

CONFRONTING STIGMA & DISCRIMINATION

Results from the BC People Living with HIV Stigma Index Study

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BACKGROUND

The international People Living with HIV Stigma Index (PLHSI) was developed by and for people living with HIV, in collaboration from members of BC community, agency and academic. The BC People Living with HIV (PLHIV) Stigma Index study was the first implementation of the international PLHIV Stigma Index tool in Canada. Worldwide, the PLHSI has been implemented in 90 countries, 2,000 PLHIV have been trained, and over 100,000 PLHIV have been interviewed. The questionnaire has been translated into 54 languages.

PURPOSE

In this analysis, we explore participant experiences of stigma and discrimination and responses to confronting HIV-related stigma and discrimination.

METHODS

- **Study development:** A community-led team developed the protocol and adapted the international tool for the BC context implementing an informed consent and confidentiality forms. Digital data were stored in servers geographically located in Canada.
- **Peer researcher training and support:** Peer researchers were recruited and trained through PAN and Positive Living BC. Training included: the questionnaire content, HIV-related stigma and discrimination experiences, interview skills and research methods, data administration via fluid surveys, and CBR designs.
- **Recruitment:** Adults living with HIV in BC were recruited through quota sampling to achieve diversity in sex, age, sexual orientation, cultural background, and health region. Participants were recruited through a call center administered by a manager, and by PRA connections to the community.
- **Survey administration:** Peer-researchers administered the in-depth survey in a side-by-side format, with participants and peer-researchers discussing each question, before information was entered into a tablet. Participants provided demographic information and answered questions about experiences of stigma and discrimination, as well as practices around confronting stigma/discrimination. Participants received \$35 in appreciation for their time.
- **Data entry and analysis:** A team approach was used for data entry and analysis. Participant demographics were managed in a separate document, and their interview data was stored in fluid surveys, an electronic tool. An analysis and KT team guided data analysis, and reviewed and interpreted results. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize stigma/discrimination experiences, and bivariate statistics (t-test, Chi-square) to examine relationships among participant characteristics and confronting stigma/discrimination.

CONCLUSIONS

Peer-researcher interviewing produced rich information on stigma experiences and responses. While stigma and discrimination were pervasive experiences in participants' lives, the majority had confronted stigma/discrimination.



THE BC PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV STIGMA INDEX



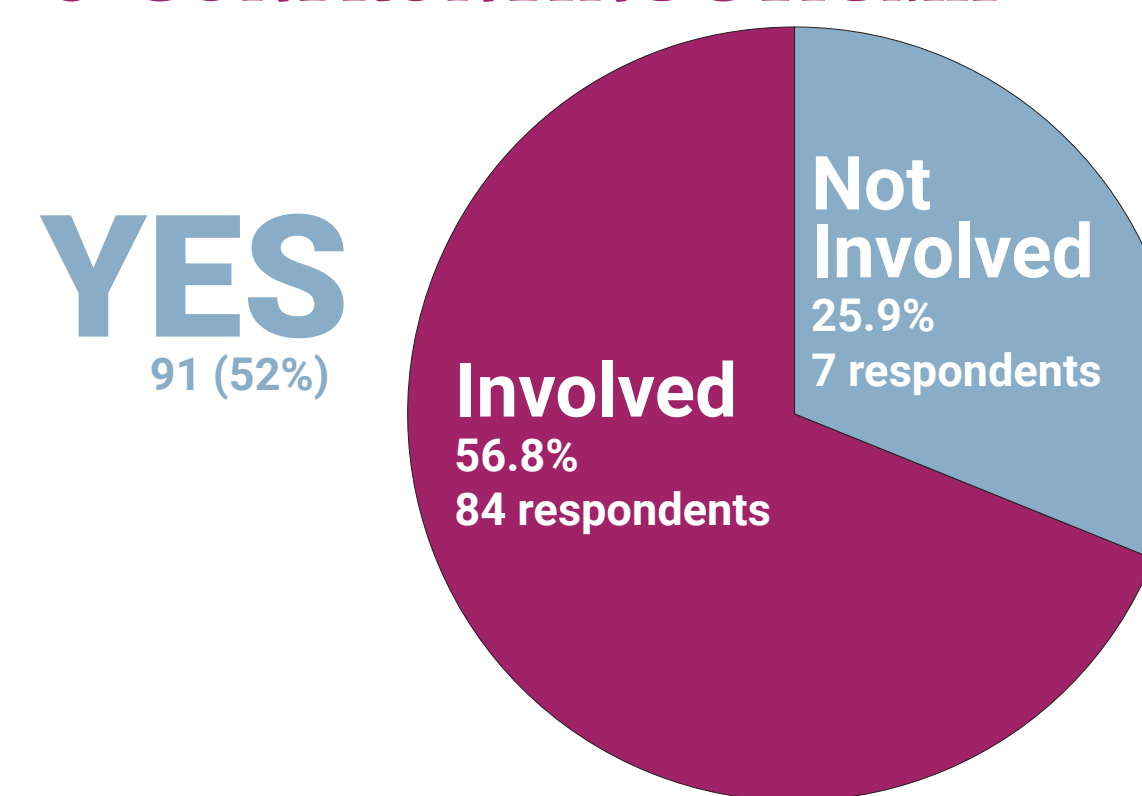
Participant Details	N	(%)
Sex		
Male	104	60%
Female	66	38%
Trans/Other	3	2%
Age (years)		
15-19	1	<1%
20-29	22	13%
30-39	61	35%
40-49	62	36%
50-59	22	13%
60-69	5	3%
Relationship Status		
Married/cohabitating	30	17%
In relationship, not living together	16	9%
Single	108	62%
Divorced/separated	12	7%
Widow/widower	8	5%
Population		
MSM	65	63%
Indigenous	41	23%
Used/use injection drugs	52	30%
Sex worker	34	19%
Prisoner	24	14%
Number of years living with HIV		
< 1 year	10	6%
1-4 years	40	23%
5-9 years	38	22%
10-14 years	60	34%
15-24 years	28	16%
Self-reported health		
Poor - fair	41	23%
Good	56	32%
Very good or Excellent	78	45%
Concurrent Conditions		
No HCV co-infection	102	58%
HCV co-infection	47	27%
HCV co-infection treated & cleared	27	15%
Physical disability	67	38%
Mental health issue or disability	110	67%
Health Region		
Interior	15	9%
Northern	23	13%
Fraser	38	22%
Vancouver Coastal	70	41%
Island	26	15%

