

Strong majority want improved access to psychologists: Ontario

Provincial Survey | Summary

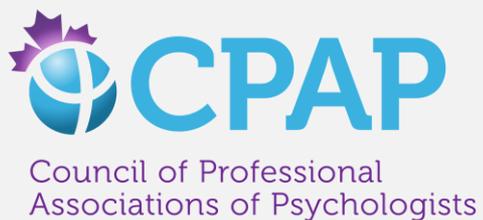
Conducted by Nanos for Canadian Psychological Association and the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists, December 2020
Submission 2020-1710B



CANADIAN
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Nanos Research was retained by the Canadian Psychological Association and the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists to conduct a study to gauge the impressions of Ontarians on issues related to mental health and the profession. This is Ontario report two (2) of two (2).

Role of psychologists

Just under one in four respondents from Ontario say they have the most confidence in psychologists when it comes to helping people with mental health problems

- **Respondents most frequently report having the most confidence in psychologists when it comes to helping people with mental health problems** – Just under one quarter of Ontarians (24%, 26% In 2011) say they have the most confidence in psychologists when it comes to helping people with mental health problems, followed by family doctor/physician (22%, up from 16% in 2011) and psychiatrists (18%, down from 34% in 2011). Under one in ten Ontarians say none (six per cent) and six per cent are unsure.
- **Three quarters of Ontarians think psychologists do something different than psychiatrists** – Just under three in four respondents (74%) think a psychologist does something different than a psychiatrist, while two in ten (21%) think they do the same thing. Five per cent are unsure.
- **Three in four think psychologists do something different than a counsellor** – Just under three in four Canadians (74%) think a psychologist does something different than a counsellor, while two in ten (20%) think they do the same thing. Six per cent are unsure.
- **Two thirds of respondents think psychologists do something different than psychotherapists** – Just over two in three respondents from Ontario (67%) think a psychologist does something different than a psychotherapist, while one in four (26%) think they do the same thing. Eight per cent are unsure.

Profession best able to care for mental health problems

- **Respondents are more likely to think a psychiatrist is best able to care for people with depression** – Asked which profession they think is best able to care for people living with depression, close to four in ten say a psychiatrist (38%), followed by a psychologist (31%), a counsellor (17%) and a psychotherapist (12%).

SUMMARY

Over three in ten respondents from Ontario are more likely to think a psychologist is best able to care for people with anxiety than other professionals

- **Respondents are more likely to think a psychologist is best able to care for people with anxiety than other professionals** – Asked which profession they think is best able to care for people living with anxiety, over one in three Ontarians (34%) say a psychologist, followed by a psychiatrist (27%), a counsellor (22%), and fifteen per cent say a psychotherapist.
- **Respondents more frequently say a counsellor is best able to care for people with addictions** – Asked which profession they think is best able to care for people living with addictions, respondents most frequently say a counsellor (42%), followed by a psychotherapist (19%), a psychiatrist (19%) and a psychologist (16%).
- **Respondents are more likely to think a psychiatrist is best able to care for people living with dementia** - Asked which profession they think is best able to care for people living with dementia, close to three in ten a psychiatrist (27%), followed by a psychotherapist (21%), psychologist (19%) and a counsellor (15%).
- **Respondents are more likely to say a counsellor or a psychologist is best at taking care of people living with learning disabilities** – Asked which profession they think is best able to care for people living with learning disabilities/ADHD, almost three in ten say a counsellor (29%) or a psychologist (28%), followed by one in five (19%) who say a psychotherapist, followed by a psychiatrist (17%).
- **A counsellor is most frequently said to be the professional best able to care for someone with stress of being diagnosed with a disease** – Asked which profession they think is best able to care for people living with the stress of being diagnosed with a disease like cancer, over four in ten say a counsellor (46%), followed by a psychologist (21%), a psychotherapist (14%), and a psychiatrist (13%).

