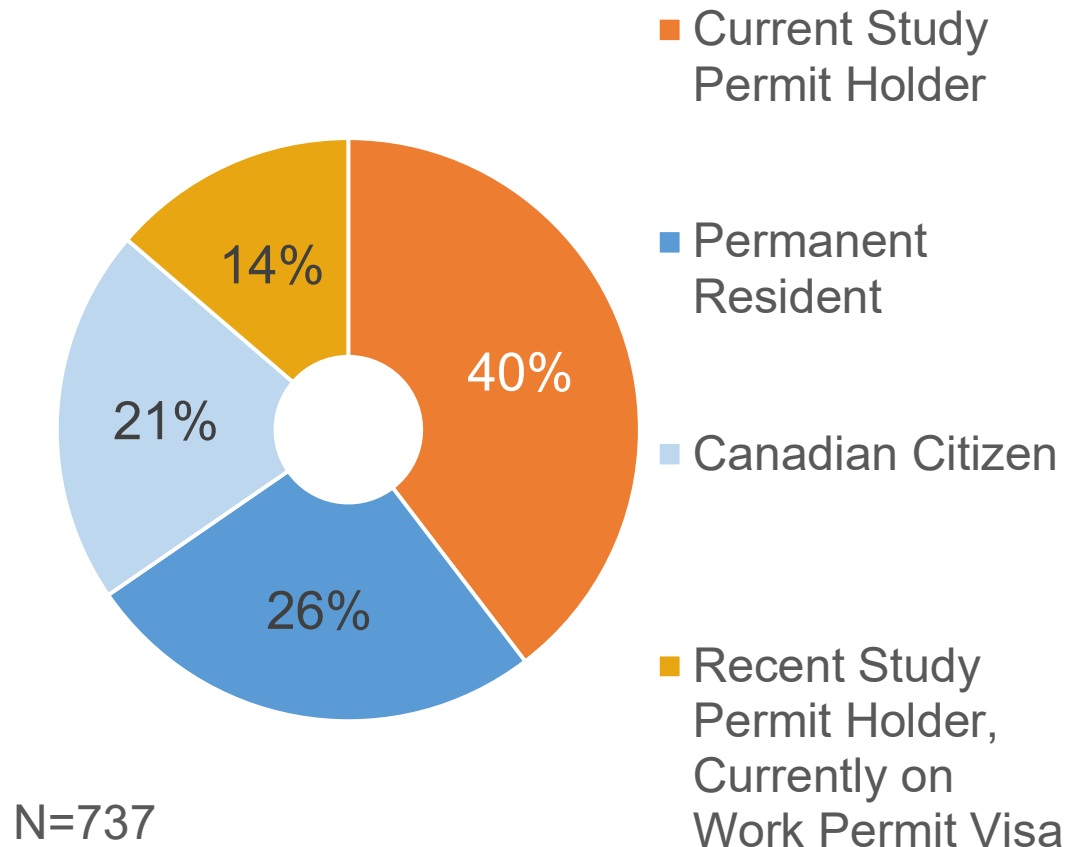
- A total of 1,167 completed responses
- 737 complete responses were used for analysis
  
- Languages that the survey were completed in:
  - English (83%)
  - Simplified Chinese (12%)
  - Spanish (2%)
  - 1% or less completed the survey in:
    - Arabic;
    - Farsi;
    - French;
    - Portuguese; and,
    - Russian.





# Current Status

## Current Status in Canada



## Analyzed findings by two groups:

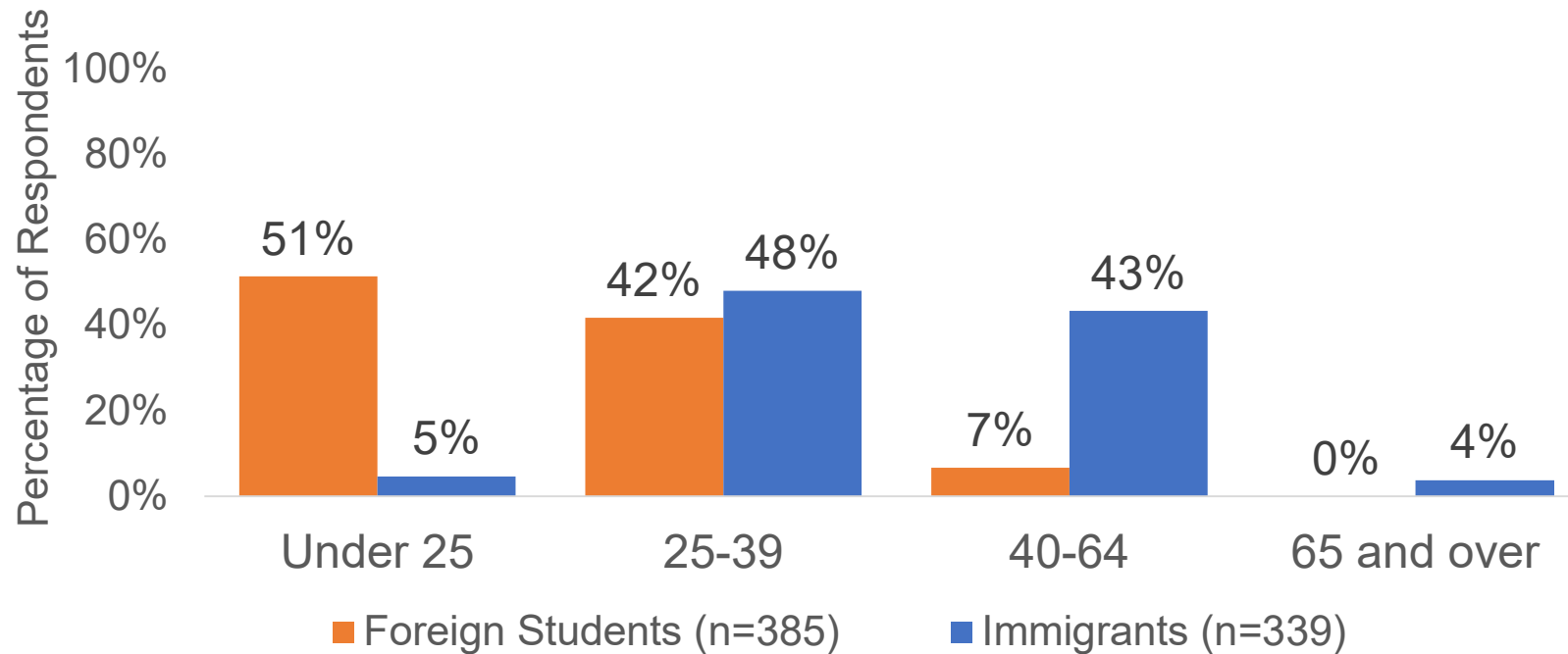
- Foreign students (n=393):
  - Current study permit holders
  - Recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visa
- Immigrants (n=344):
  - Canadian Citizens
  - Permanent Residents
- A larger percent of survey respondents were foreign students (54%)

# Survey Findings: Demographics



# Age

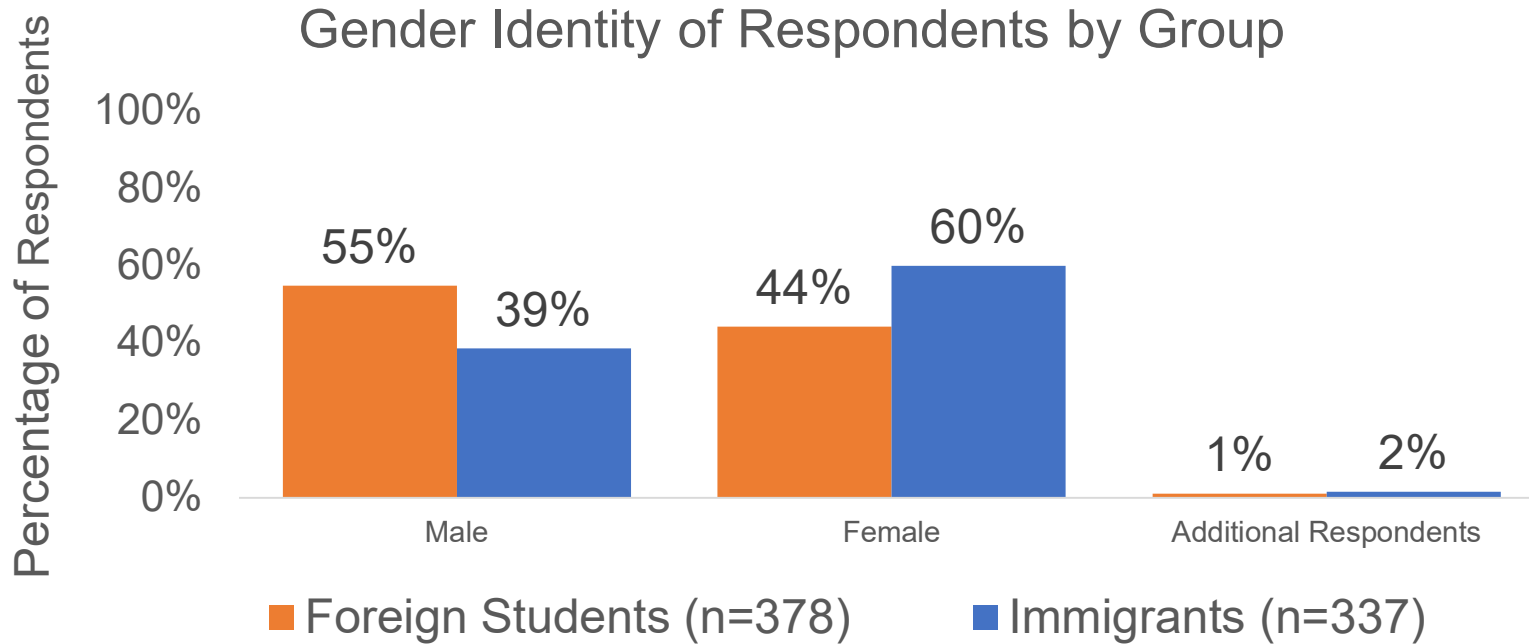
## Age of Respondents by Group



- Majority of immigrant respondents (91%) were between 25 and 64 years of age (core working)
- Majority of foreign student respondents were under 25 (51%)

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

# Gender



- Majority of foreign student respondents were male (55%)
- Majority of immigrant respondents were female (60%).

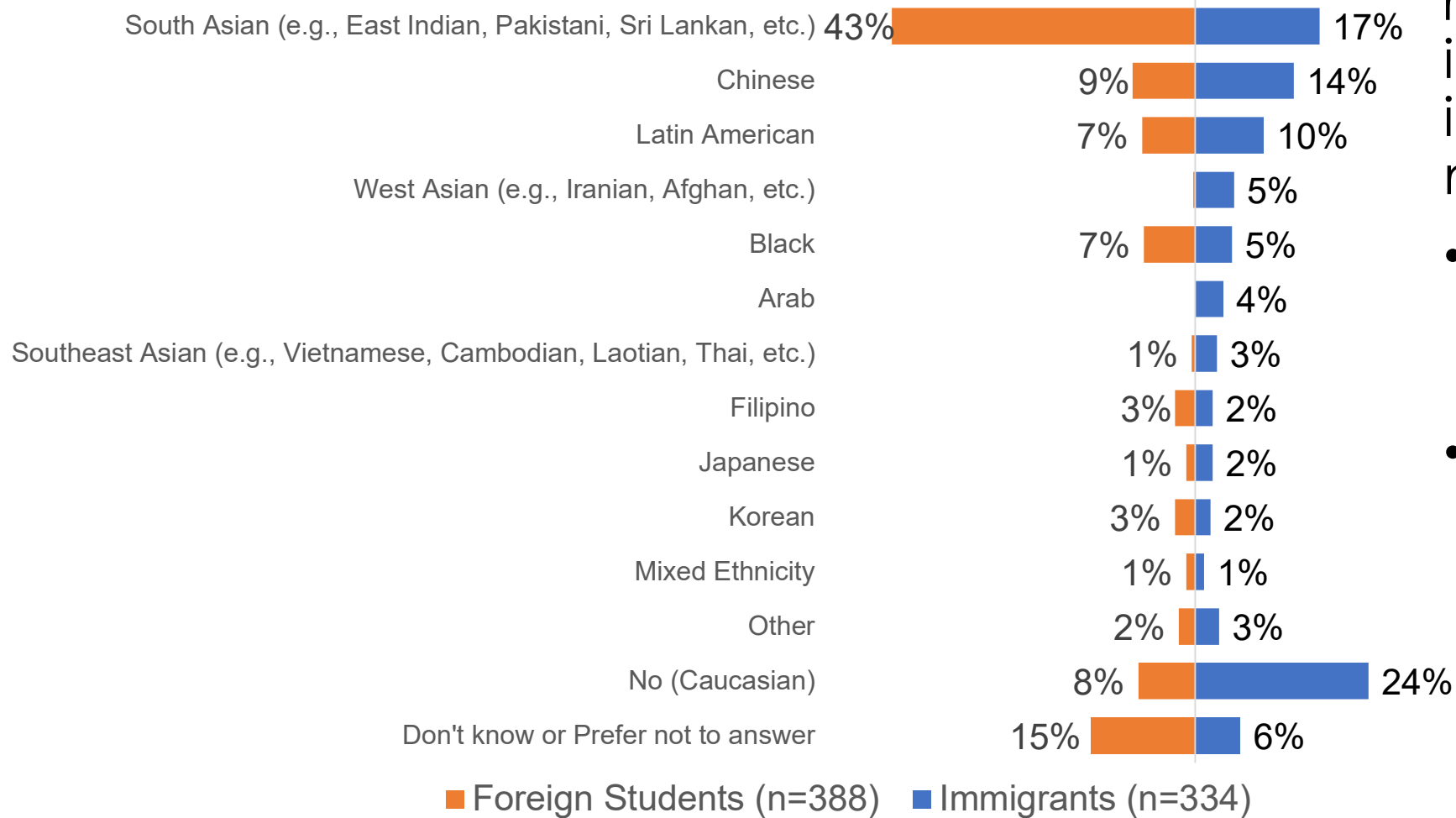
Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas.

Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

Additional respondents include those who selected transgender (male to female), transgender (female to male), don't know or prefer not to answer. Responses were grouped together to maintain confidentiality.

# Visible Minority

## Visible Minority by Group



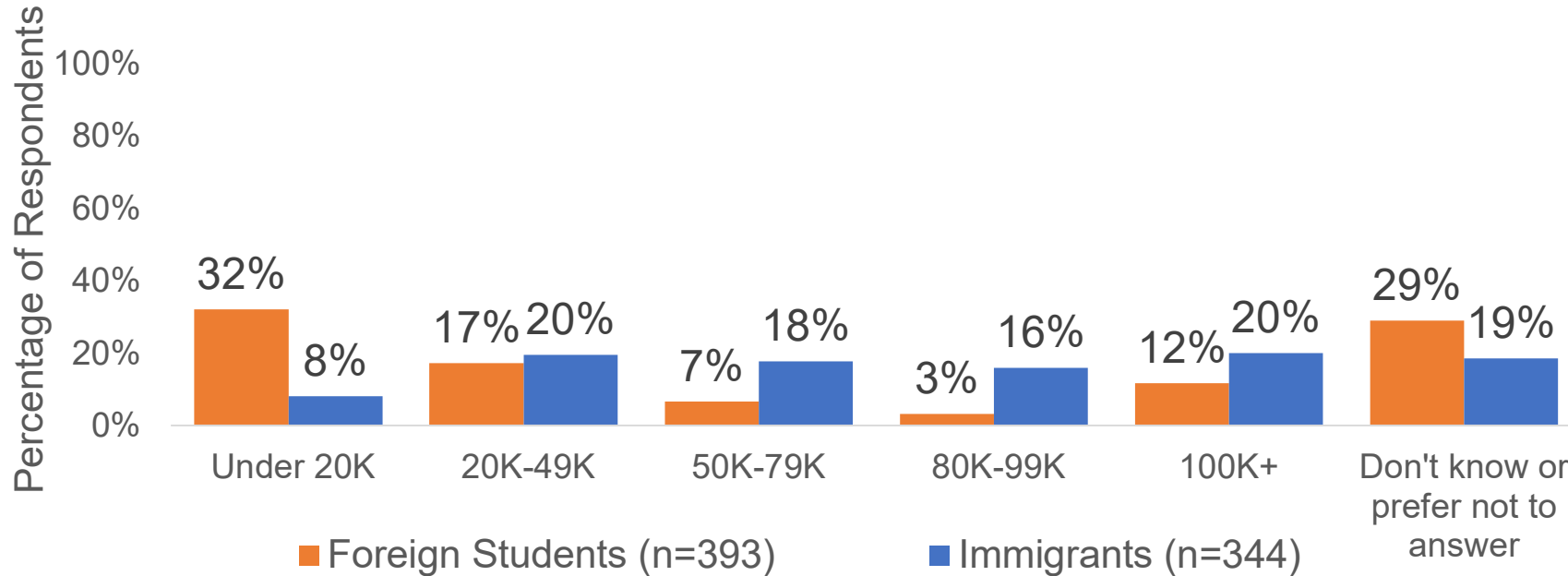
Three quarters (75%) of foreign student respondents and 66% of immigrant respondents identified as a visible minority:

- More foreign student respondents were South Asian (43%)
- The top visible minority groups in immigrant respondents were South Asian (17%), Chinese (14%), and Latin American (10%)

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

# Income

Total Household Income in 2019 Before Taxes From all Sources by Group



- A greater percentage of foreign student respondents reported an income under \$20,000 compared to immigrant respondents (32% vs 8%)

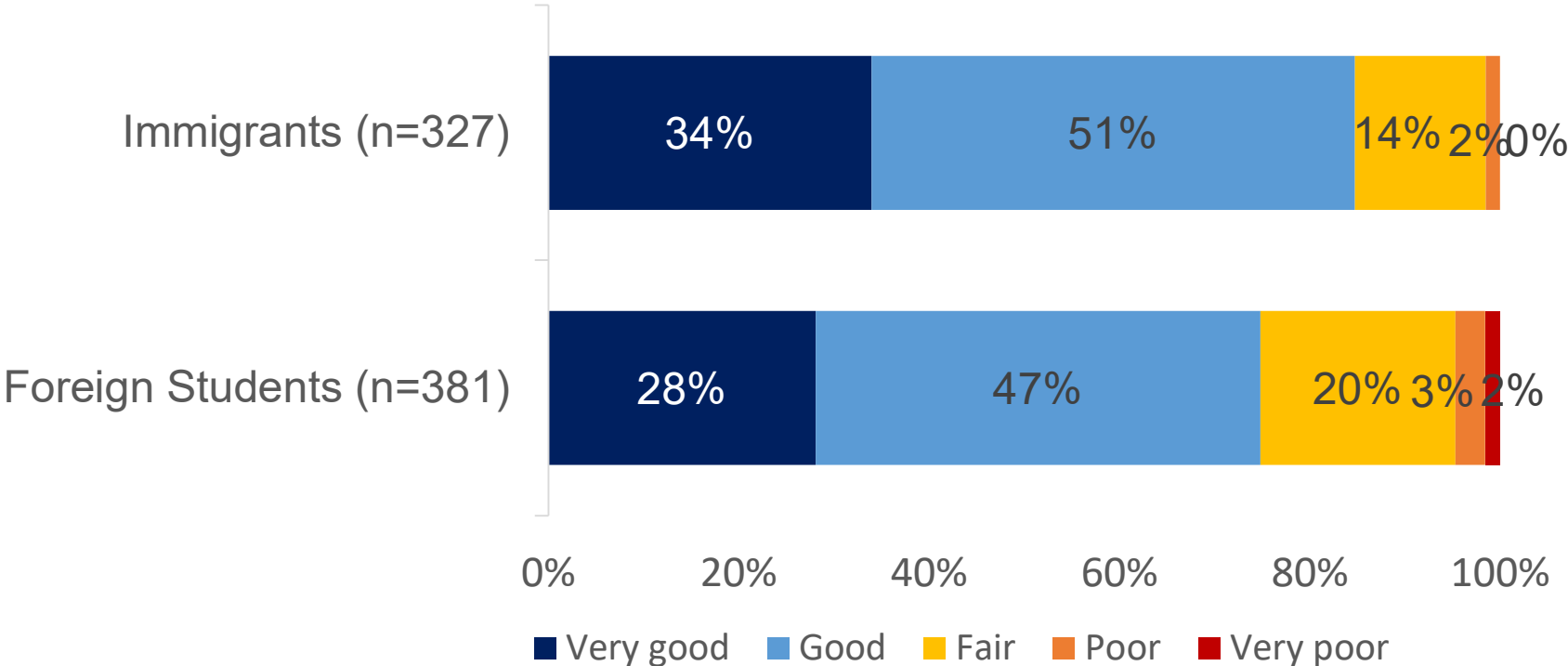
Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

# Survey Findings: Self-perception of Physical and Mental Wellbeing since Arriving in Canada



# Overall Health

Overall Health Status by Group



- A larger percentage of immigrant respondents (85%) felt their overall health was ‘very good’ or ‘good’ compared to foreign student respondents (75%)

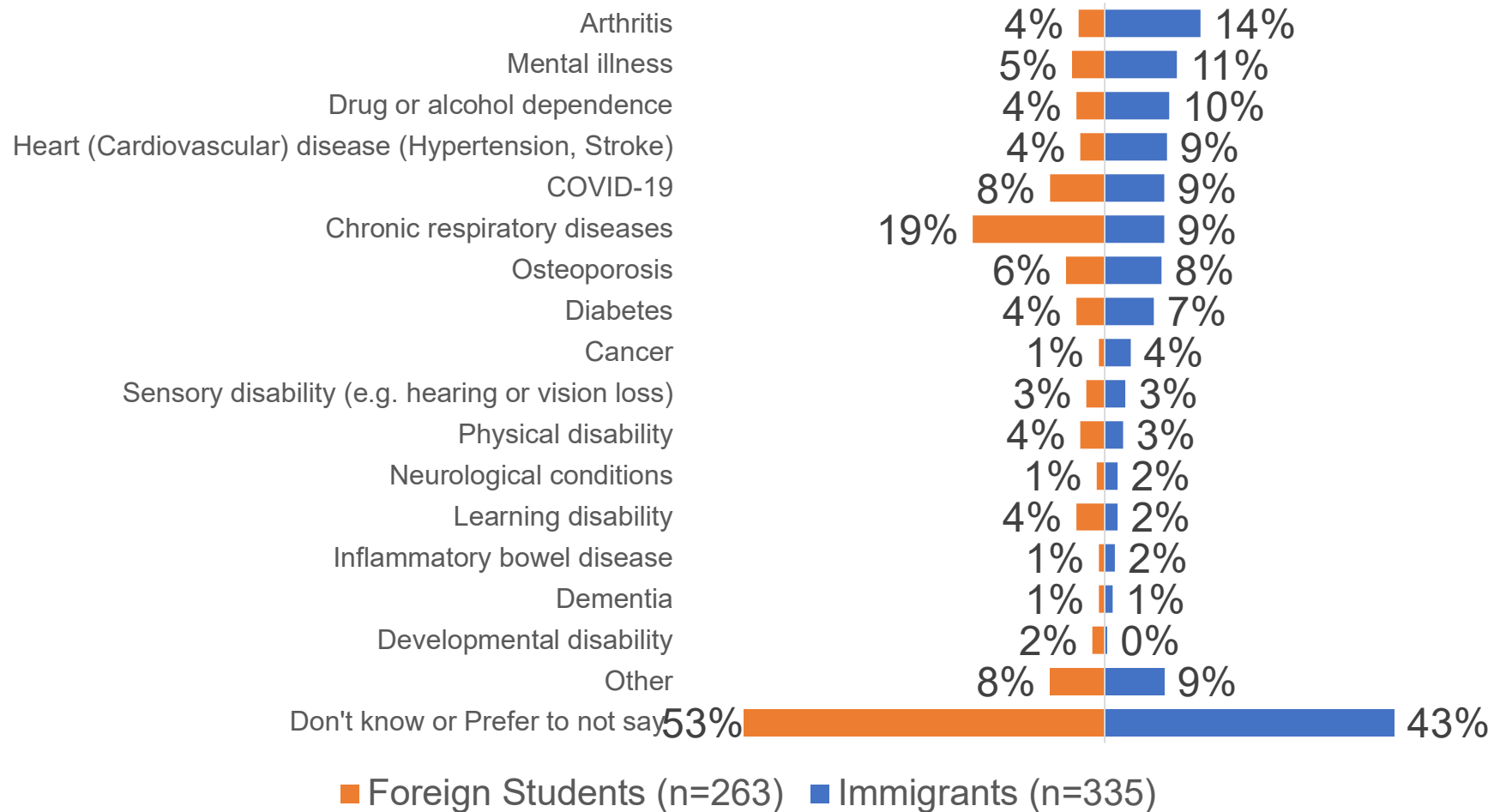
Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.