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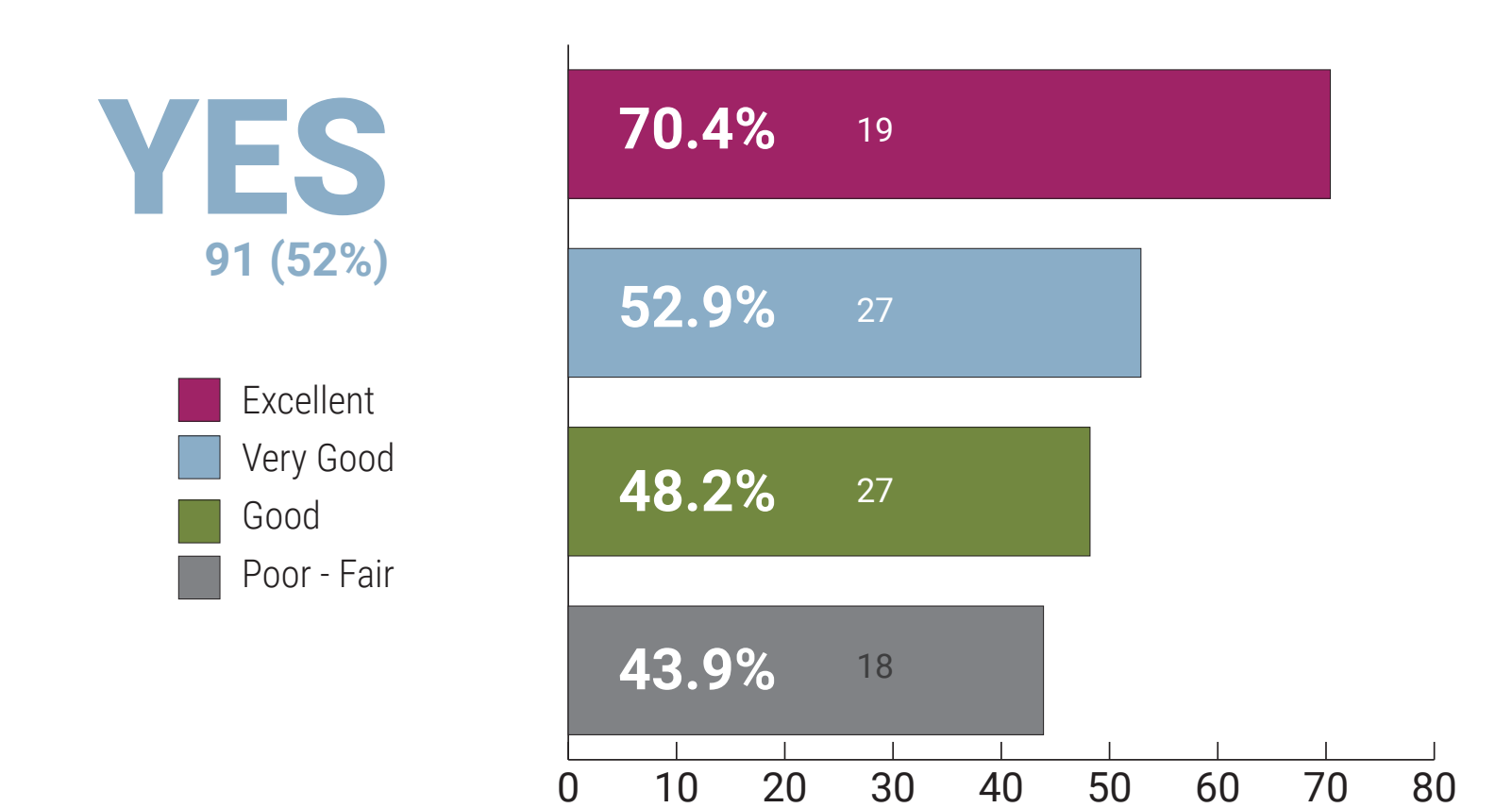
- **52%** have confronted or educated someone who was stigmatizing or discriminating against them in the last 12 months
- **33%** have sought help from organizations or individuals to help resolve an issue of stigma or discrimination
- **52%** felt disclosure of HIV status was empowering