Effectiveness of psychologists helping people who are living with mental health problems

- **Respondents most frequently say psychologists are effective at helping people who are living with depression** – More than one in three (35%) say psychologists are effective at helping people with depression, while under three in ten say they are somewhat effective (30%) or very effective (21%). Five per cent say they are not effective at all and nine per cent don't know.
- **More than one in three say psychologists are effective at helping people who are living with anxiety** – More than one in three (36%) say psychologists are effective at helping people with anxiety, while under three in ten say they are somewhat effective (30%) or very effective (22%). Three per cent say they are not effective at all and ten per cent don't know.
- **Opinions on the effectiveness of psychologists in helping people who are living with addictions remain consistent with 2011** – One in three Canadians say psychologists are effective (33%) or somewhat effective (34%), respectively, in helping people who are living with addictions, while one in five (20%) say they are very effective and seven per cent say they are not effective at all. Six per cent don't know. These results are comparable with tracking from 2011.
- **Psychologists are most frequently seen as somewhat effective at helping people living with dementia** – Close to four in ten (38%) say psychologists are somewhat effective in helping people living with dementia, while one in four (25%) say they are effective and under one in ten say they very effective (8%). Eighteen per cent say they are not effective at all nine per cent don't know. These results are comparable with tracking from 2011.
- **Respondents most frequently say psychologists are somewhat effective in helping people who are living with learning disabilities** – Close to four in ten say psychologists are somewhat effective (37%) or effective (30%), respectively, in helping people who are living with learning disabilities/ADHD, while under two in ten (15%) say they are very effective and 10 per cent say they are not effective at all. Nine per cent don't know. These results are comparable with tracking from 2011.

Over one in two respondents say psychologists are very effective (21%) or effective (35%) at helping people who are living with depression

Six in ten
Ontarians say
psychologists
are very
effective (20%)
or effective
(40%) at
diagnosing
people who are
living with
anxiety

- **Psychologists are most frequently seen as effective or somewhat effective in helping people living with the stress of being diagnosed with a disease like cancer** – One in three say they think psychologists are effective (32%) or somewhat effective (33%) in helping people living with the stress of being diagnosed with a disease like cancer, and under one in five (22%) say they are very effective. Five per cent say they are not effective at all. Nine per cent don't know. These results are comparable with tracking from 2011.

Effectiveness of psychologists diagnosing people who are living with mental health problems

- **Respondents most frequently say they think psychologists are effective in diagnosing people living with depression** – Over four in ten Canadians (43%) say they think psychologists are effective in diagnosing people living with depression, while one in four each say they are somewhat effective (25%) or very effective (19%). Four per cent say they are not effective at all and nine per cent don't know.
- **Respondents most frequently say they think psychologists are effective in diagnosing people living with anxiety** – Four in ten (40%) say they think psychologists are effective in diagnosing people living with anxiety, while more than one in four say they are somewhat effective (27%) and one in five say they are very effective (20%). Three per cent say they are not effective at all and nine per cent don't know.
- **Just under four in ten say psychologists are effective in diagnosing people living with addictions** – Just under four in ten (38%) say they think psychologists are effective in diagnosing people living with addictions, while three in ten say they are somewhat effective (29%) and two in ten say they are very effective (19%). Five per cent say they are not effective at all and nine per cent don't know.
- **Respondents most frequently say psychologists are effective or somewhat effective in diagnosing people living with dementia** – Over one in three (35%) say psychologists are effective in diagnosing people living with dementia, while just under one in three (32%) say they are somewhat effective. Eleven per cent say they are very effective or not effective at all. Ten per cent don't know.

SUMMARY

A strong majority of respondents from Ontario support (58%) or somewhat support (27%) improving access to psychologists through the publicly-funded health care system

