



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS

Mental Health among
Emergency Physicians

OCTOBER 2020

Methodology

METHODOLOGY:

This poll was conducted between October 7-October 13, 2020 among a national sample of 862 emergency physicians. The interviews were conducted online using the American College of Emergency Physicians' provided member list. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

KEY POINTS

- 1 Eighty-seven percent of emergency physicians report they have been feeling more stress since the start of COVID-19. Additionally, 72 percent report experiencing more professional burnout.
- 2 Four in five emergency physicians cite concerns about family, friends, and personal health as causes for stress or burnout since the start of COVID-19, while three in five emergency physicians cite concerns for job or financial security and lack of PPE.
- 3 Forty-five percent of emergency physicians report they are not comfortable seeking mental health treatment if needed.
- 4 Seventy-one percent of emergency physicians rate their ability to access mental health treatment as good or excellent.
- 5 When it comes to seeking mental health treatment, 73 percent of emergency physicians feel there is stigma in their workplace.
- 6 Nearly three in five emergency physicians (57 percent) report they would be concerned for their job if they were to seek mental health treatment.

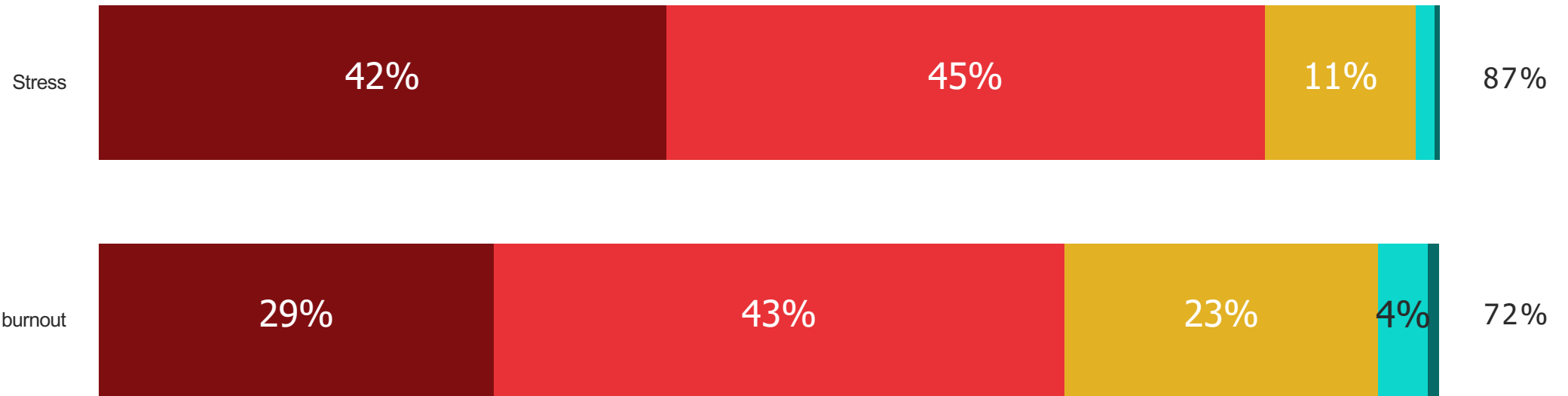
ACEP20

Eighty-seven percent of emergency physicians report they have been feeling more stress since the start of COVID-19. Additionally, 72 percent report experiencing more professional burnout.

Have you felt more or less of each of the following since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic?

● Much more
 ● Somewhat more
 ● Same amount since before COVID-19
 ● Somewhat less
 ● Much less

Total More

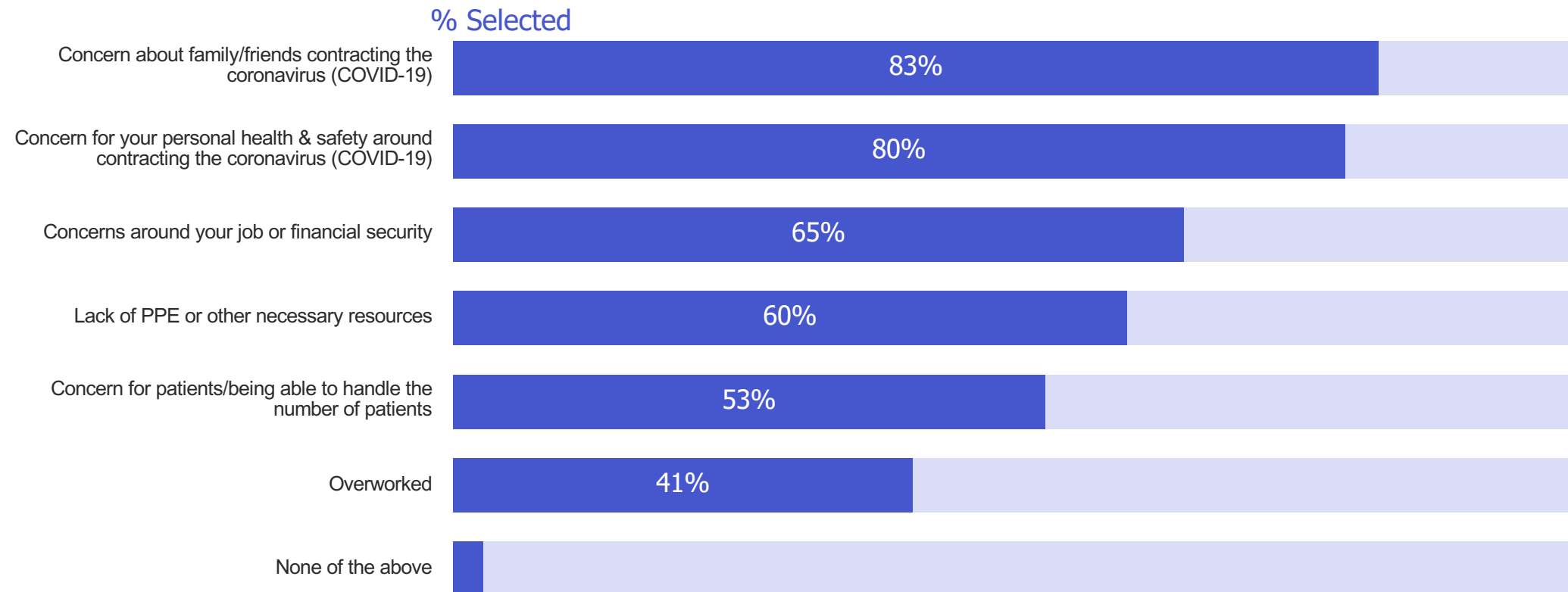


Total More = Much more + Somewhat

ACEP20

Four in five emergency physicians cite concerns about family, friends, and personal health as causes for stress or burnout since the start of COVID-19, while three in five emergency physicians cite concerns for job or financial security and lack of PPE.

Have you experienced any of the following potential causes stress or burnout since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic?
Please select all that apply.