# Illness and Diseases

Illnesses and/or Diseases by Group



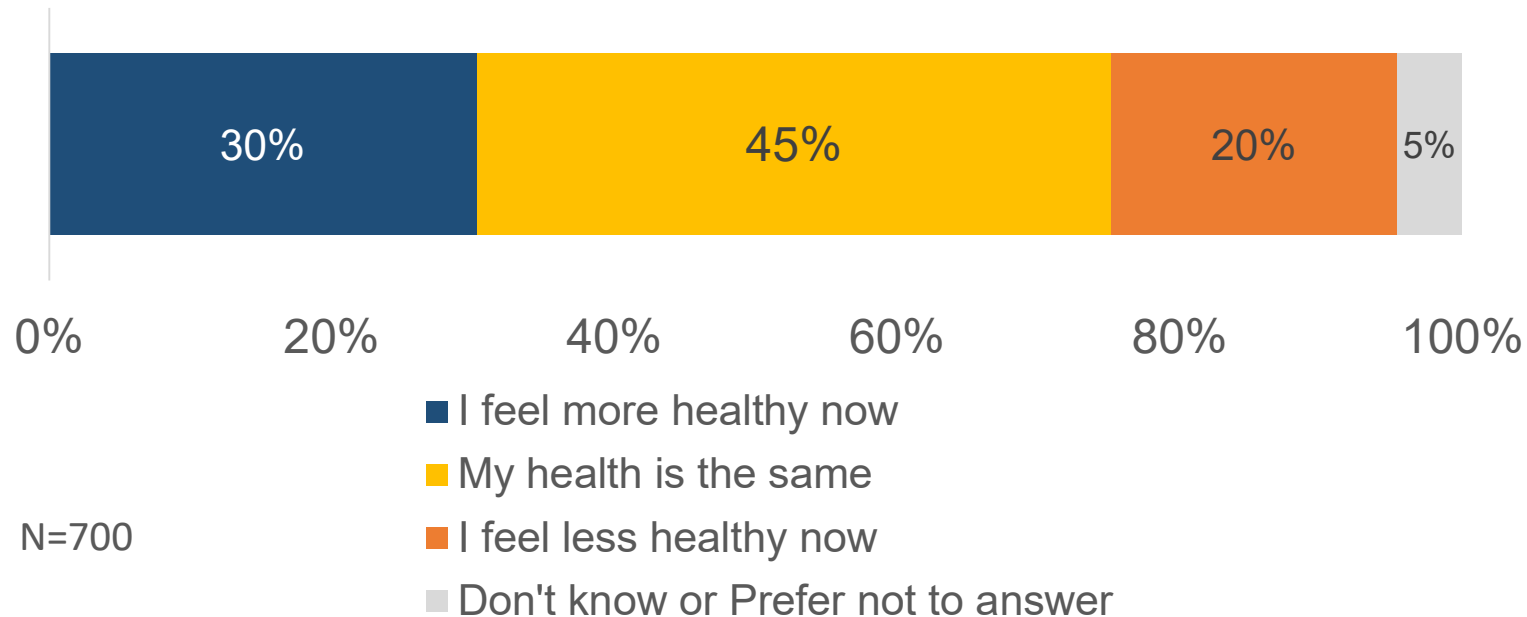
- Most respondents didn't know or preferred not to say (53% and 43%)
- The top reported illness by immigrant respondents was arthritis (14%) and chronic respiratory diseases (19%) by foreign student respondents

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

This was a multiple choice question, and responses will not add up to 100%.

# Effect of the Canadian Settlement Process

Effect of Canadian Settlement Process on Overall Health



- 45% of immigrant and foreign student respondents felt their health was the same while 30% felt more healthy (immigrant and foreign student respondents were displayed together because little difference was seen)

# Crosstab Report: Length of Time in Canada Vs Health

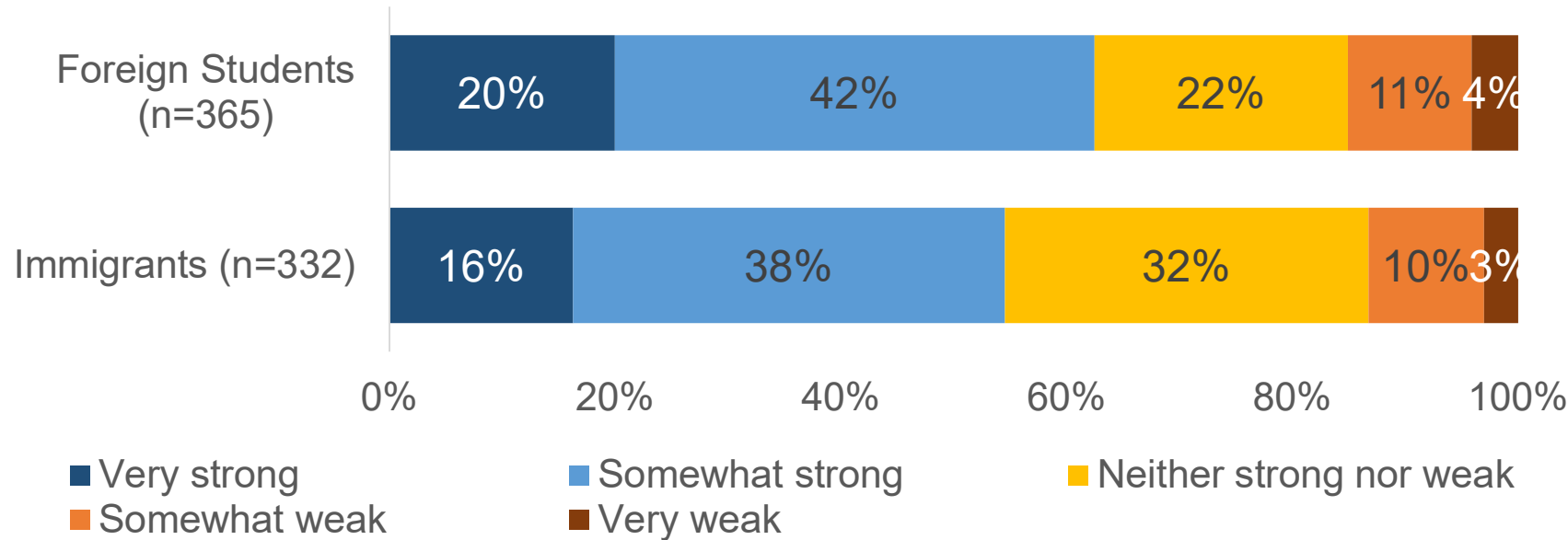
Survey Highlights by Length of Time in Canada for Immigrant Respondents				
	Last 5 years (n=111)	6-10 years (n=69)	11+ years (n=154)	Total (n=334)
<b>Overall health - Good</b>	87%	89%	81%	85%
<b>Impact of settlement into Canada on overall health - Less healthy now</b>	19%	23%	17%	19%

- 87% of immigrant respondents who moved to Canada within the last 5 years rated their overall health as good, compared to 89% who moved to Canada 6-10 years ago and 81% who moved to Canada 11+ years ago
- 19% of immigrant respondents who moved to Canada within the last 5 years reported feeling “less healthy now” when asked how the process of settling into Canada affected their overall health, compared to 23% who moved to Canada 6-10 years ago and 17% who moved to Canada 11+ years ago
- The differences seen are not statistically significant.



# Sense of Community Belonging

Sense of Community Belonging by Group

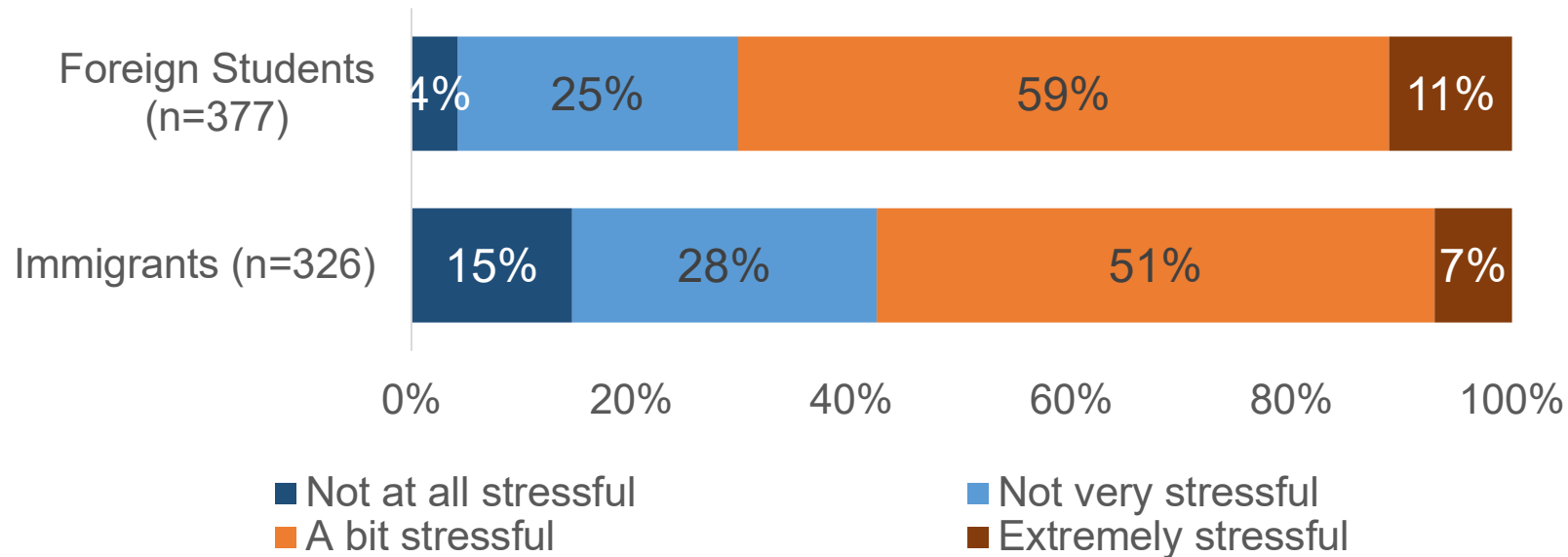


- More foreign student respondents (62%), compared to immigrants (54%) respondents reported a 'very strong' or 'somewhat strong' sense of community belonging
- 73% (64.7% to 81.9%) of Simcoe County non-immigrants, felt a very strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging to their local community on the 2015/2016 CCHS