- **Respondents most frequently say psychologists are effective or somewhat effective in diagnosing people living with learning disabilities/ADHD** – One in three (34%) say psychologists are effective or somewhat effective in diagnosing people living with dementia. Under two in ten say they are very effective (18%) and eight per cent say they are not effective at all. Seven per cent don't know.
- **Respondents most frequently say they are confident or somewhat confident in the care psychologists provide** – Just over one in three say they are confident (36%) or somewhat confident (35%) in psychologists and the care they provide when it comes to mental health, while fourteen per cent say they are very confident. Six per cent say they are not confident at all and ten per cent are unsure. These results are comparable with tracking from 2011.
- **Respondents are more likely to think that they can access the services of a psychologist in the publicly-funded health care system within a somewhat unreasonable or unreasonable period of time** – Over four in ten respondents say to the best of their knowledge they are able to access the services of a psychologist in the publicly-funded health care system within a somewhat unreasonable (23%) or unreasonable (21%) period of time. Just over three in ten say services are accessible within a reasonable (six per cent) or somewhat reasonable (25%) period of time, and 26 per cent are unsure.
- **A strong majority support or somewhat support improving access to psychologists through the publicly-funded health care system** – Over eight in ten support (58%) or somewhat support (27%) improving access to psychologists through the publicly-funded health care system, while under one in ten somewhat oppose (five per cent) or oppose this (two per cent). Eight per cent are unsure.

SUMMARY

Over seven in ten respondents say it is a very good (40%) or good (34%) idea to provide greater access to psychologists through employer health benefit plans

- **Respondents more often report they can definitely or think they can access a psychologist through their employer's health benefit plan within a reasonable period of time** – Asked if they are, to the best of their knowledge, able to access a psychologist through their employer's health benefit plan within a reasonable period of time, close to one in two say yes, definitely (16%) or yes, I think so (33%). Fifteen per cent say no, while 21 per cent report they are not employed, and 16 per cent are unsure.
- **Three in four respondents say providing greater access to psychologists through employer health benefit plans is a very good or good idea** – A majority of respondents say it is a very good idea (40%) or good idea (34%) to provide greater access to psychologists through employer health benefit plans (e.g. more sessions, higher financial caps), while 13 per cent say it is an average idea. Two per cent each say this is a poor idea or a very poor idea, and nine per cent are unsure.

Barriers to access

- **A strong majority of respondents say psychological services costing too much to pay by themselves is a very significant or somewhat significant barrier when deciding whether to access a psychologist** – Close to eight in ten say psychological services costing too much for them to pay themselves is a very significant (53%) or somewhat significant (25%) barrier to them deciding whether or not they should access a psychologist, which is consistent with the previous wave. More than one in ten say this is a somewhat not significant (eight per cent) or not significant (five per cent) barrier, and nine per cent are unsure.
- **Three in four respondents say psychologists not being covered by their provincial or territorial health plan is a very significant or somewhat significant barrier when deciding whether to access a psychologist** – Consistent with the previous wave of research, a majority of respondents say psychologists not being covered by their provincial/ territorial health plan is a very significant (52%) or somewhat significant (24%) barrier to them deciding whether or not they should access a psychologist. Under two in ten say this is a somewhat not significant (eight per cent) or not significant (six per cent) barrier, and 10 per cent are unsure.

SUMMARY

Two-thirds of Ontarians say the length of wait times being too long to see a psychologist is a very significant (36%) or significant (30%) barrier to access care

- **Two thirds say psychological services not being covered by their employer’s health benefit plan is a very significant or somewhat significant barrier when deciding whether to access a psychologist** – A majority of respondents say psychological services not being covered by their employer’s health benefit plan is a very significant (43%) or somewhat significant (25%) barrier to them deciding whether or not they should access a psychologist, consistent with the previous wave. Almost one in four say this is a somewhat not significant (nine per cent) or not significant (14%) barrier, and 9 per cent are unsure.
- **Two thirds say the length of wait times to see a psychologist is a very significant or somewhat significant barrier when deciding whether to access a psychologist** – Consistent with the previous wave of research, two thirds say the wait times to see a psychologist being too long is a very significant (36%) or somewhat significant (30%) barrier to them deciding whether or not they should access a psychologist. Two in ten say this is a somewhat not significant (12%) or not significant (seven per cent) barrier, and 15 per cent are unsure.
- **Respondents are divided on how significant preferring to deal with problems and disorders on their own is as a barrier when deciding whether to access a psychologist** – Close to one in two say preferring to deal with these problems/disorders on their own is a very significant (17%) or somewhat significant (30%) barrier to them deciding whether or not they should access a psychologist, while the same proportion say this is a somewhat not significant (21%) or not significant (25%) barrier. Seven per cent are unsure. This is comparable with the previous wave of research.
- **Over half say not wanting others to know they are seeing a psychologist is not significant or somewhat not significant as a barrier when deciding whether to access a psychologist** – Respondents more often say not wanting others to know they are seeing a psychologist is not significant (34%) or somewhat not significant (20%) as a barrier to them deciding whether or not they should access a psychologist, consistent with the previous wave. Four in ten say this is a very significant (17%) or somewhat significant (24%) barrier, and six per cent are unsure.