In the last 12 months, have you confronted or educated someone who was stigmatizing or discriminating against you? (N:175)

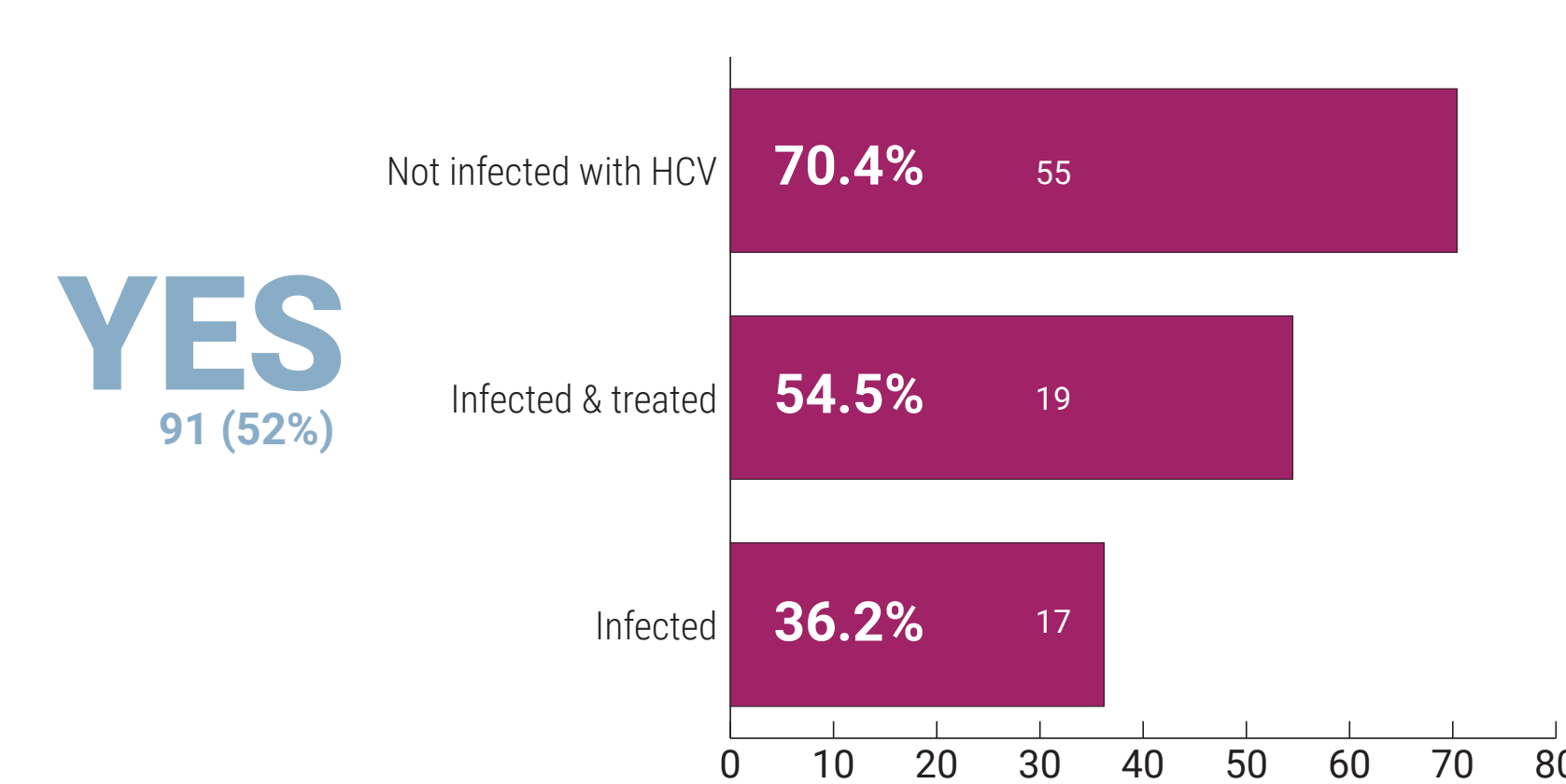
INVOLVEMENT IN THE HIV COMMUNITY & CONFRONTING STIGMA