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

# Stress in Daily Life

Stress in Daily Life by Group

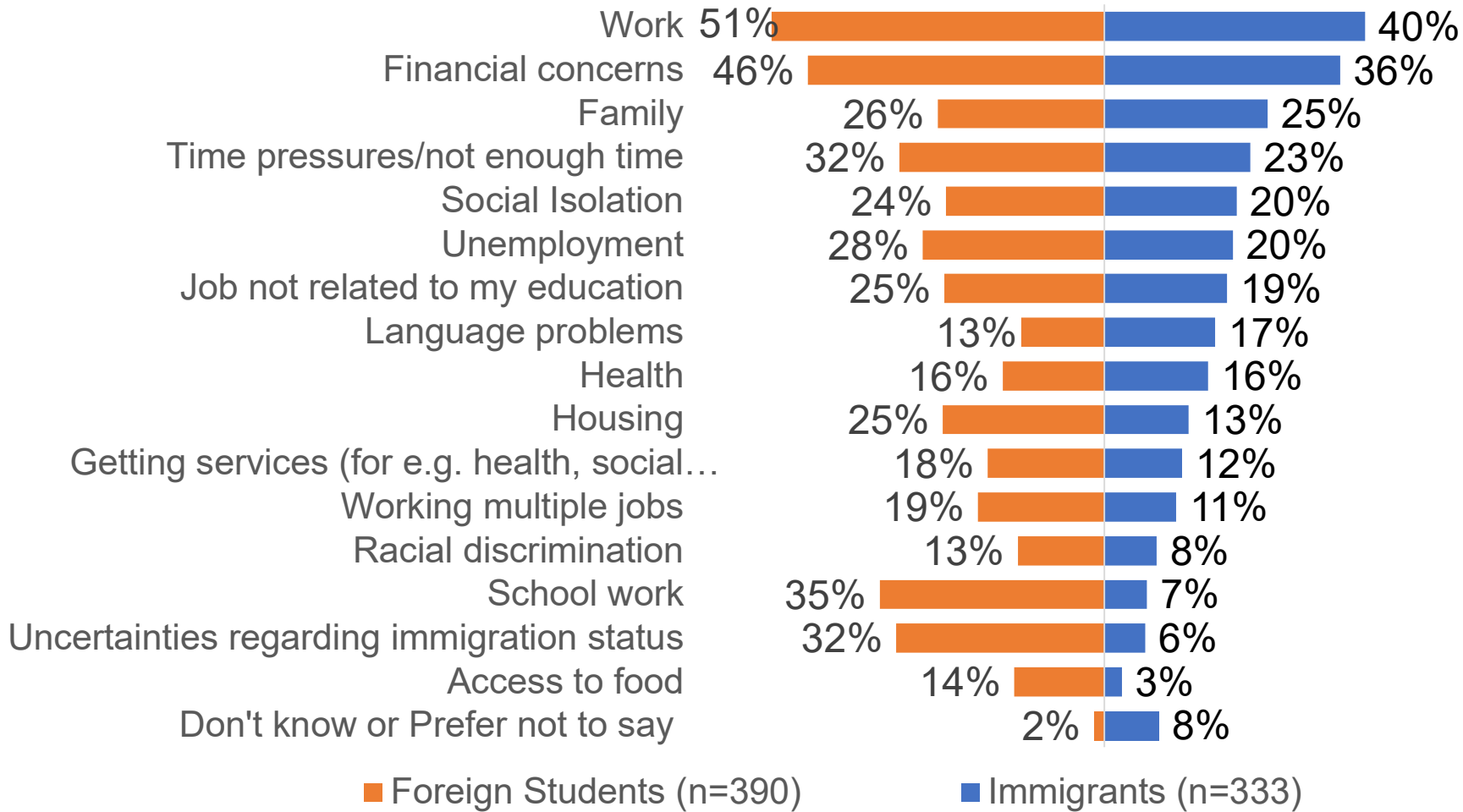


Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

- More foreign student respondents reported their daily life as a bit stressful or extremely stressful compared to immigrant respondents (70% vs 58%)
- 70% (61% to 78%) non-immigrants living in Simcoe County rated their life stress as quite a bit, extremely stressful or a bit stressful on the 2015/2016 CCHS

# Daily Stress Factors

## Daily Stress Factors by Group



- Top factors of stress for foreign student respondents were work (51%), financial concerns (46%), and school work (35%)
- Top factors of stress for immigrant respondents were work (40%), financial concerns (36%), and family (25%)

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

This was a multiple choice question, and responses will not add up to 100%.

# Crosstab Report: Gender Vs Life Stress

## Survey Highlights by Gender for Immigrant Respondents

	Female (n=202)	Male (n=130)	Total (n=332)
*Life Stress - Stressed	64%	48%	58%

- Female immigrant respondents were more likely than male immigrant respondents to rate their life stress as stressful (extremely stressful or a bit stressful) (64% vs 48%)

\* This difference is statistically significant

# Crosstab Report: Area of Residence Vs Life Stress

Survey Highlights by Where Immigrant Respondents Lived						
	Barrie (n=105)	North Simcoe (n=44)	Orillia and Area (n=35)	South Georgian Bay (n=40)	South Simcoe (n=120)	Total (n=344)
*Life stress - Stressed	68%	54%	41%	47%	59%	58%

- The largest percentage of immigrant respondents who reported most of their days were stressful (extremely stressful or a bit stressful), lived in Barrie (68%), followed by South Simcoe (59%), North Simcoe (54%), South Georgian Bay (47%) and Orillia and Area (41%).

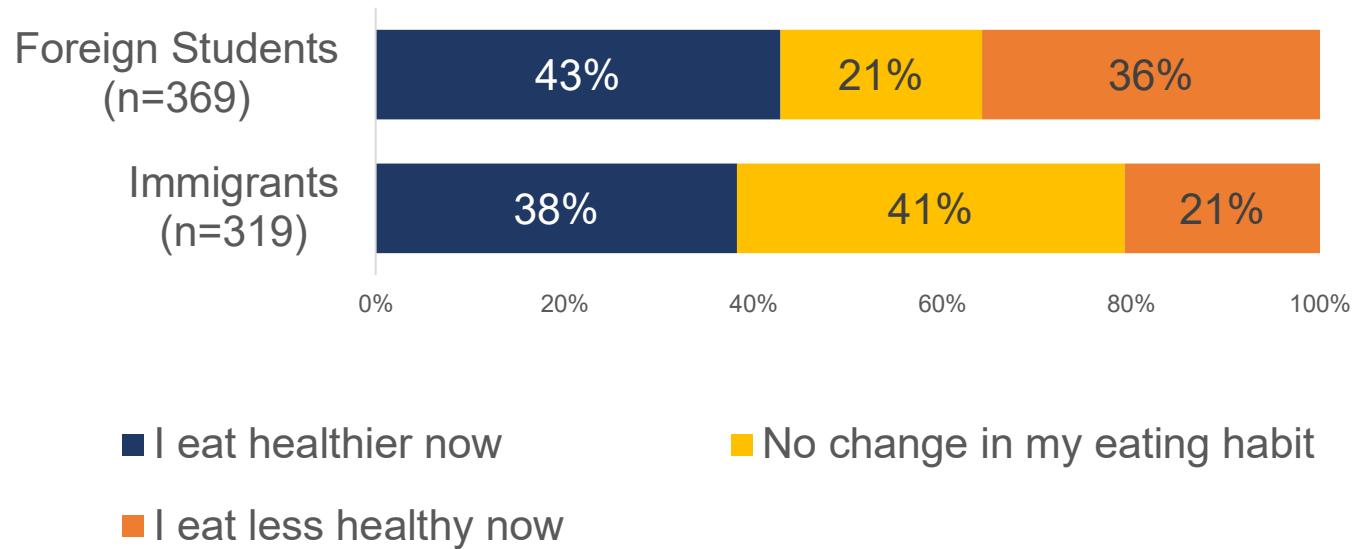
\*This difference is statistically significant





# Eating Behaviour

Eating Behaviour After Arriving in Canada by Group

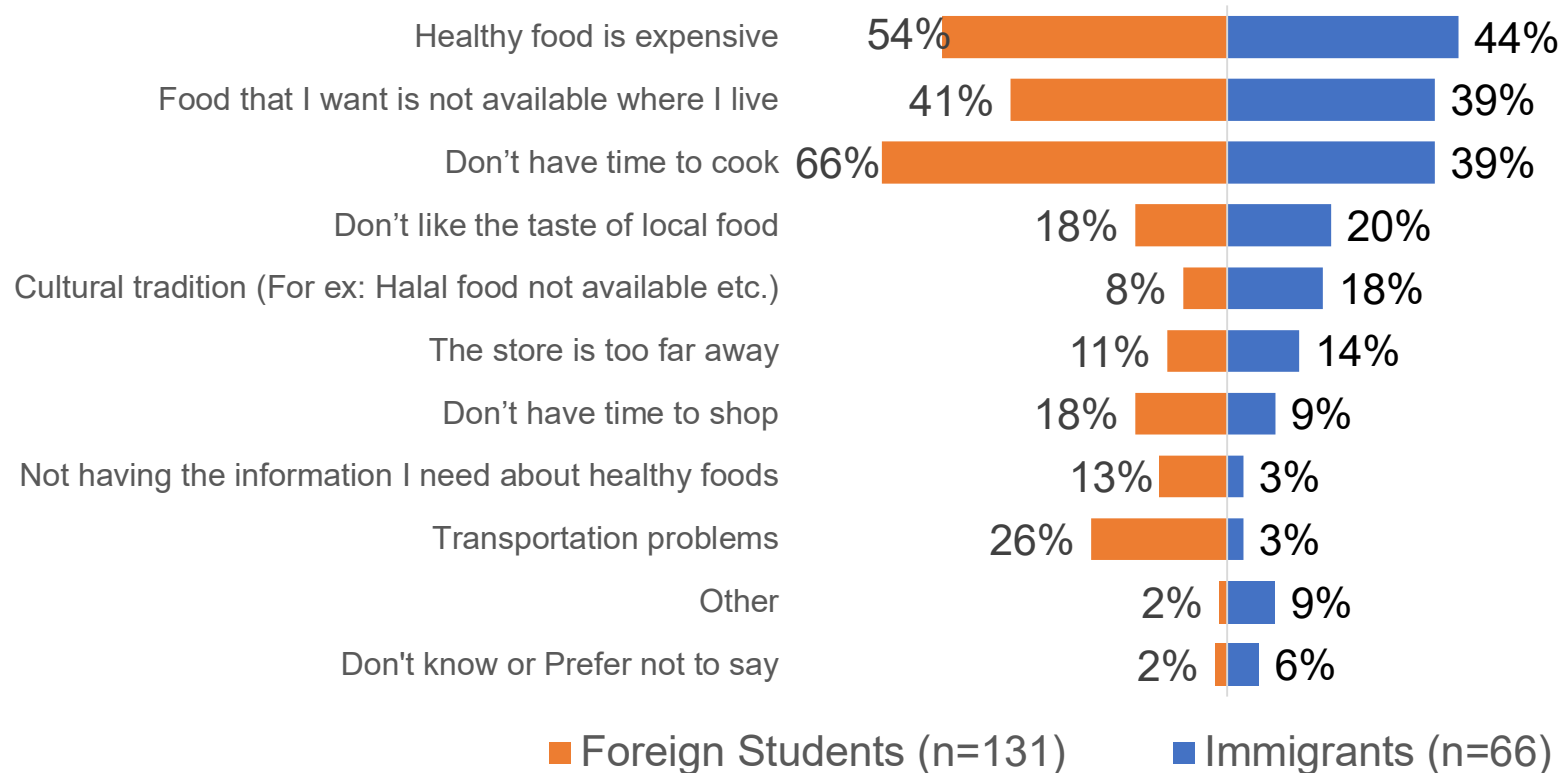


- The majority of foreign student and immigrant respondents ate healthier now or experienced no change to their eating habits
- More foreign student respondents (36%) ate less healthy compared to immigrant respondents (21%)

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

# Reasons for Eating Less Healthy

Reasons Respondents Ate Less Healthy\* by Group



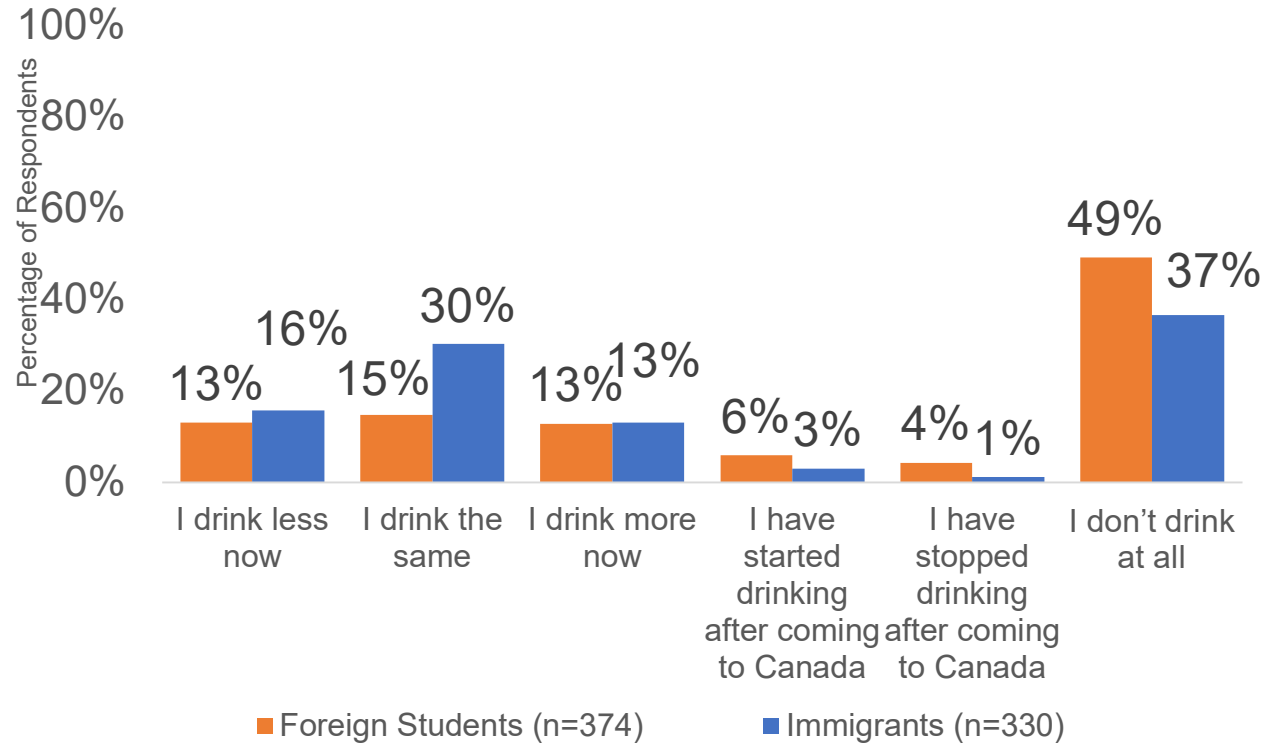
\*This question was only asked to those who reported eating less healthy now to a previous question. Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

This was a multiple choice question, and responses will not add up to 100%.