Collaboration with health professionals

- **A strong majority say psychologists working collaboratively with other health professionals in primary care teams is a very good or good idea** – Eight in ten say it is a very good idea (47%) or good idea (33%) for psychologists to work collaboratively with other health professionals, such as family physicians in primary care teams. Eleven per cent say this is an average idea, under two percent think this is a poor idea or very poor idea. Eight per cent are unsure.

Nanos conducted an online survey of 657 residents of Ontario between September 25th, 2020 and October 2nd, 2020. This was part of a larger national study of 3,070 Canadians 18 years of age or older, between September 25th, 2020 and October 2nd, 2020. The results were statistically checked and weighted by age and gender using the latest Census information and the sample is geographically stratified to be representative of the population.

The research was commissioned by the Canadian Psychological Association and the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists and was conducted by Nanos Research.

Eight in ten respondents from Ontario say psychologists working collaboratively with other health professionals in primary care teams is a very good (47%) or good (33%) idea

Confidence in health professionals



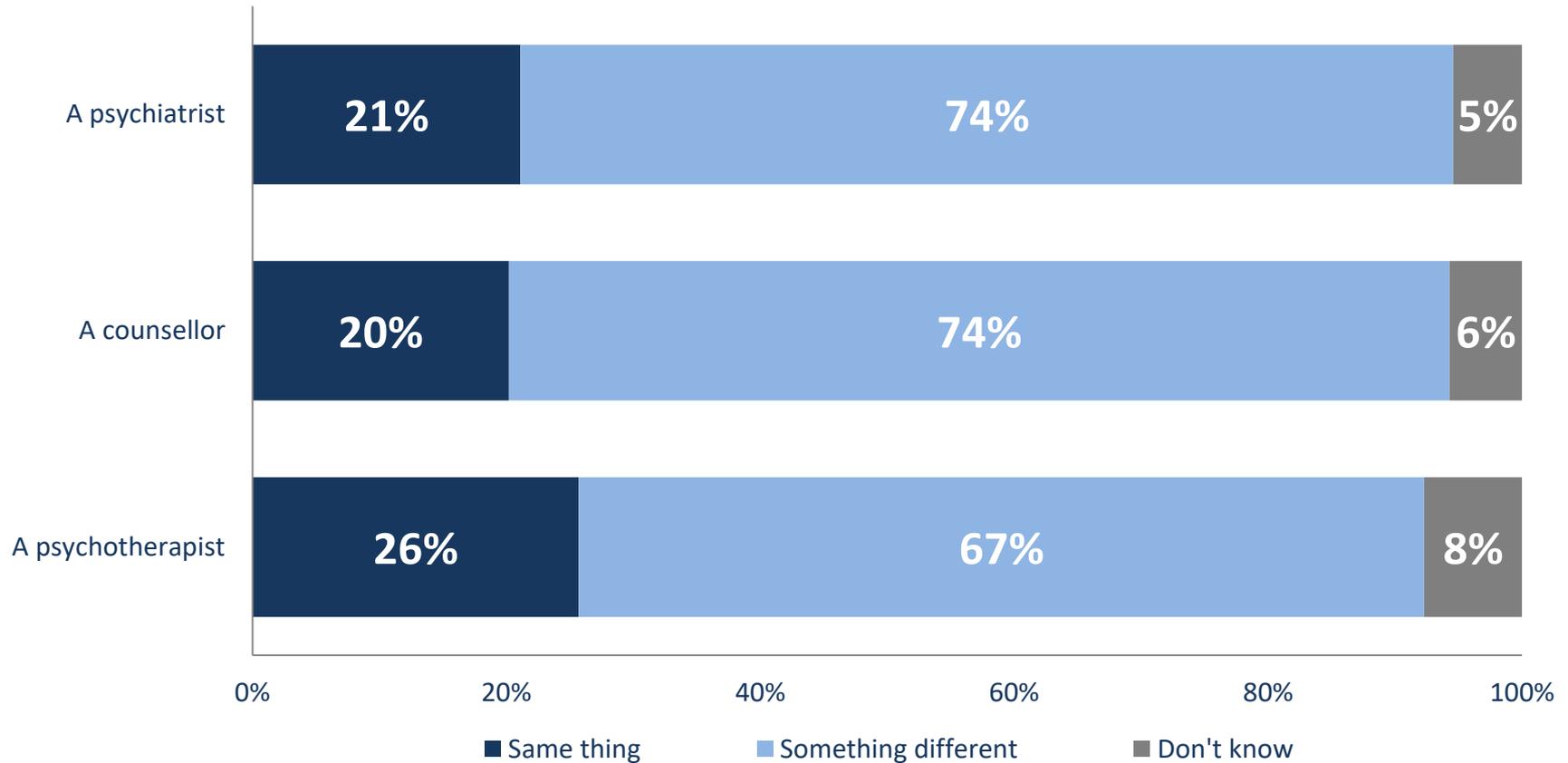
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Top mentions	2020 (n=595)	2011 (n=582)
Psychologist	24%	26%
Family doctor/physician	22%	16%
Psychiatrist	18%	34%
Therapist	8%	NA
Unsure	6%	1%
None	6%	1%
Mental health professionals/team of doctors	4%	NA