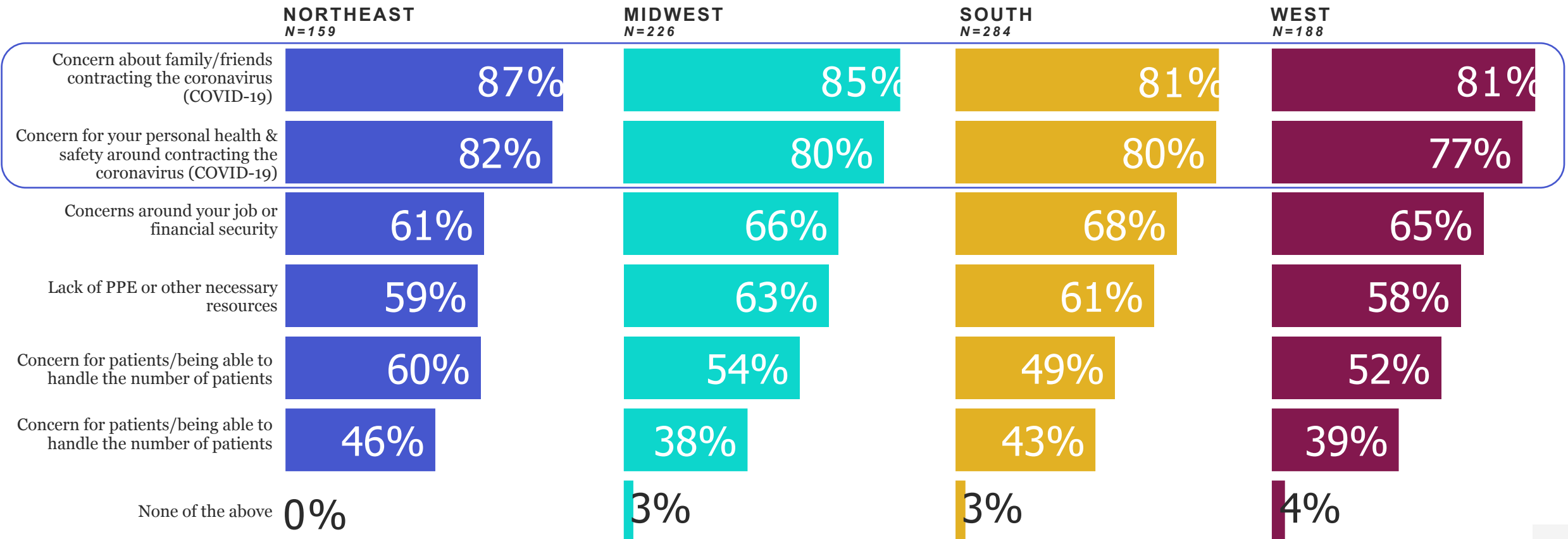


ACEP20

Emergency physicians across the four-point census region cite concerns about family, friends, and personal health as causes for stress or burnout since the start of COVID-19.

Have you experienced any of the following potential causes stress or burnout since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic?

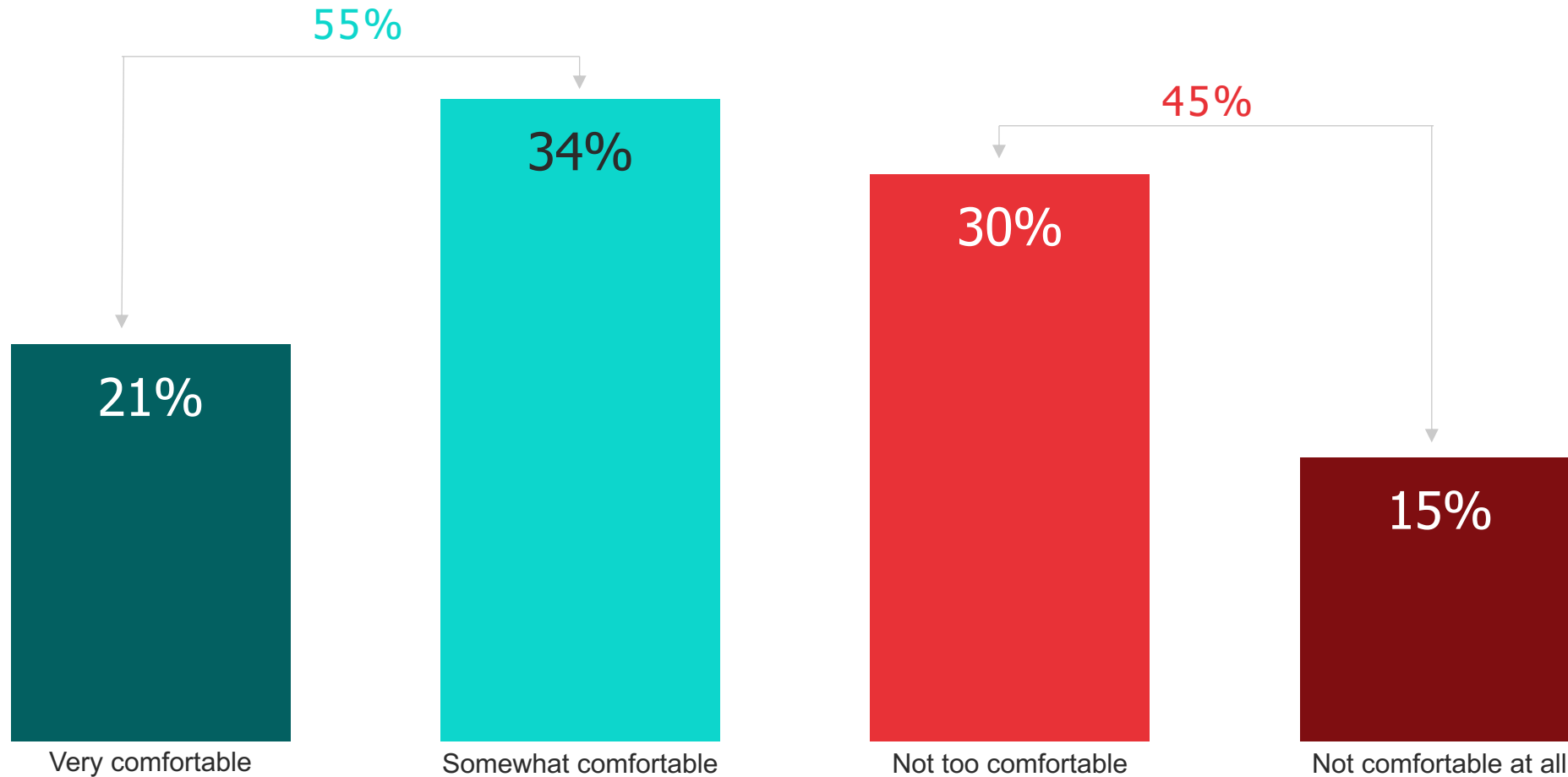
Please select all that apply.



ACEP20

Forty-five percent of emergency physicians report they are not comfortable seeking mental health treatment if needed.

How comfortable would you be seeking mental health treatment if needed?