- Top reasons for foreign student respondents were no time to cook (66%) and cost (54%)
- Top reasons for Immigrant respondents were cost (44%) and a tie between food that I want is not available where I live (39%) and no time to cook (39%)

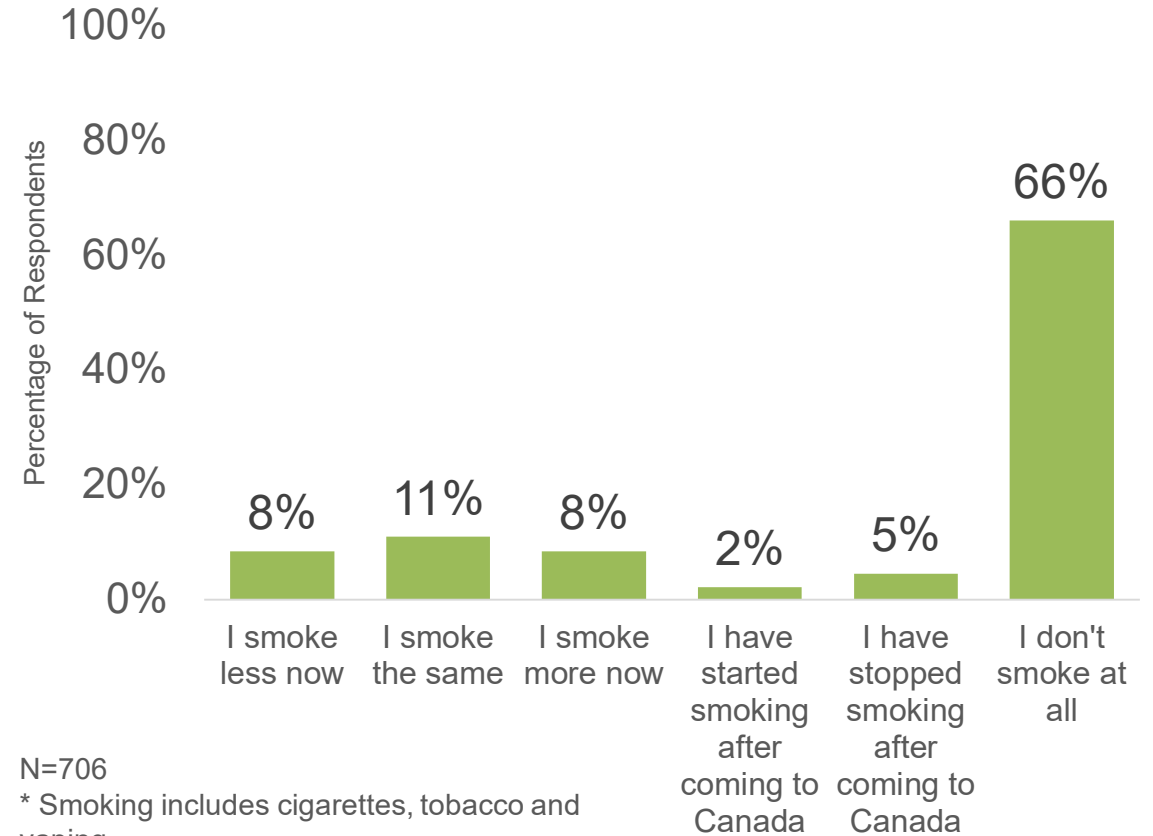
# Smoking and Drinking Behaviour

## Alcohol Drinking Behaviour After Arriving in Canada by Group



Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

## Smoking\* Behaviour After Arriving in Canada



N=706

\* Smoking includes cigarettes, tobacco and vaping.

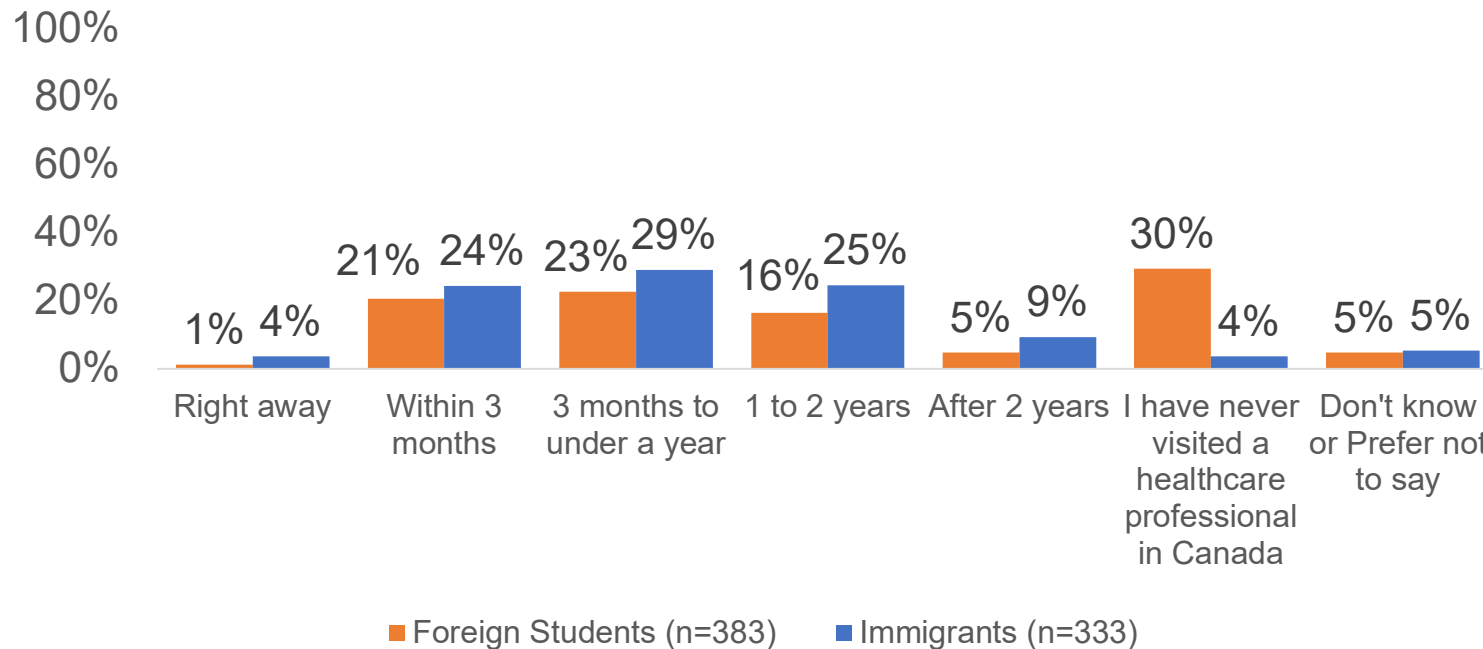


# Survey Findings: Experience Accessing and Receiving Health Care Services



# First Healthcare Professional Visits

First Visit with a Healthcare Professional After Arriving in Canada by Group

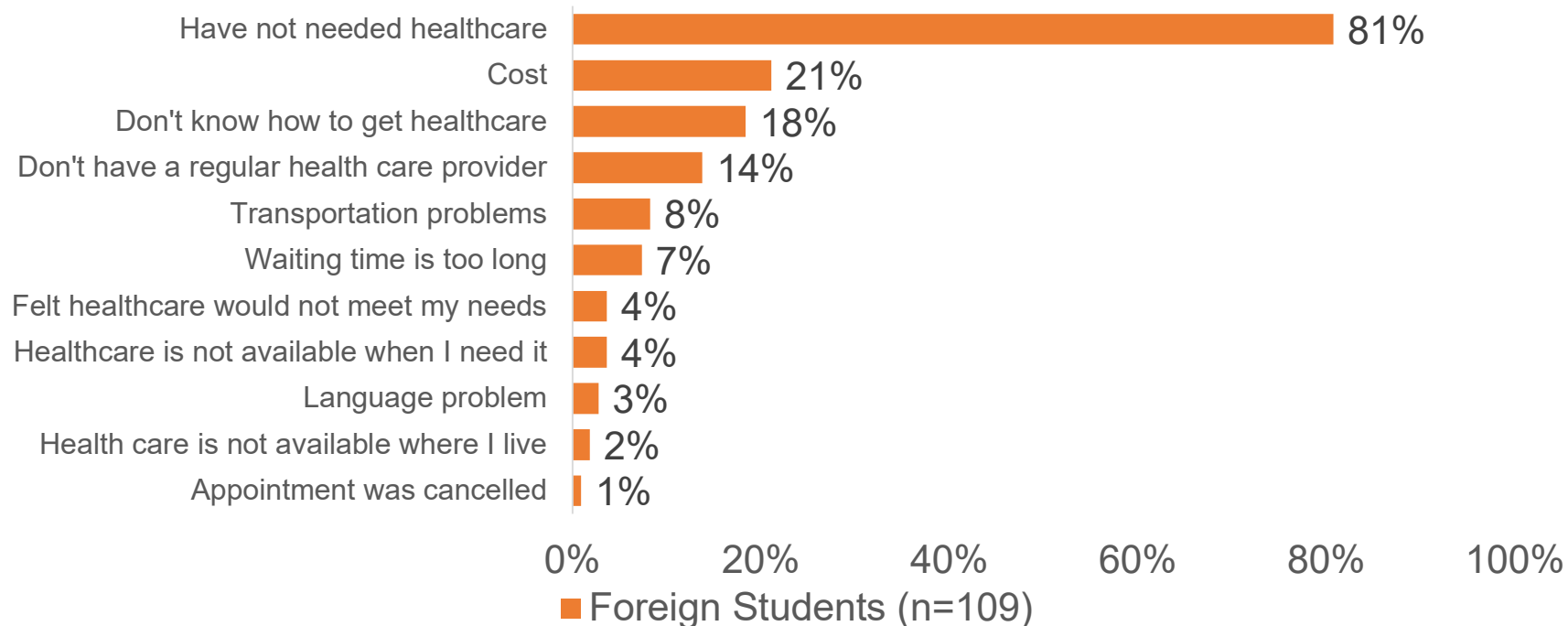


Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

- Within the first year of arriving to Canada, 45% of foreign student respondents and 57% of immigrant respondents saw a healthcare professional
- More foreign student respondents (30%) had not visited a health care professional compared to immigrant respondents (4%)

# Reasons for Foreign Students not Visiting a Healthcare Professional

Reasons Foreign Student Respondents Had Not Visited a Healthcare Professional After Arriving in Canada\*