QUESTION – What health professional do you have the most confidence in, overall, when it comes to helping people with mental health problems? (open-ended)

Psychologists compared to other professionals



*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding

QUESTION – Do you think a psychologist does the same thing or something different as each of the following?
[RANDOMIZE]

Professional best able to care for people living with depression

Top Mentions	Ontario (n=644)
Psychiatrist	38%
Psychologist	31%
Counsellor	17%
Psychotherapist	12%
Doctor/nurse	2%
Alternative medicine/practitioner	0.3%

QUESTION – Which profession do you think is best able to care for people living with the following mental health problems? [RANDOMIZE]

Depression

Professional best able to care for people living with anxiety

Top Mentions	Ontario (n=647)
Psychologist	34%
Psychiatrist	27%
Counsellor	22%
Psychotherapist	15%
Doctor/nurse	1%
Alternative medicine/practitioners	1%

QUESTION – Which profession do you think is best able to care for people living with the following mental health problems? [RANDOMIZE]

Anxiety

Professional best able to care for people living with addictions

Top Mentions	Ontario (n=643)
Counsellor	42%
Psychotherapist	19%
Psychiatrist	19%
Psychologist	16%
Specialists	2%
Doctor/nurse	2%

QUESTION – Which profession do you think is best able to care for people living with the following mental health problems? [RANDOMIZE]

Addictions

Professional best able to care for people living with dementia

Top Mentions

Ontario
(n=639)

Psychiatrist	27%
Psychotherapist	21%
Psychologist	19%
Counsellor	15%
Doctor/nurse	9%
Specialists	7%

QUESTION – Which profession do you think is best able to care for people living with the following mental health problems? [RANDOMIZE]

Dementia

Professional best able to care for people living with learning disabilities

Top Mentions	Ontario (n=640)
Counsellor	29%
Psychologist	28%
Psychotherapist	19%
Psychiatrist	17%
Specialist	3%
Doctor/nurse	2%

QUESTION – Do you think a psychologist does the same thing or something different as each of the following?
[RANDOMIZE]