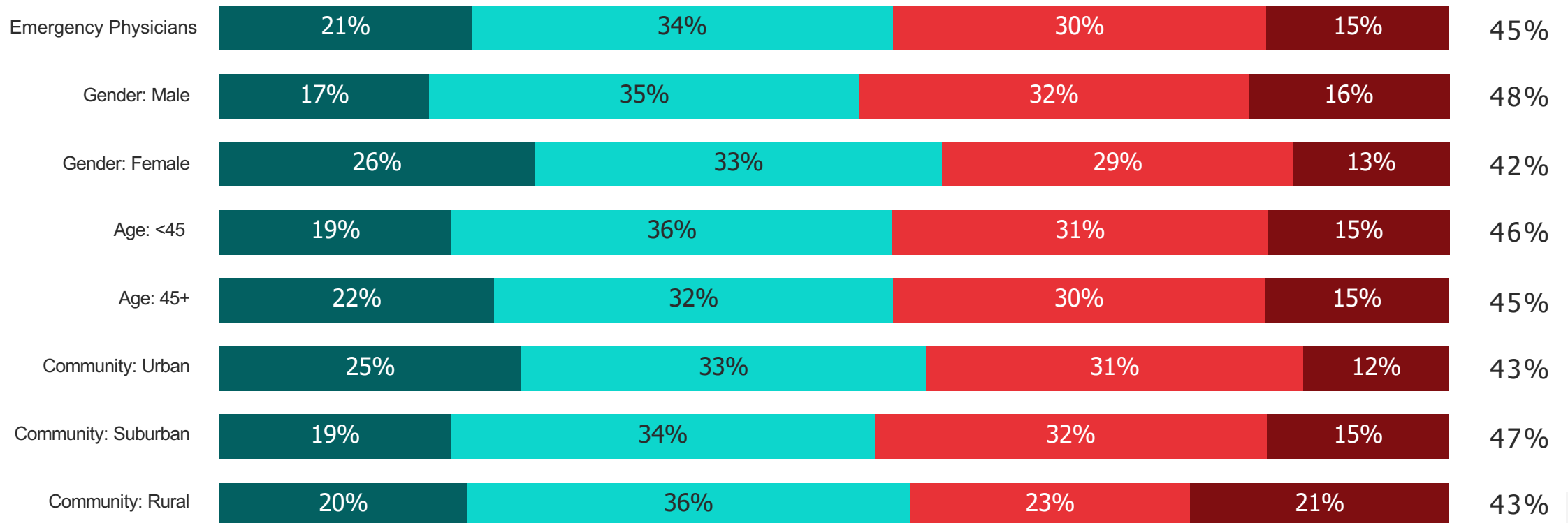
ACEP20

Male emergency physicians are slightly more uncomfortable seeking mental health treatment than female emergency physicians, with those in rural communities reporting the highest intensity of feeling uncomfortable with seeking treatment.

How comfortable would you be seeking mental health treatment if needed?

● Very comfortable ● Somewhat comfortable ● Not too comfortable ● Not comfortable at all

Total Uncomfortable

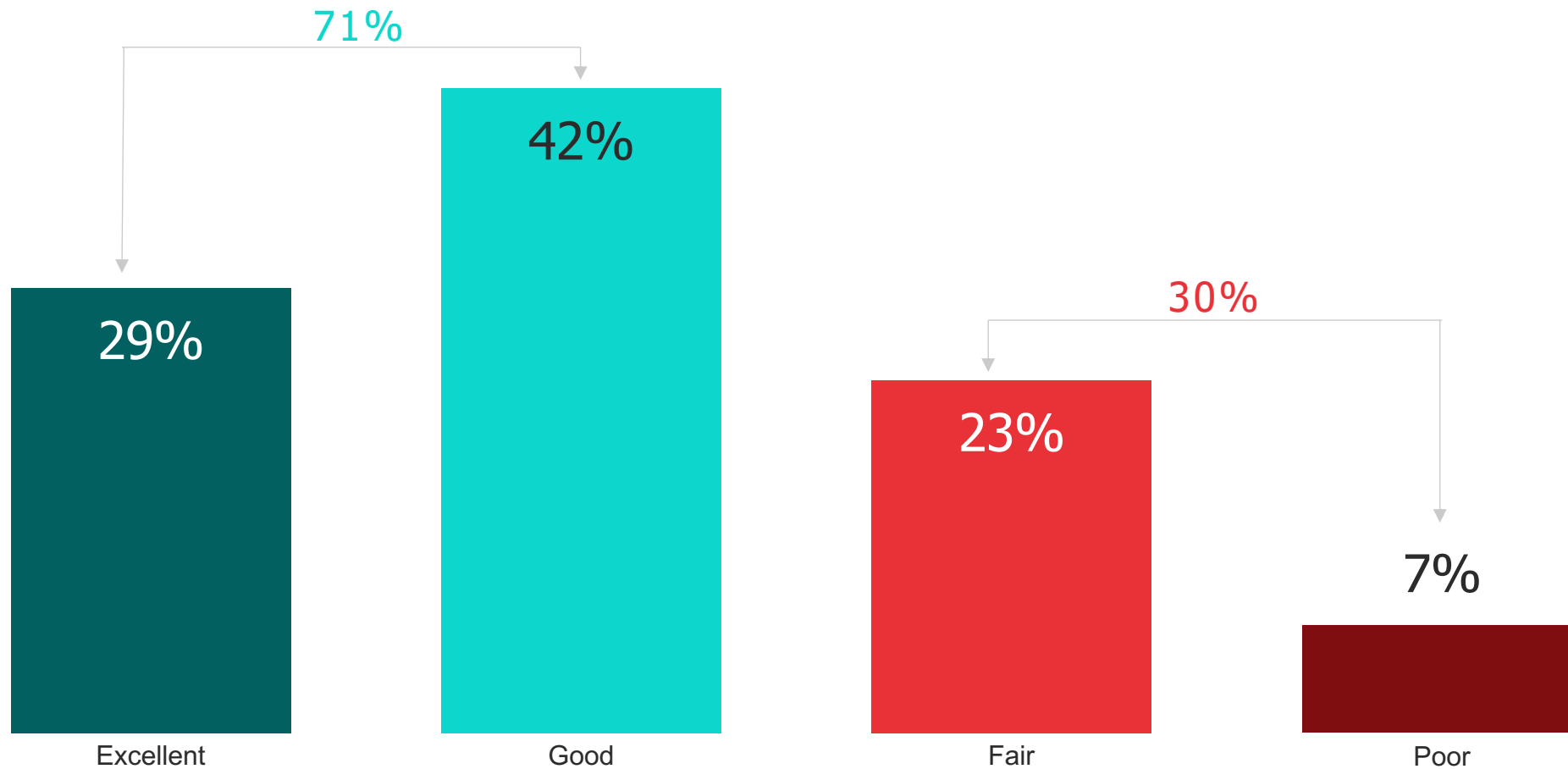


Total Uncomfortable = Not too + Not comfortable at all

ACEP20

Seventy-one percent of emergency physicians rate their ability to access mental health treatment as good or excellent.