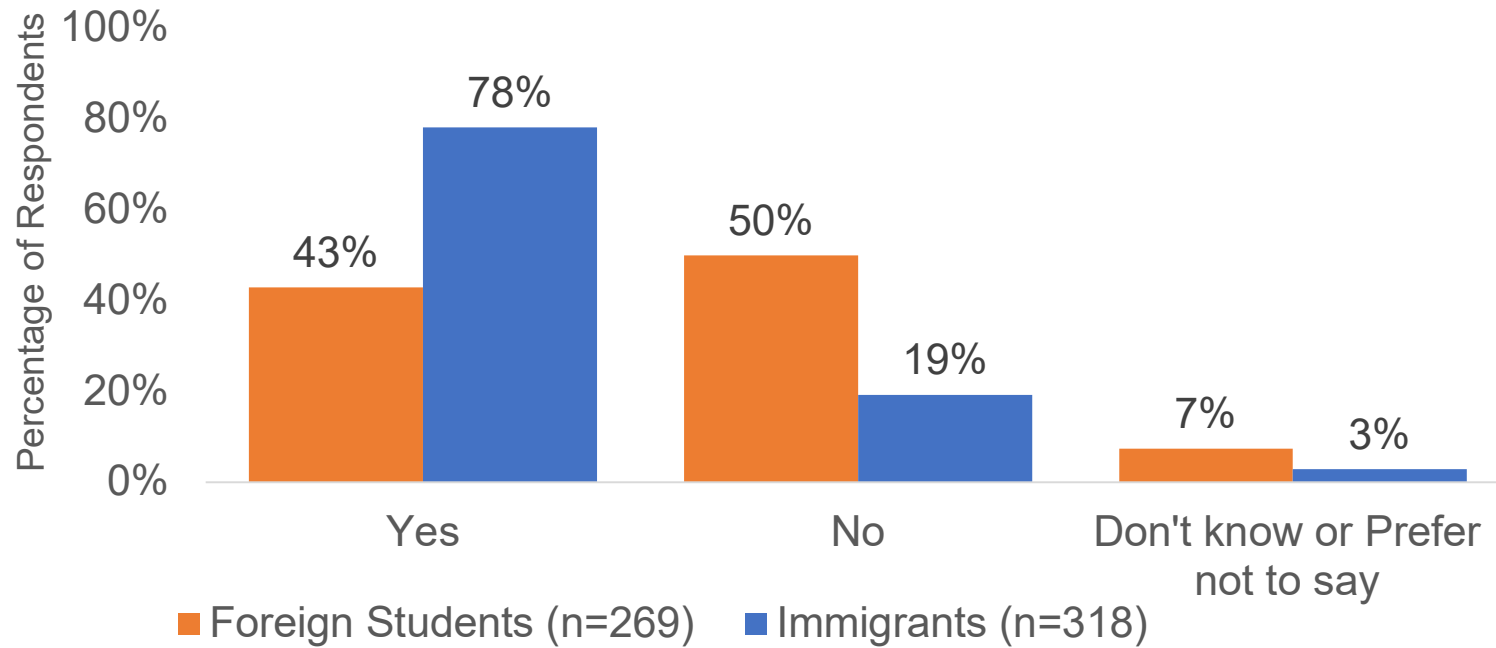
- Majority of foreign student respondents reported not needing healthcare (81%), followed by cost (21%) and not knowing how to get healthcare (18%)

\*This question was only asked to those who reported having never visited a healthcare professional in Canada in a previous question.

This was a multiple choice question, and responses will not add up to 100%.

# Regular Primary Healthcare Provider

Regular Primary Healthcare Provider in Canada\* by Group



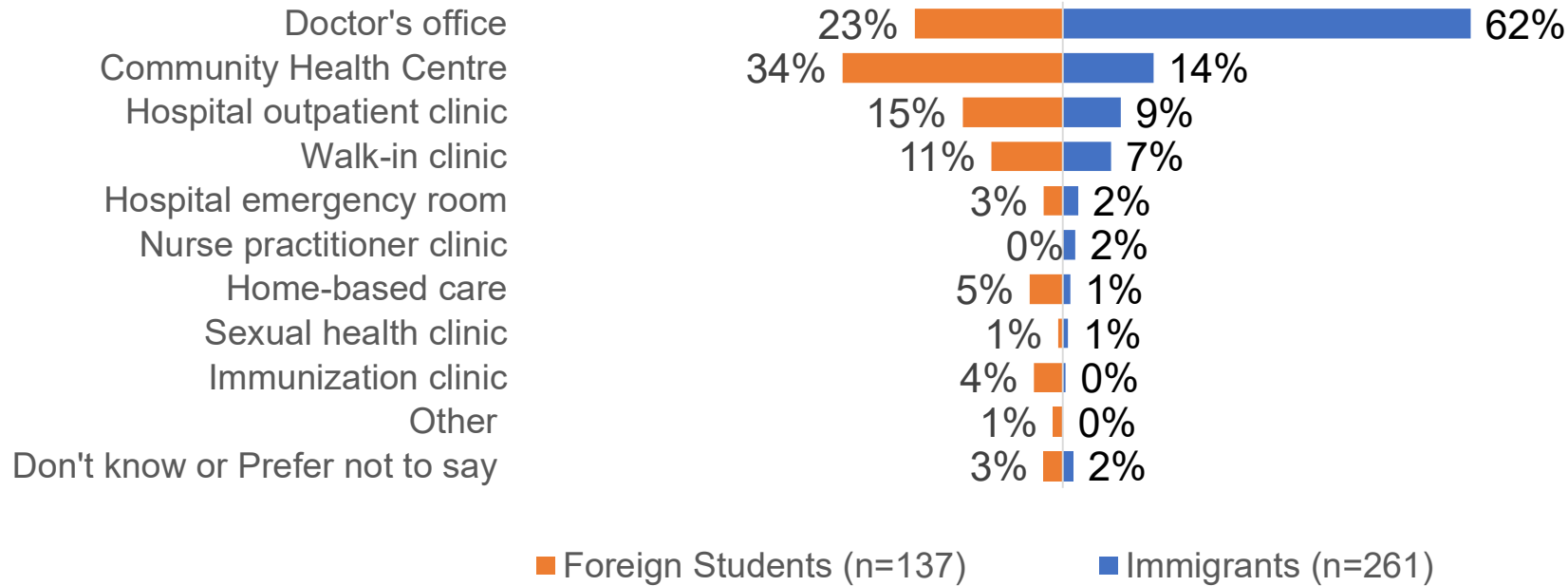
\*This question was asked to all respondents except those who reported having never visited a healthcare professional in Canada in a previous question

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

- Half (50%) of foreign student respondents do not have a regular primary healthcare provider while the majority of immigrant respondents (78%) do
- 91% (87.9% to 93.7%) of non-immigrants living in Simcoe County reported having a regular health care provider on the 2015/2016 CCHS

# Contact for Primary Healthcare needs

Contact for Primary Healthcare Needs\* by Group



- Foreign student respondents' top contact for primary healthcare needs were community health centre (34%) followed by doctor's office (23%), and hospital outpatient clinic (15%)
- Majority of immigrant respondents reported their doctor's office (62%)

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

\*This question was asked to all respondents except those who reported having never visited a healthcare professional in Canada in a previous question



# Crosstab Report: Gender vs Contact for Primary Healthcare Needs

## Survey Highlights by Gender for Immigrant Respondents

	Female (n=202)	Male (n=130)	Total (n=332)
*Contact for primary healthcare needs – Doctor’s Office	76%	54%	68%
*Contact for primary healthcare needs – Community Health Centre	11%	24%	15%
*Contact for primary healthcare needs – Hospital Outpatient Clinic	7%	15%	9%
*Contact for primary healthcare needs – Walk-in Clinic	7%	7%	7%

- Female immigrant respondents were more likely than male respondents to contact a doctor’s office for their primary healthcare needs
- Male immigrant respondents were more likely than female respondents to contact a Community Health Centre or a Hospital Outpatient Clinic for their primary healthcare needs

\*The difference between gender and contact for primary healthcare needs was statistically significant



# Crosstab Report: Visible Minority Status vs Contact for Primary Healthcare Needs

Survey Highlights by Visible Minority Group for Immigrant Respondents			
	Visible Minority (n=217)	Not a Visible Minority (Caucasian) (n=81)	Total (n=298)
*Contact for primary healthcare needs – Doctor’s Office	60%	78%	65%
*Contact for primary healthcare needs – Community Health Centre	**	**	16%
*Contact for primary healthcare needs – Hospital Outpatient Clinic	10%	9%	10%
*Contact for primary healthcare needs – Walk-in Clinic	9%	8%	8%

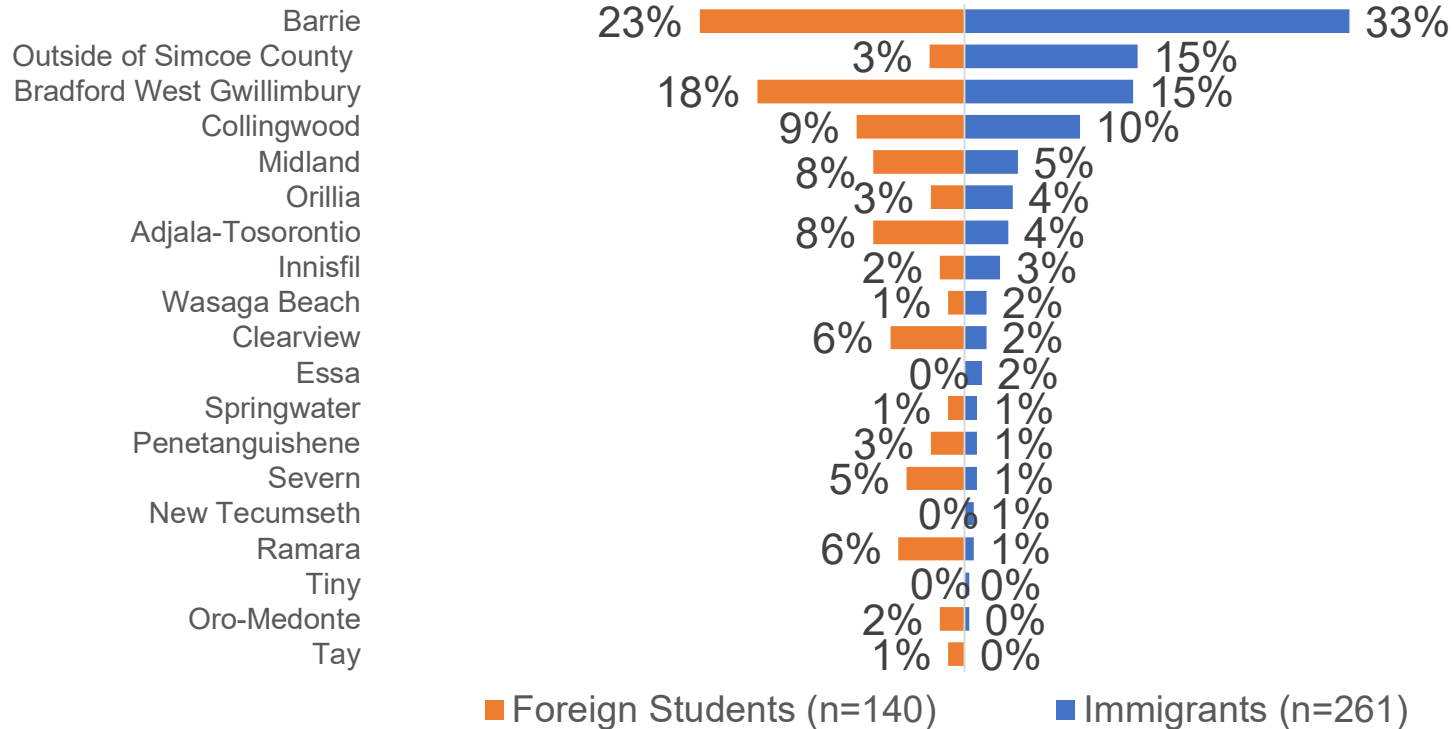
- Immigrant respondents who self identified as not a visible minority (Caucasian) were more likely to contact a doctor’s office for their primary healthcare needs compared to those that identified as a visible minority (78% vs 60%)

\*The difference between visible minority groups and contact for primary healthcare needs were statistically significant