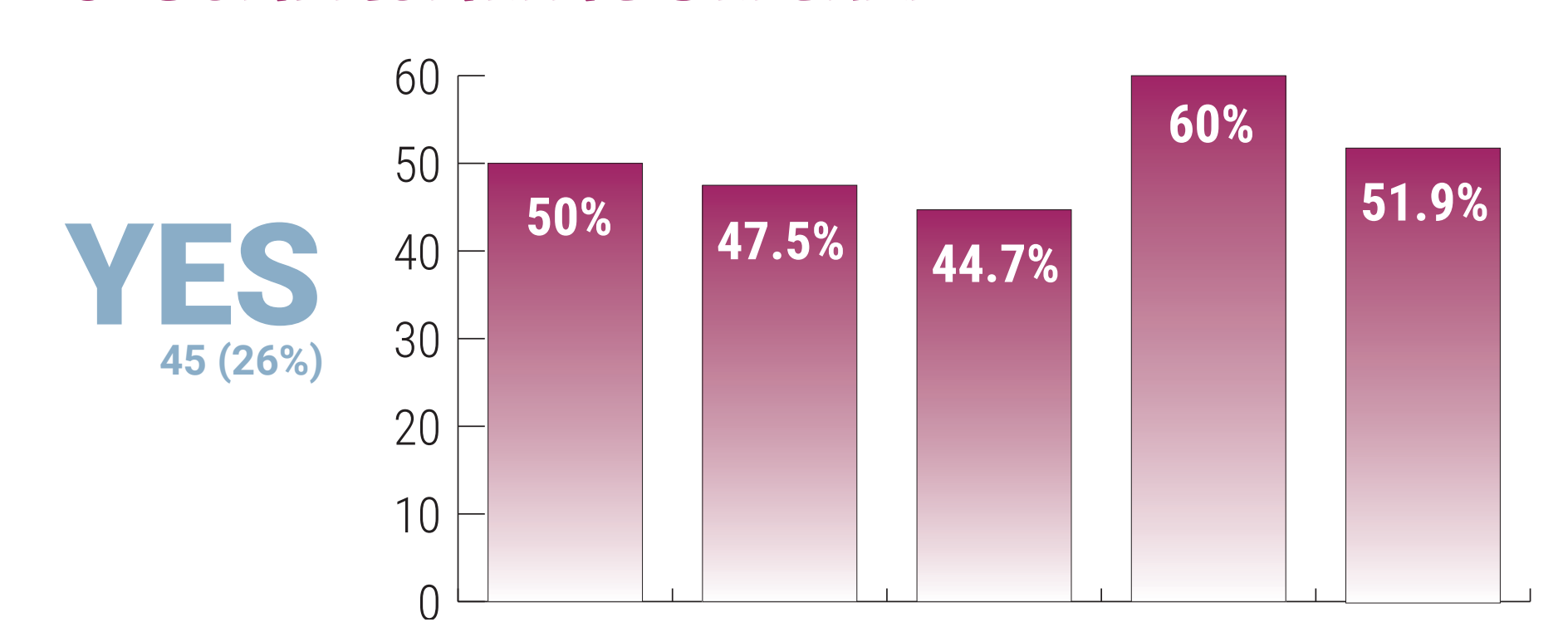
PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTH & CONFRONTING STIGMA