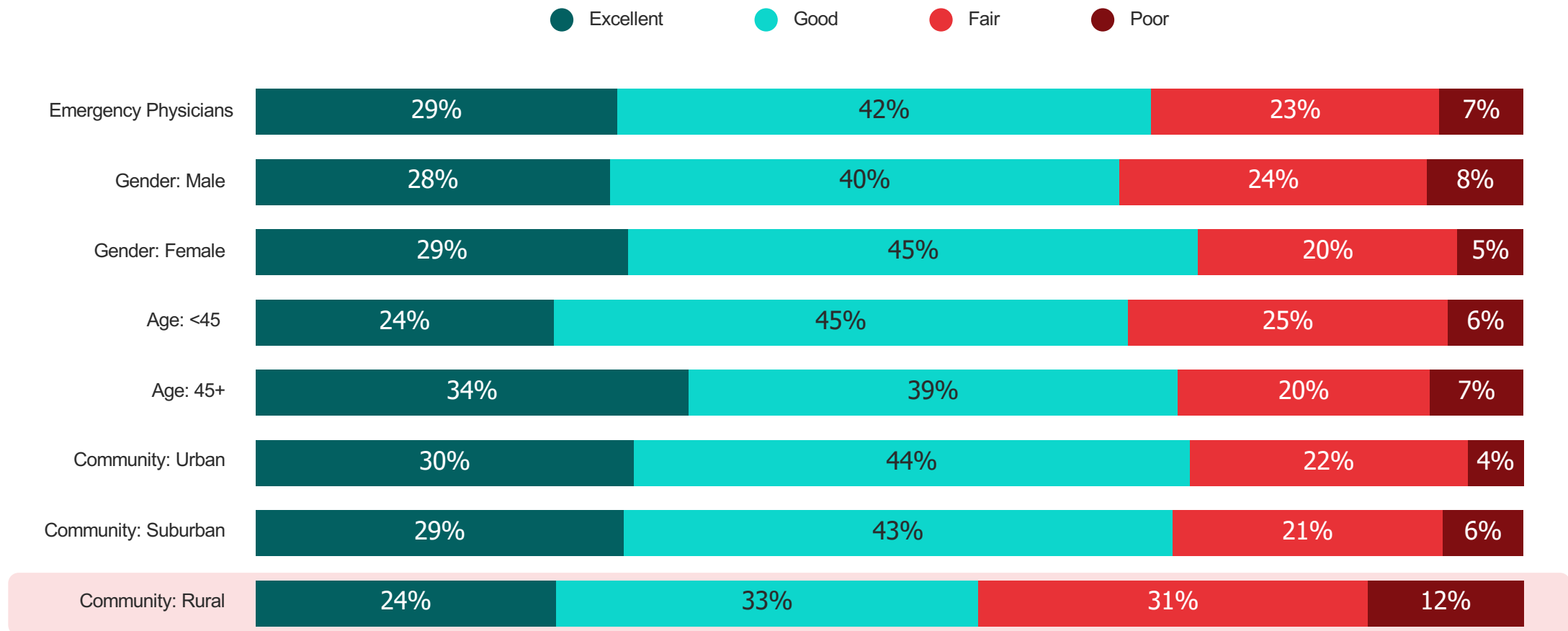
How would you rate your ability to access mental health treatment if you decided to seek it?



ACEP20

Rural emergency physicians are the most likely to rate their access to mental health treatment as fair or poor.

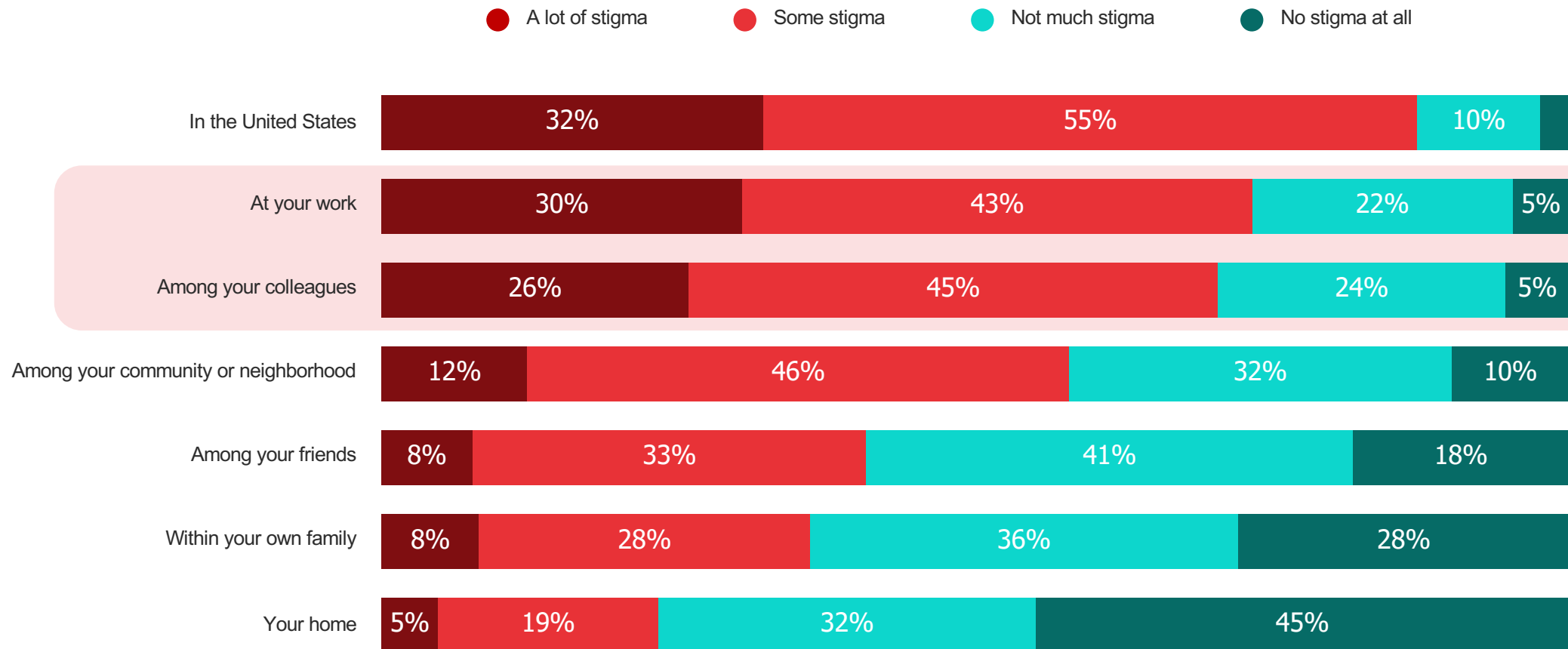
How would you rate your ability to access mental health treatment if you decided to seek it?



ACEP20

When it comes to seeking mental health treatment, 73 percent of emergency physicians feel there is stigma in their workplace and 71 percent feel there is stigma among their colleagues.