# Location of Primary Healthcare Provider

Location of Primary Healthcare Provider\* by Group



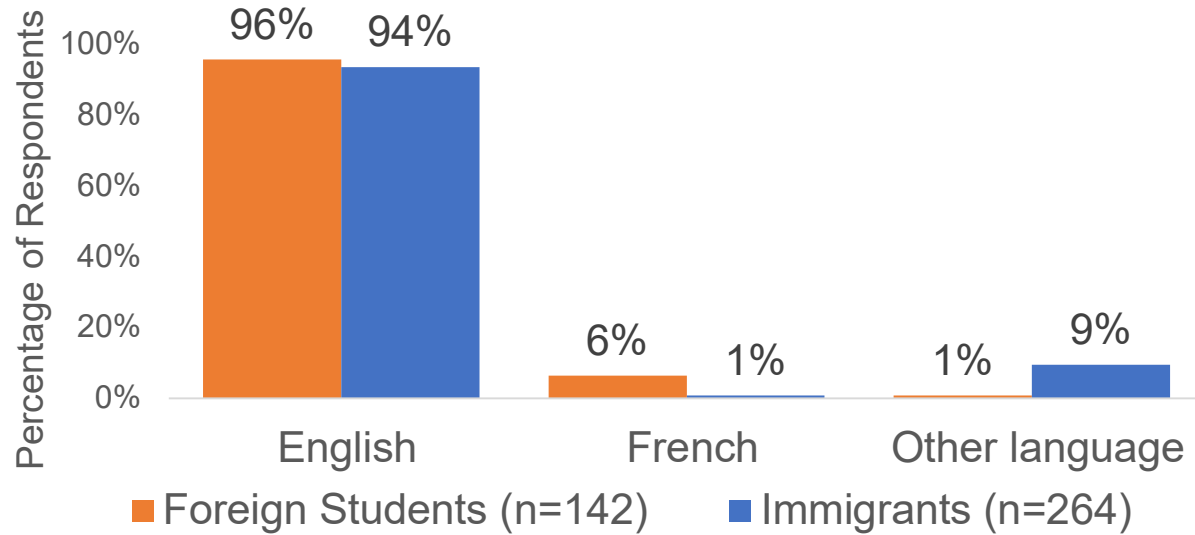
- Majority of respondents had healthcare providers in Simcoe County
- More immigrant respondents (15%) had healthcare providers located outside of Simcoe County compared to foreign student respondents (3%)

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

\*This question was asked to all respondents except those who reported having never visited a healthcare professional in Canada in a previous question

# Language

## Current Service Delivery Language\* by Group

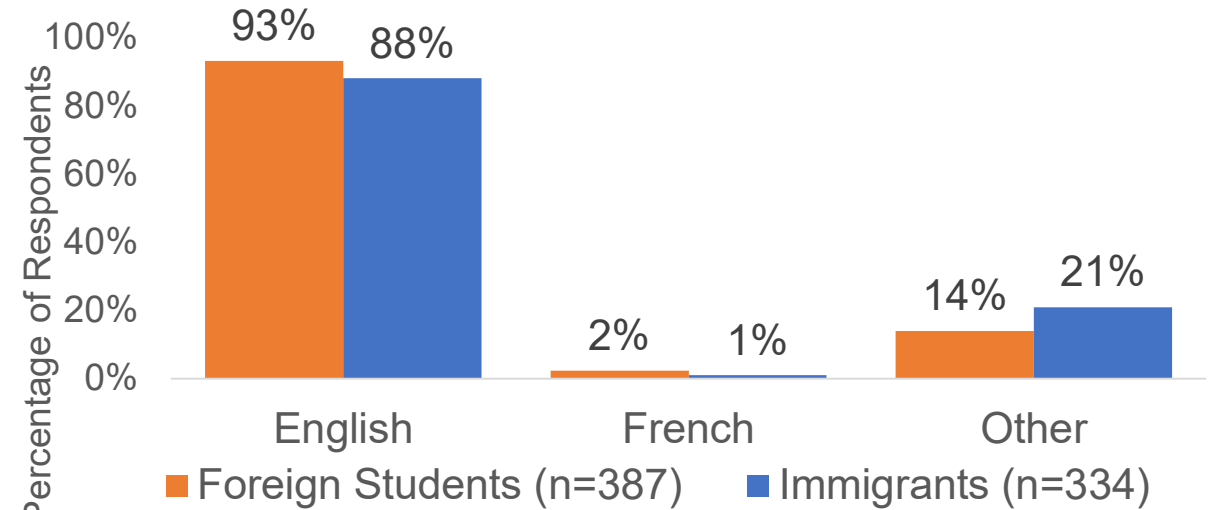


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\*This question was asked to all respondents except those who reported having never visited a healthcare professional in Canada in a previous question

This was a multiple choice question, and responses will not add up to 100%.

## Preferred Service Delivery Language by Group

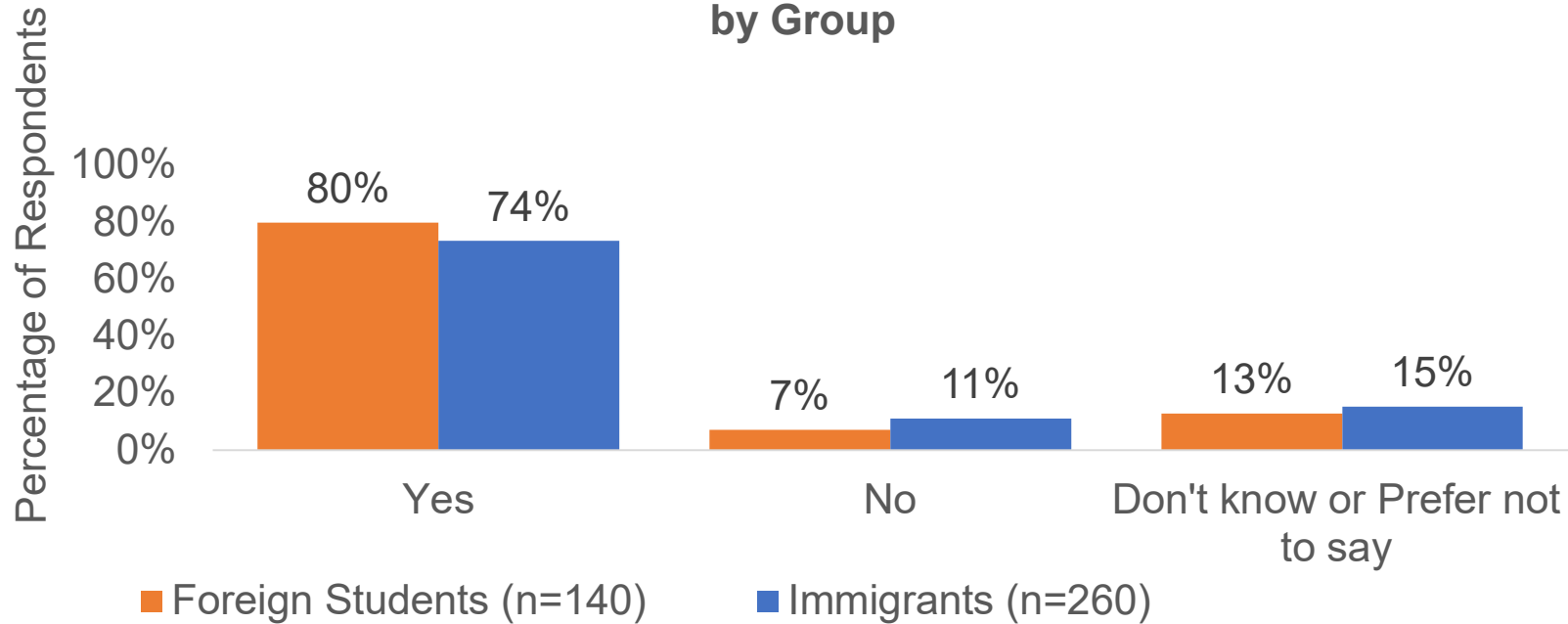


Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

This was a multiple choice question, and responses will not add up to 100%.

# Cultural Needs

Primary Healthcare Providers Understanding of Cultural Needs\*  
by Group



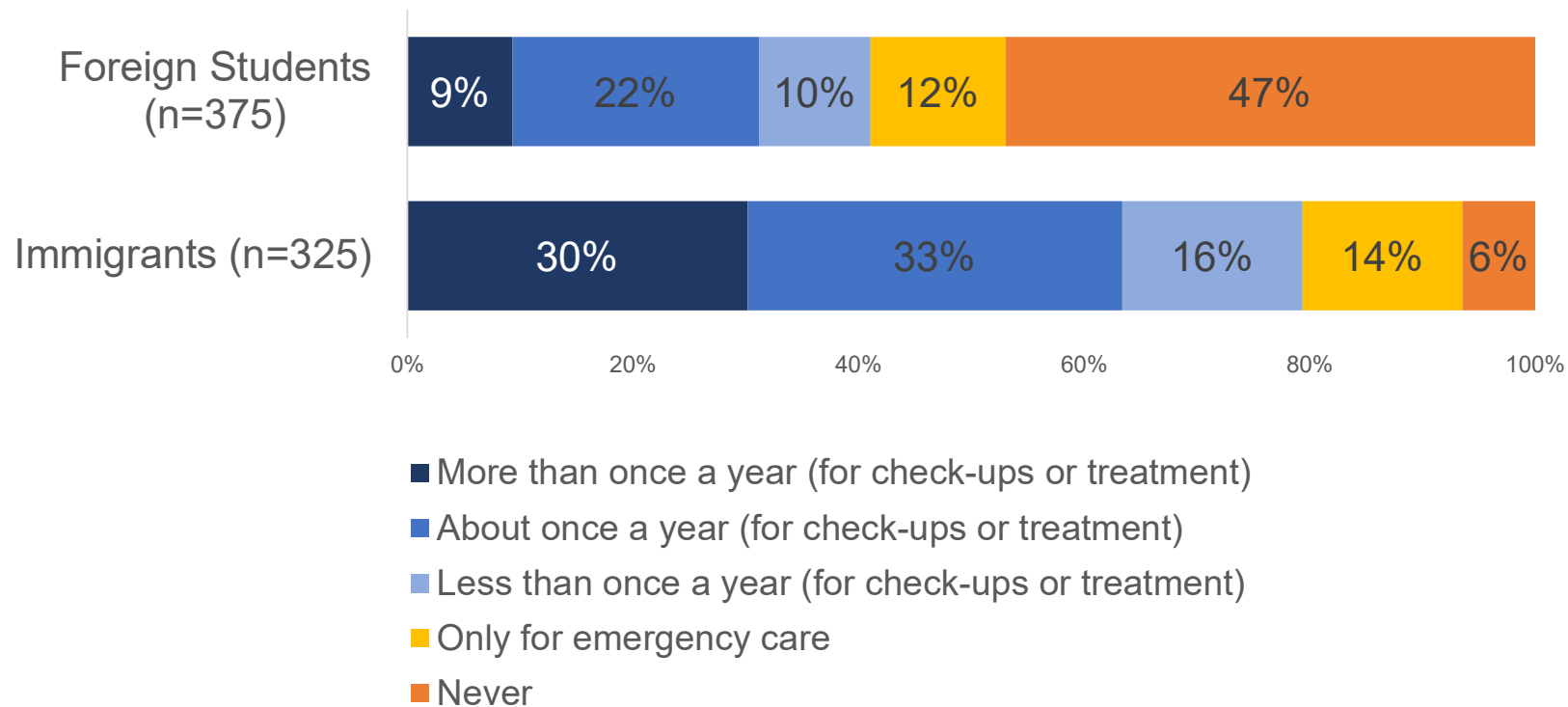
- Majority of respondents reported their primary healthcare provider understood their cultural needs

Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

\*This question was asked to all respondents except those who reported having never visited a healthcare professional in Canada in a previous question

# Frequency of Dental Visits

Frequency of Dental Visits Since Arriving in Canada by Group



- Just under half (47%) of foreign student respondents had never visited a dental professional since arriving in Canada, a larger percentage compared to immigrant respondents (6%)