HCV INFECTION & CONFRONTING STIGMA



YEARS LIVING WITH HIV & CONFRONTING STIGMA

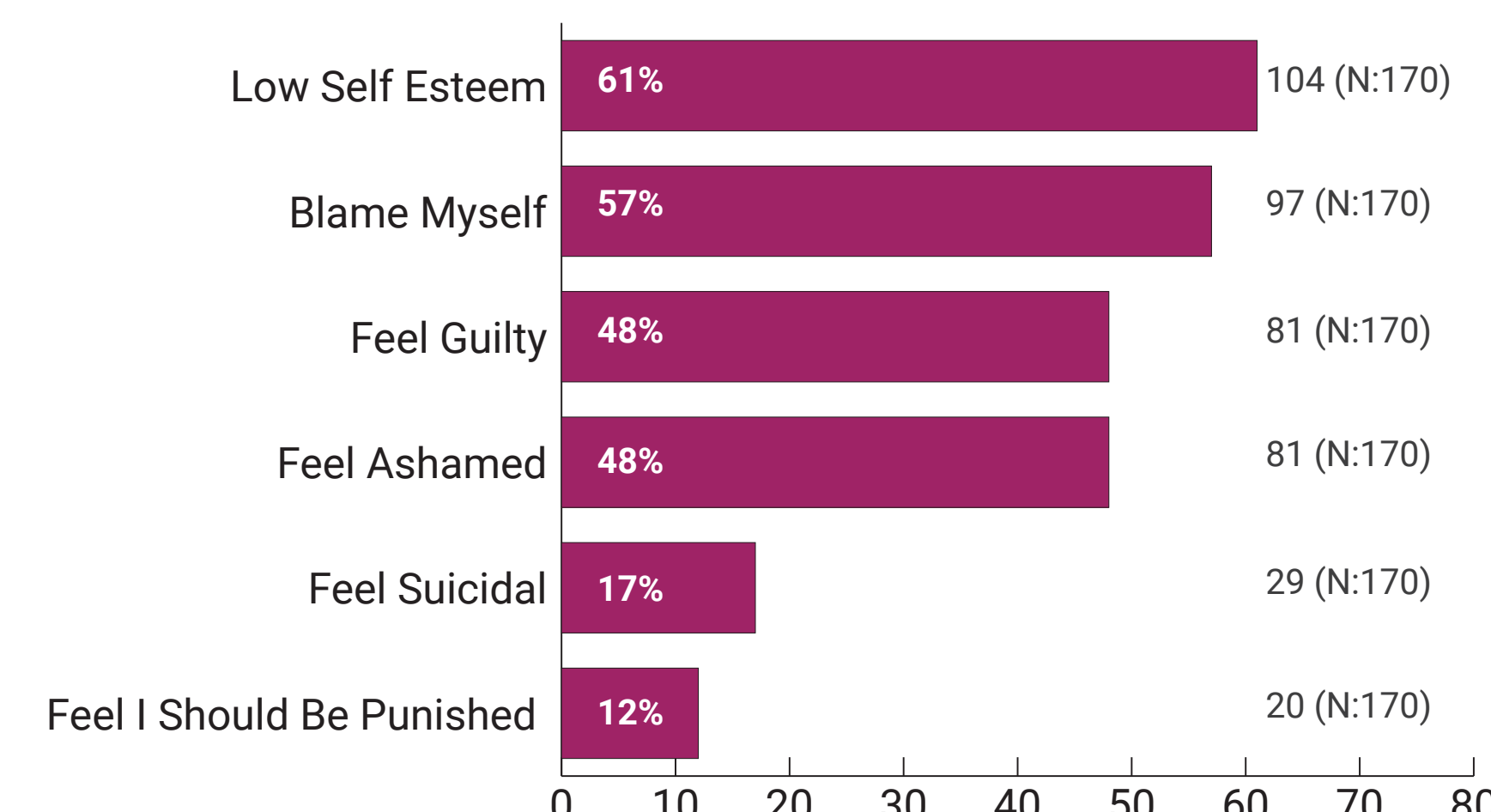


STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION EXPERIENCES

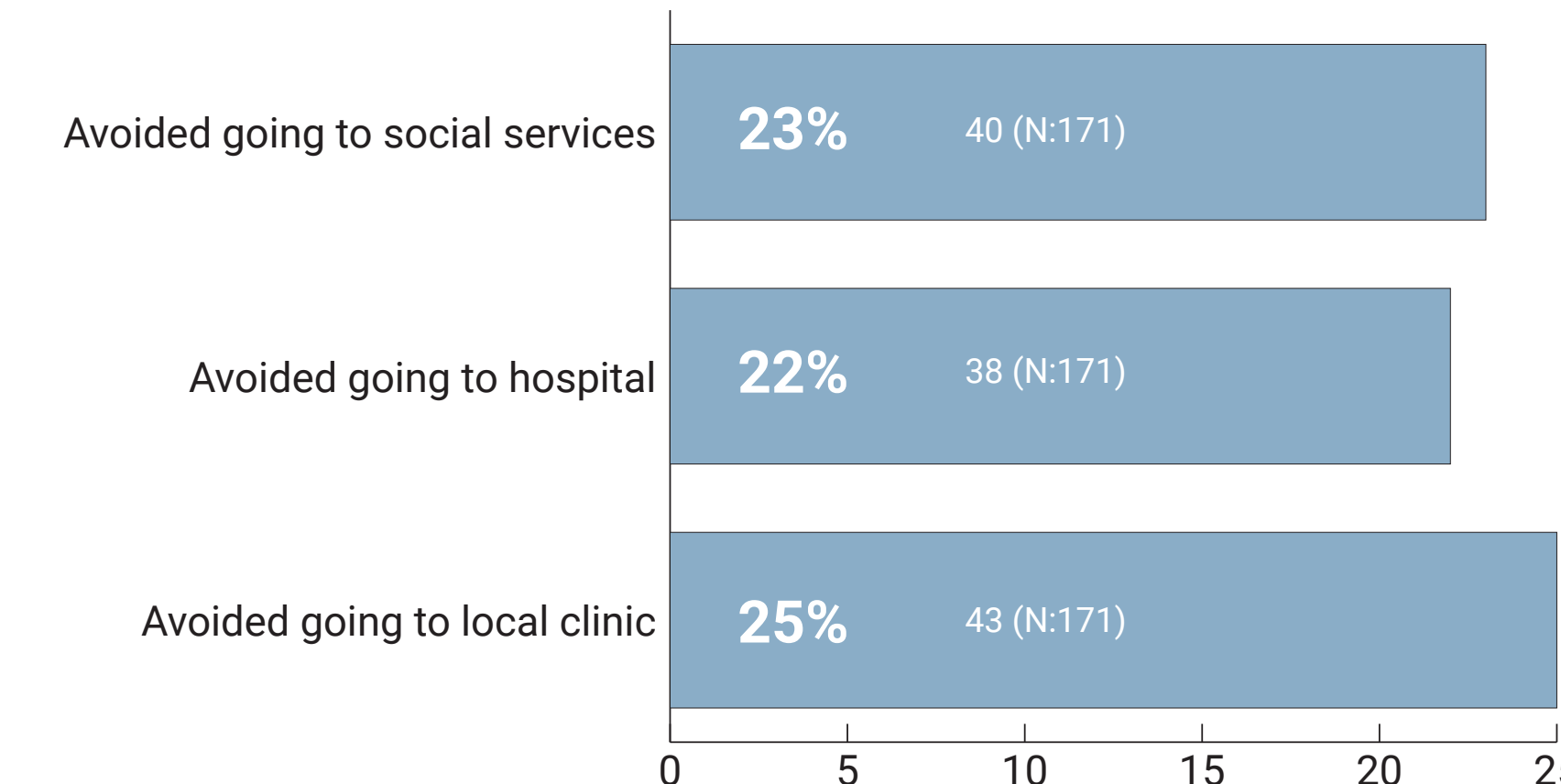
Fear of Stigma & Recrimination

- **52%** hesitate to test for HIV because of fears about how others would respond
- **70%** afraid they would be shunned by family & friends
- **56%** fearful of being verbally insulted, harassed and/or threatened
- **43%** fearful of being physically assaulted

INTERNAL STIGMA



AVOIDANCE OF HEALTH/SUPPORT SERVICES



SELF ISOLATION