How much stigma, if any, do you feel there is about seeking mental health treatment in each of the following groups or places?

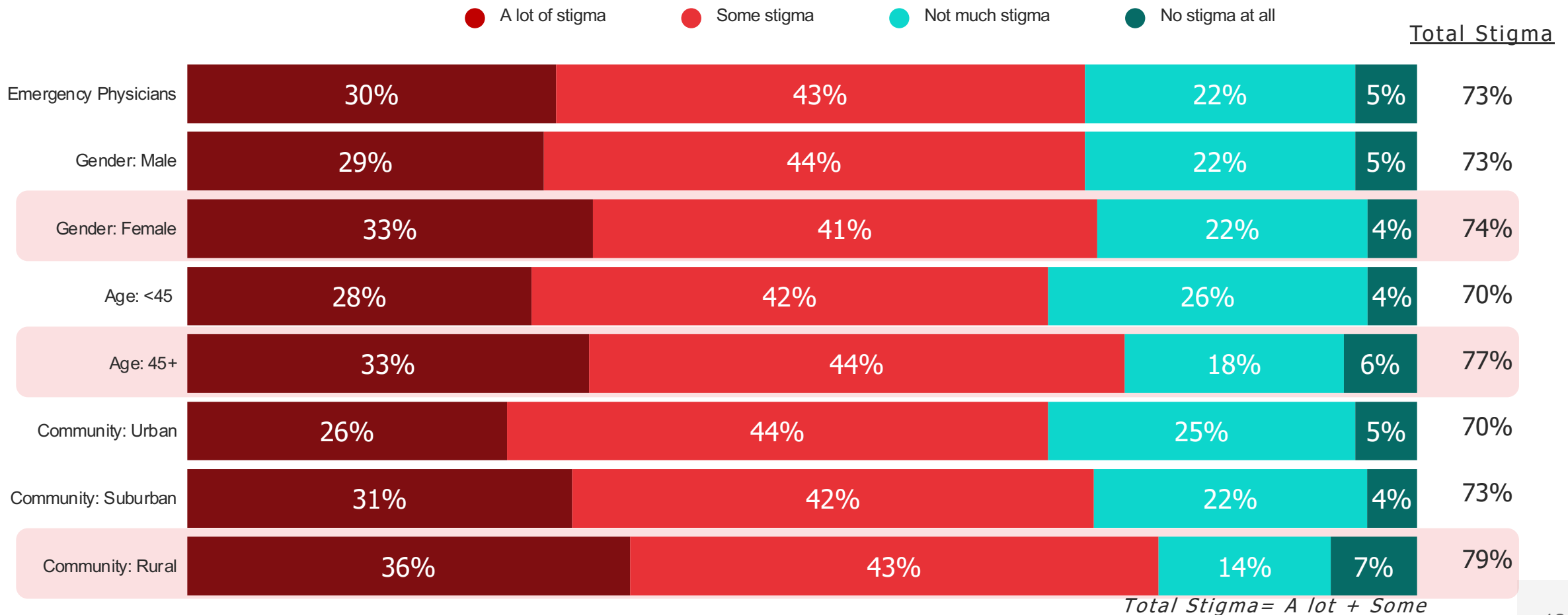


ACEP20

Female, older, and rural emergency physicians report the highest level of stigma in their workplace.

How much stigma, if any, do you feel there is about seeking mental health treatment in each of the following groups or places?

At your work



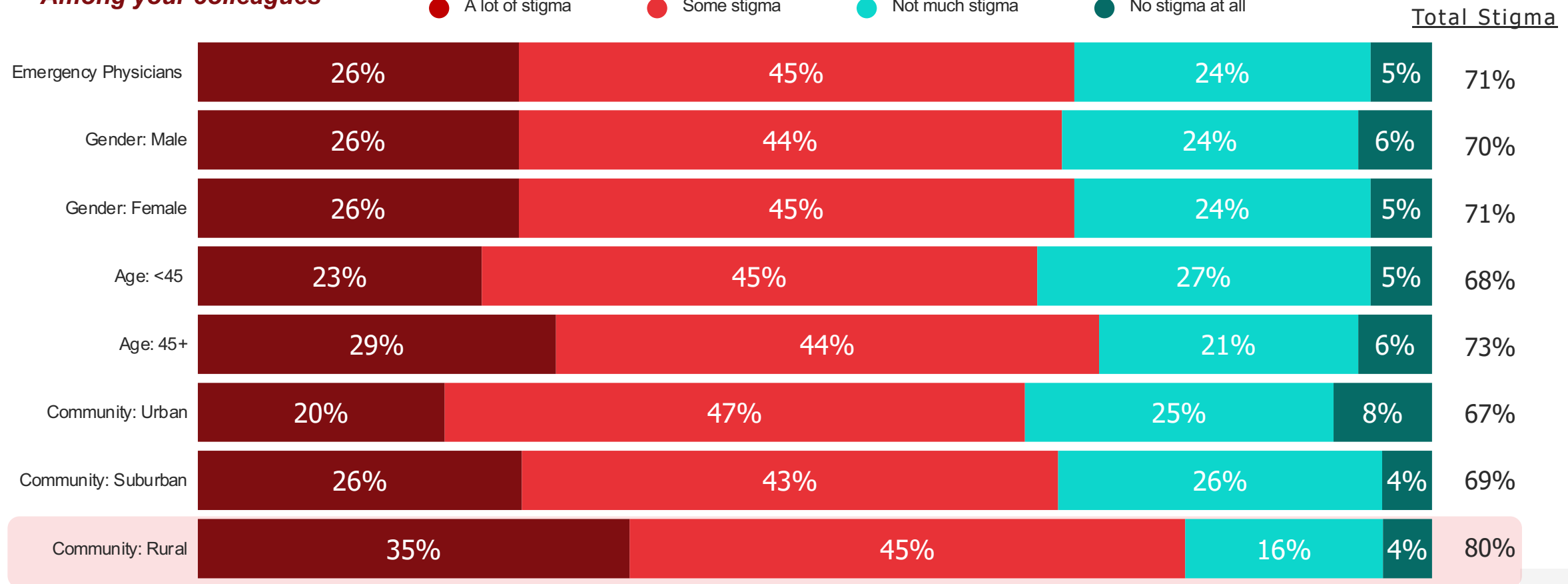
ACEP20

When it comes to seeking mental health treatment, a majority of emergency physicians feel there is stigma in doing so among their colleagues—this is most intensely felt by rural emergency physicians.

How much stigma, if any, do you feel there is about seeking mental health treatment in each of the following groups or places?