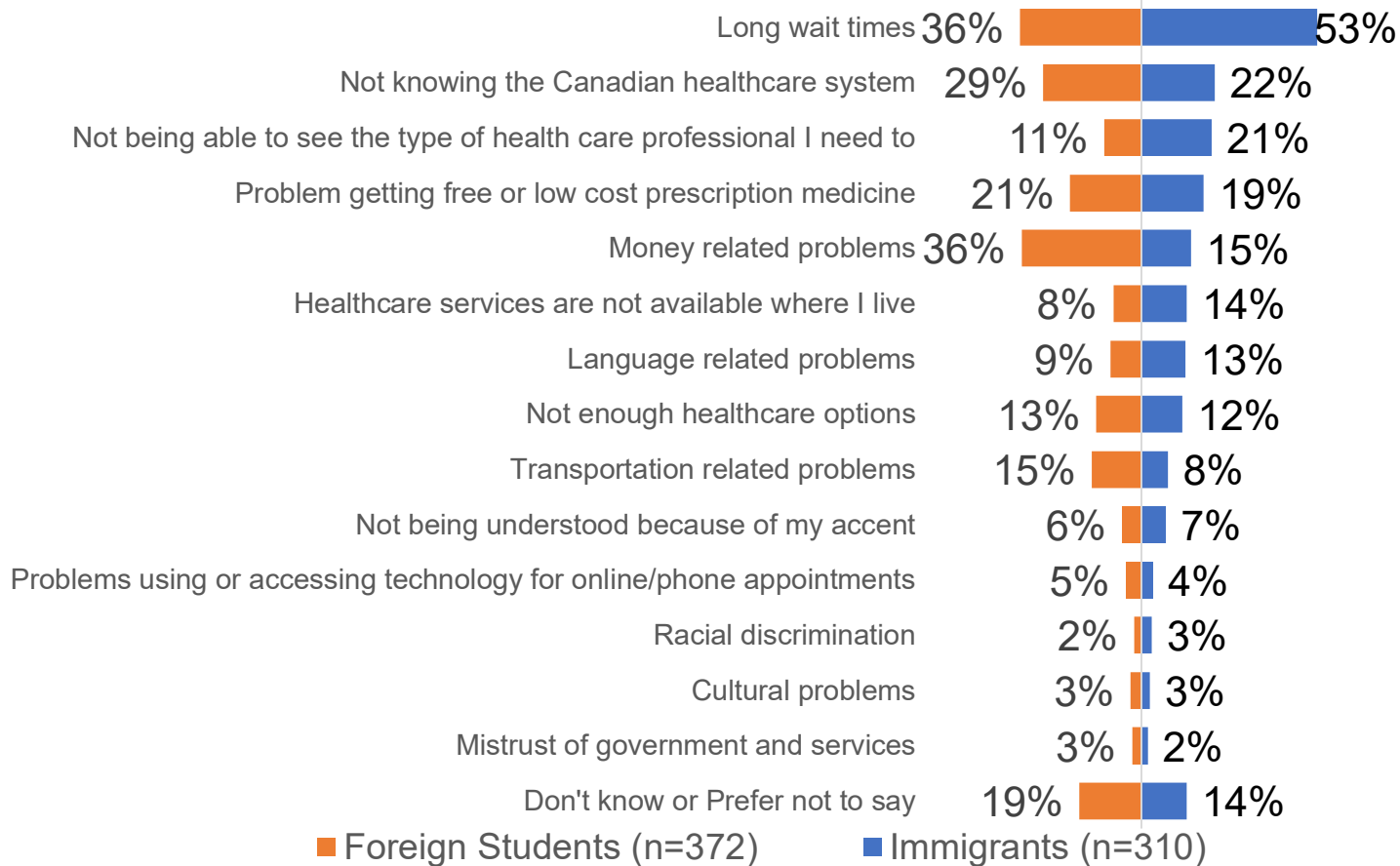
Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

# Survey Findings: Barriers



# Challenges Accessing Healthcare

## Challenges Accessing Healthcare in Canada by Group



Note: Foreign students include respondents who identified as current study permit holders or recent study permit holders, currently on work permit visas. Immigrants include respondents who identified as permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

- Top challenges faced by foreign student respondents were long wait times (36%), money related problems (36%), and not knowing the Canadian healthcare system (29%)
- Top challenges faced by Immigrant respondents were long wait times (53%), not knowing the Canadian healthcare system (22%), not being able to see the type of healthcare professional they need (21%)





# Problems Getting Healthcare Services

“What other problem(s), if any, have you faced while getting or trying to get healthcare services?” (n=300)

## 1. Comments related to time. (n=49, 16%)

- Long wait times, for example, at the emergency room and walk-in clinics. (n=31, 10%)
- Long wait times to get results, diagnosis, and treatment. Treatment is not focused on disease prevention, instead it is provided at advanced or worse stages. (n=9, 3%)
- Long time to get appointments/bookings and referrals, for example for doctors and specialists. (n=7, 2%)
- Desired time for appointments not available and doctors work for a few days a week. (n=3, 1%)

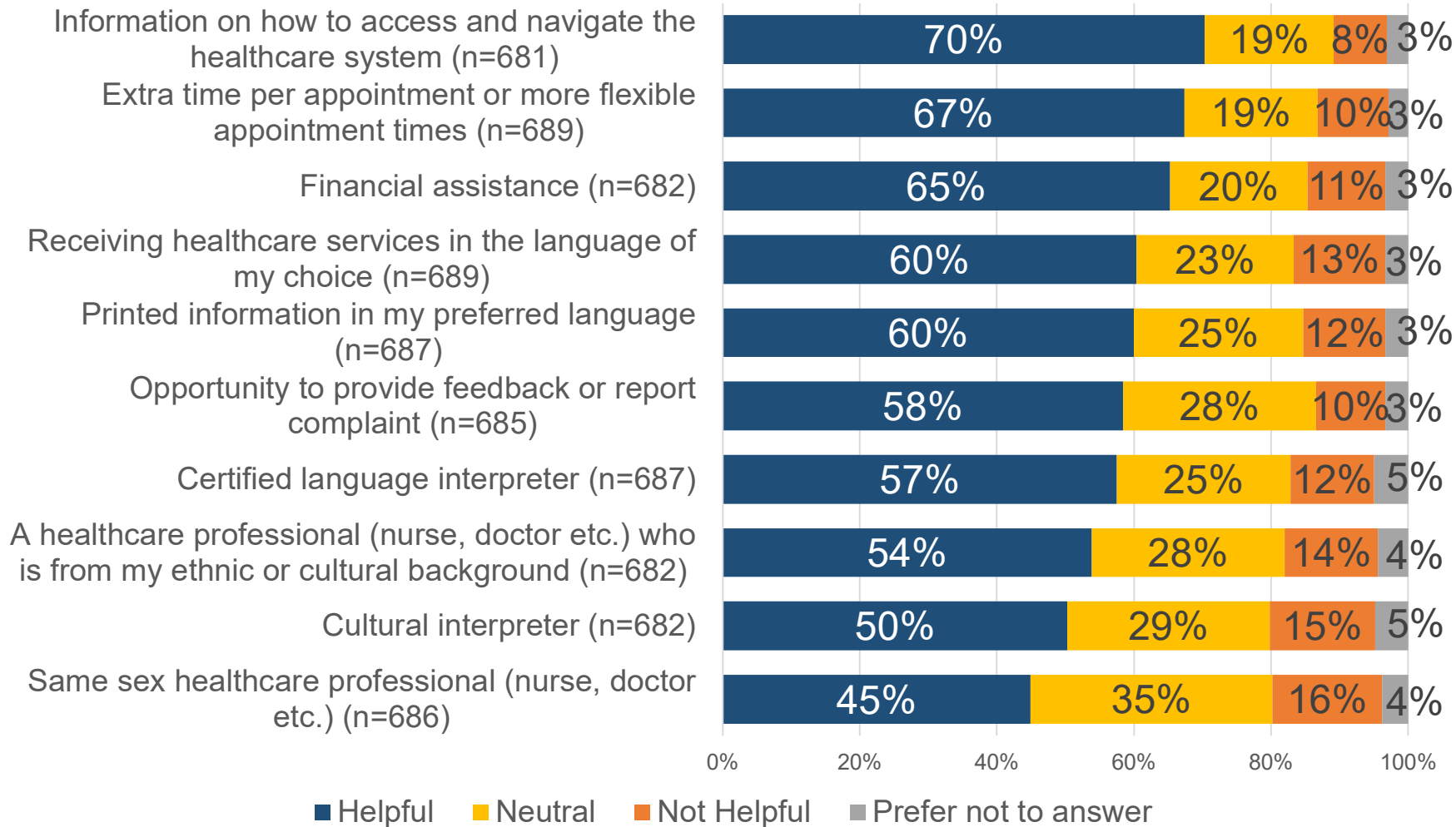
## 2. Expensive medical and health services (i.e. dental and eye care). (n=28, 9%)

## 3. Language barrier, communication issues, rushed appointments, patients not listened to, questions not answered, and lack of follow-ups. (n=26, 9%)



# Improvements to the Healthcare Experience

Improvements to Healthcare Experience



- The top three reported helpful improvements were 'information on how to access and navigate the healthcare system' (70%), 'extra time per appointment or more flexible appointment times' (67%), and financial assistance (65%).

# Crosstab Report: Gender Vs Helpful Improvements to Healthcare Experience

Survey Highlights by Gender for Immigrant Respondents			
	Female (n=202)	Male (n=130)	Total (n=332)
<b>*Helpful Improvement to healthcare experience – Information on how to access and navigate the healthcare system</b>	75%	62%	70%

- Female immigrant respondents were more likely to rate ‘information on how to access and navigate the healthcare system’ as a helpful improvement to their healthcare experience compared to male respondents (75% vs 62%)

\*This difference is statistically significant

# How Overall Healthcare Experience can be Improved

“Please share more details on how your overall healthcare experience can be improved?”  
(n=308)

1. Improvement to overall quality and satisfaction of services, experience, and products (i.e. simpler, efficient, safer, cleaner, faster, organized, and trustworthy care). (n=41, 13%)
2. Access to cheaper and/or free health care and medicines or providing student discounts. Having more services covered under insurance plans and OHIP (i.e. blood work, pharmaceuticals, dental services, psychotherapists, physiotherapists, naturopaths, osteopaths, and diabetes testing tools). (n=37, 12%)
3. More accessible and available healthcare services, healthcare professionals, and tests. The ability to book appointments easily and within the desired timeslot and timeframe. More hours worked by healthcare professionals, increased visits/appointments with healthcare professionals, and the ability to directly consult with specialists without a referral. (n=37, 12%)

# COVID-19 Related Data

- About **one in ten immigrant respondents (9%)** and **foreign student respondents (8%)** reported **COVID-19** as an illness and/or disease a healthcare professional told them they had when the survey was conducted between March 8th and April 1st, 2021.
- Two respondents mentioned the “COVID vaccine” and the “pandemic” as factors adding to their feelings of daily stress.
- Accessing health care services was reported as an issue during the pandemic because:
  - clinics were closed;
  - doctors were not seeing patients in person;
  - doctors were not accepting new patients;
  - longer wait times for appointments;
  - refused service due to occupation, despite having a negative COVID-19 results; and,
  - coming back to Canada from receiving medical treatment abroad during COVID-19 would result in a \$2,000 quarantine at a hotel.
- One respondent reported that their COVID-19 test results were lost by the health care system.

Note: These COVID-19 related comments have been mentioned one to a few times. This is a collection from all questions and could have been mentioned by the same person in each relevant question.



# Recommendations for Health Care Providers

## **Foreign-Born Residents:**

1. Demographic Data Collection
2. Develop translated health care system navigation tools
3. Non-official languages and health care delivery
4. Increasing programming to address community belonging
5. Increased engagement with health service providers

## **International Students:**

1. Reducing systemic barriers to international student's health care access



# Thank you. Questions?



- [simcoe.ca/communitydata](https://simcoe.ca/communitydata)
- [Immigration.simcoe.ca/](https://immigration.simcoe.ca/)
- [simcoe.ca/sclip](https://simcoe.ca/sclip)

## Contact Information:

Manager Local Immigration Partnership: [Sandra.Lee@simcoe.ca](mailto:Sandra.Lee@simcoe.ca)

Research Analysts: [Kholah.Nisar@simcoe.ca](mailto:Kholah.Nisar@simcoe.ca) and [Victoria.Chapman@simcoe.ca](mailto:Victoria.Chapman@simcoe.ca)