Among your colleagues

● A lot of stigma ● Some stigma ● Not much stigma ● No stigma at all

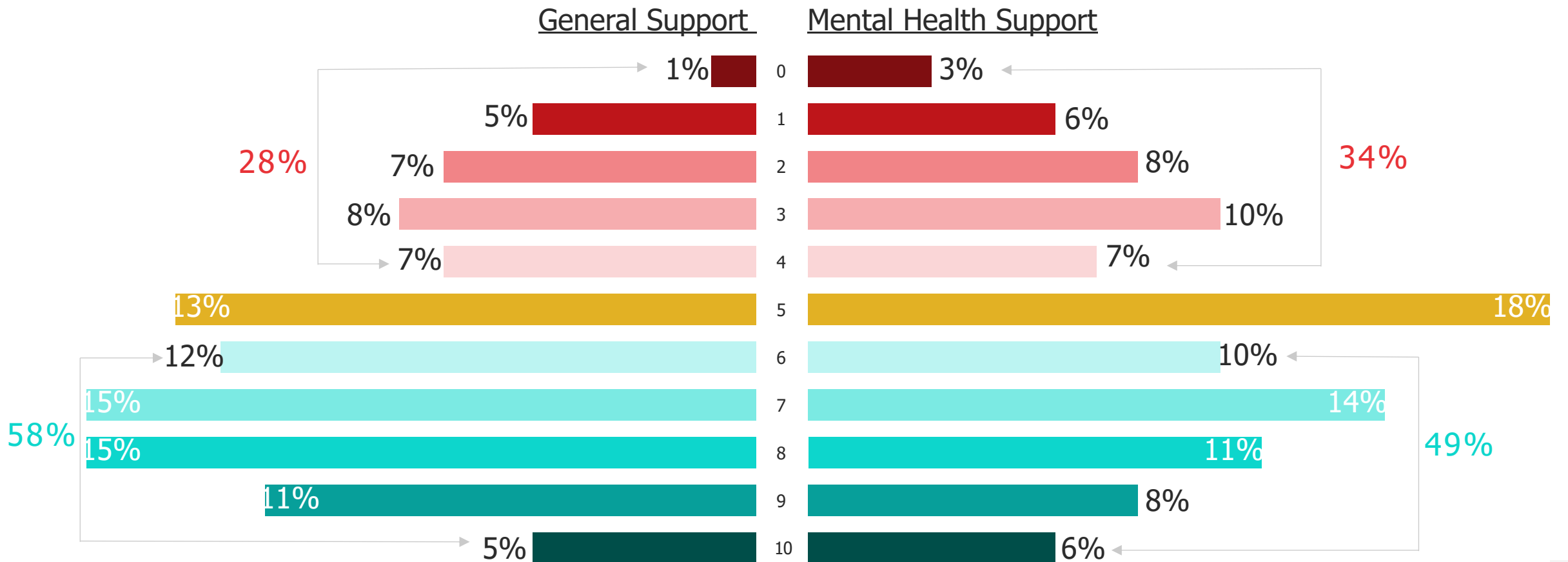


Total Stigma = A lot + Some

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Emergency physicians report feeling more general support than mental health support from their workplace.

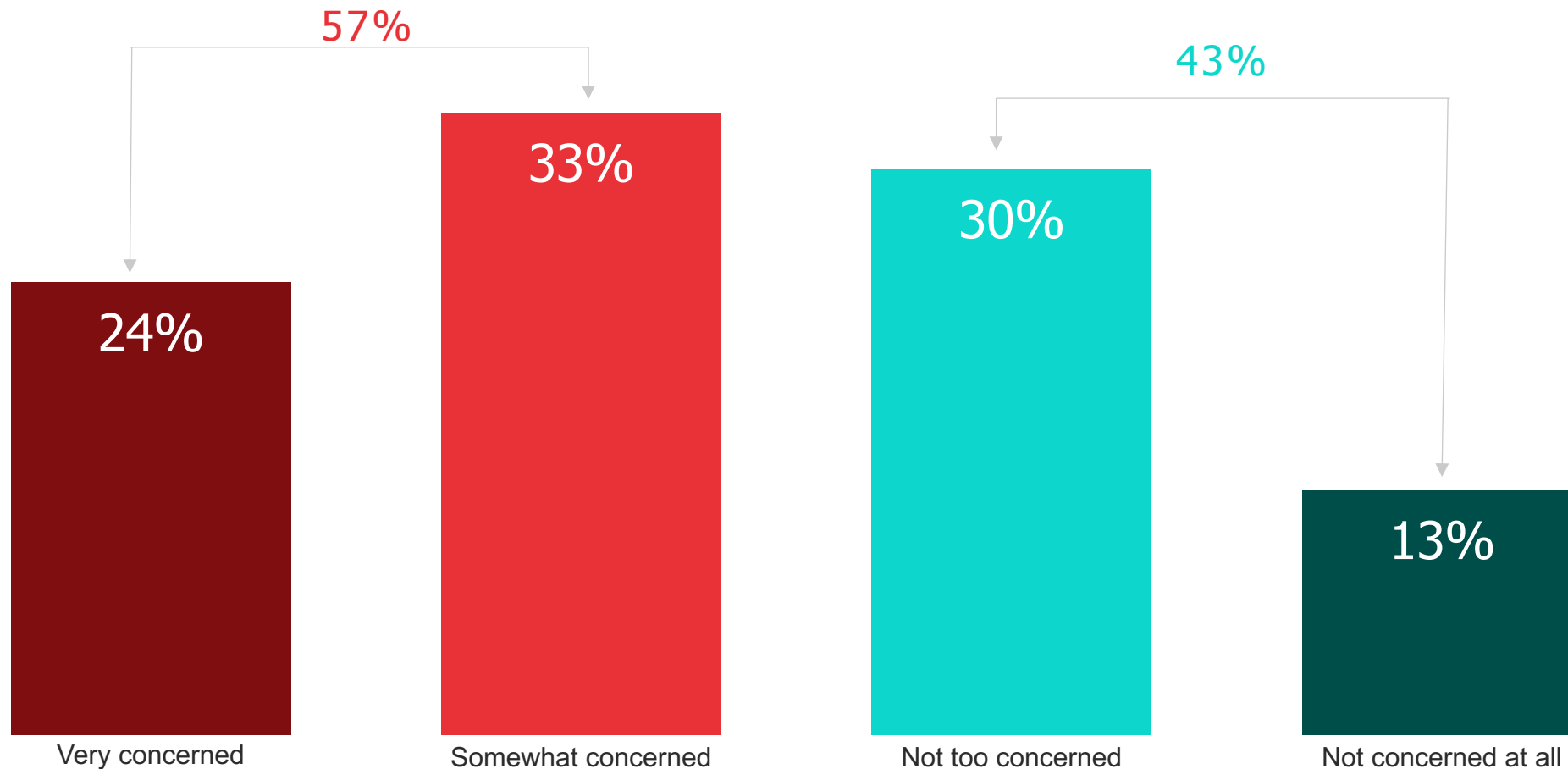
Please use the sliding scale to indicate the level of support you feel from your place of work if you were to seek mental health treatment, where 0 is not supported at all and 10 is extremely supported.



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Nearly three in five emergency physicians (57 percent) report they would be concerned for their job if they were to seek mental health treatment.

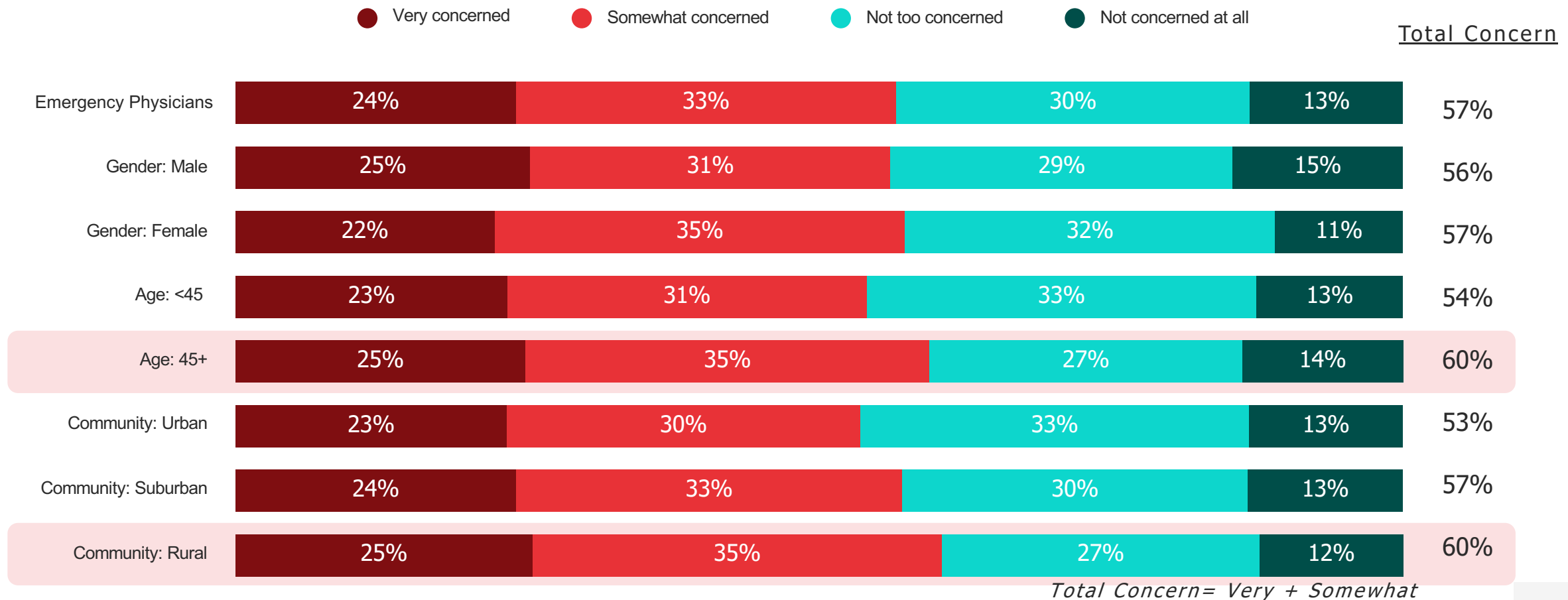
How concerned would you be for your job if you were to seek mental health treatment?



ACEP20

Older and rural emergency physicians are the most concerned for their job if they were to seek mental health treatment.

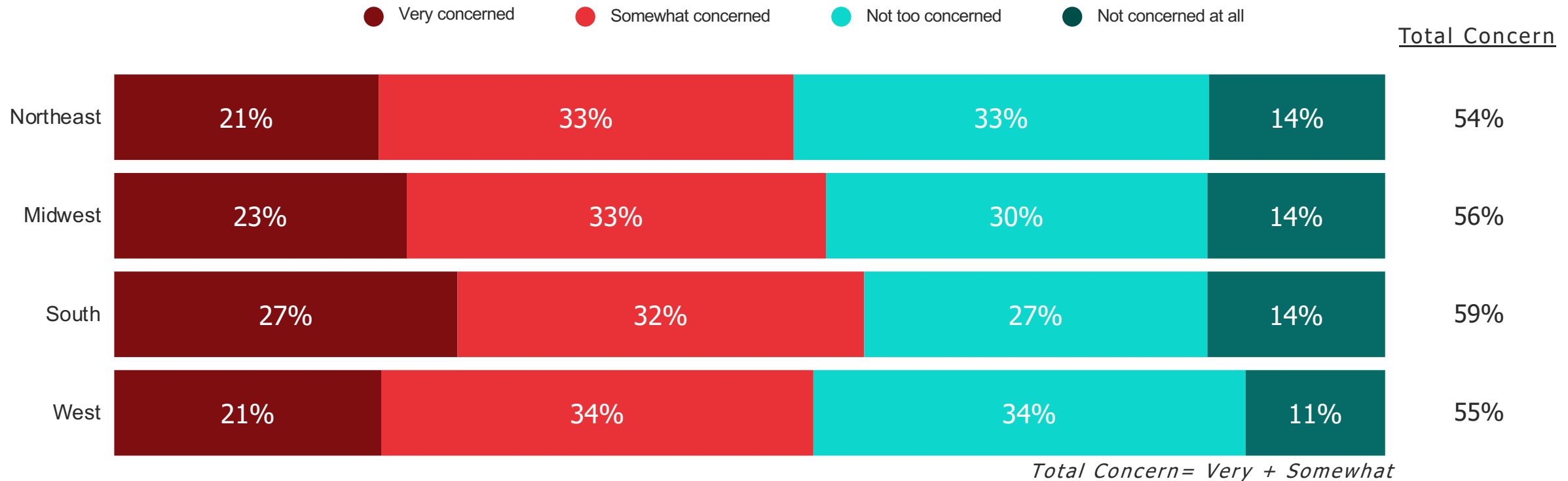
How concerned would you be for your job if you were to seek mental health treatment?



ACEP20

Emergency physicians across the four-point census region would be concerned about their job if they were to seek mental health treatment, particularly in the South.

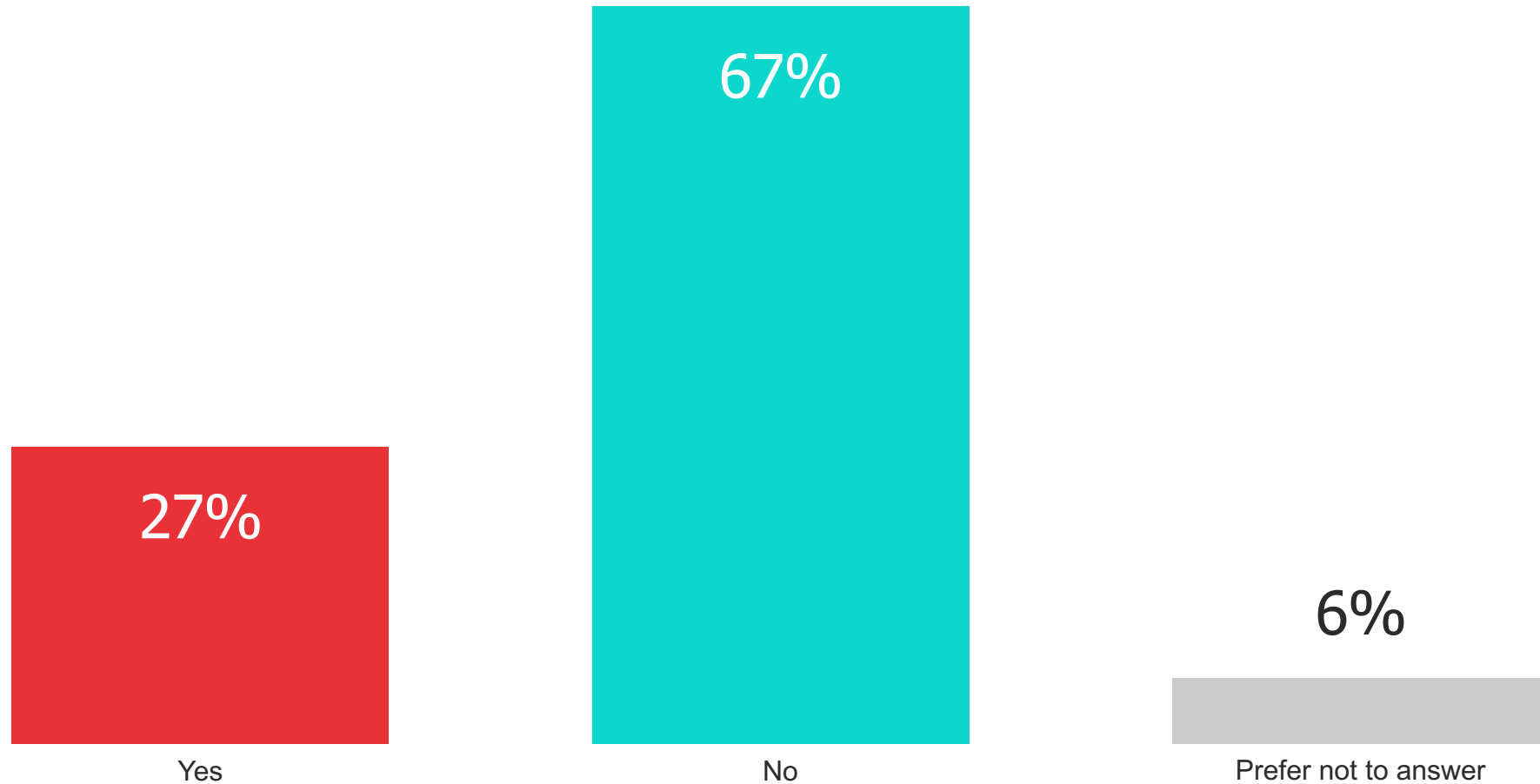
How concerned would you be for your job if you were to seek mental health treatment?



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More than a quarter (27 percent) report they have avoided seeking mental health treatment in fear of professional repercussions.

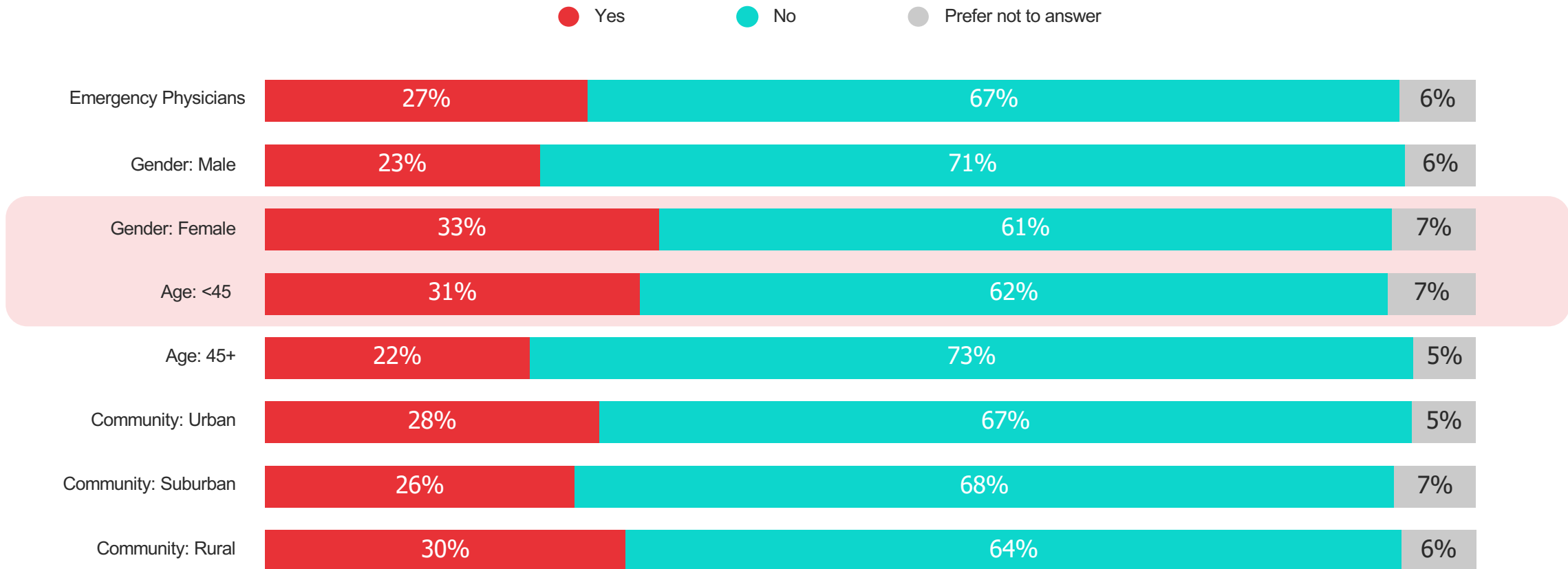
Have you ever avoided seeking mental health treatments in fear of professional repercussions?



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This avoidance is most highly reported by female and younger emergency physicians and those working in rural communities.

Have you ever avoided seeking mental health treatments in fear of professional repercussions?



ACEP20

Emergency physicians who reported not seeking mental health treatments in fear of professional repercussions cited job security, professional stigma, and future job opportunities as reasons why.

You reported that you have avoided seeking mental health treatments in fear of professional repercussions. In a few sentences, please describe why you avoided mental health treatments.

“ I felt concerned that my job would be in jeopardy or others would question my ability to do my job.

“ There are questions on medical license applications about if you've ever been treated for mental health. I don't want to be perceived as unfit for duty.

“ I do not want to get diagnosed with a mental health condition then have to report it on job applications or medical licensing applications/renewals. I am afraid I would potentially lose my job, future job opportunities, license, and eligibility for disability insurance.

“ In medical school, I avoided treatment as I believed it would affect residency applications, licensing eligibility, etc.

“ I am concerned about reporting to state licensing boards and retaliatory actions taken by these boards.

“ Would have to declare on reappointment, explain and risk potential limits on practice.

“ Professional stigma.

“ I thought that if I sought treatment for ADHD/anxiety that it would make me a lesser candidate for EM positions.



 **MORNING CONSULT**