Learning disabilities/ADHD

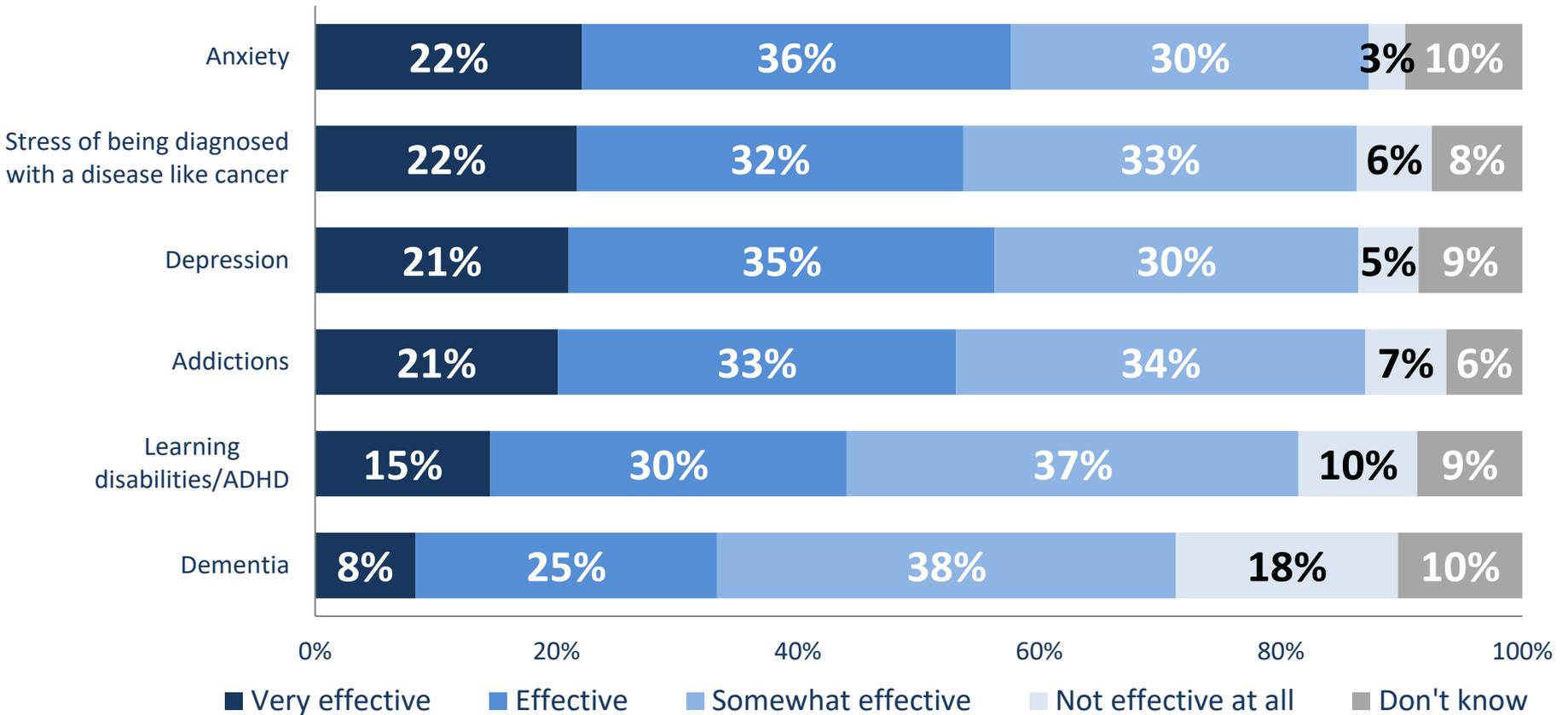
Professional best able to care for people living with stress of being diagnosed with a disease

Top Mentions	Ontario (n=644)
Counsellor	46%
Psychologist	21%
Psychotherapist	14%
Psychiatrist	13%
Specialist	2%
Doctor/nurse	2%

QUESTION – Do you think a psychologist does the same thing or something different as each of the following?
[RANDOMIZE]

Stress of being diagnosed with a disease like cancer

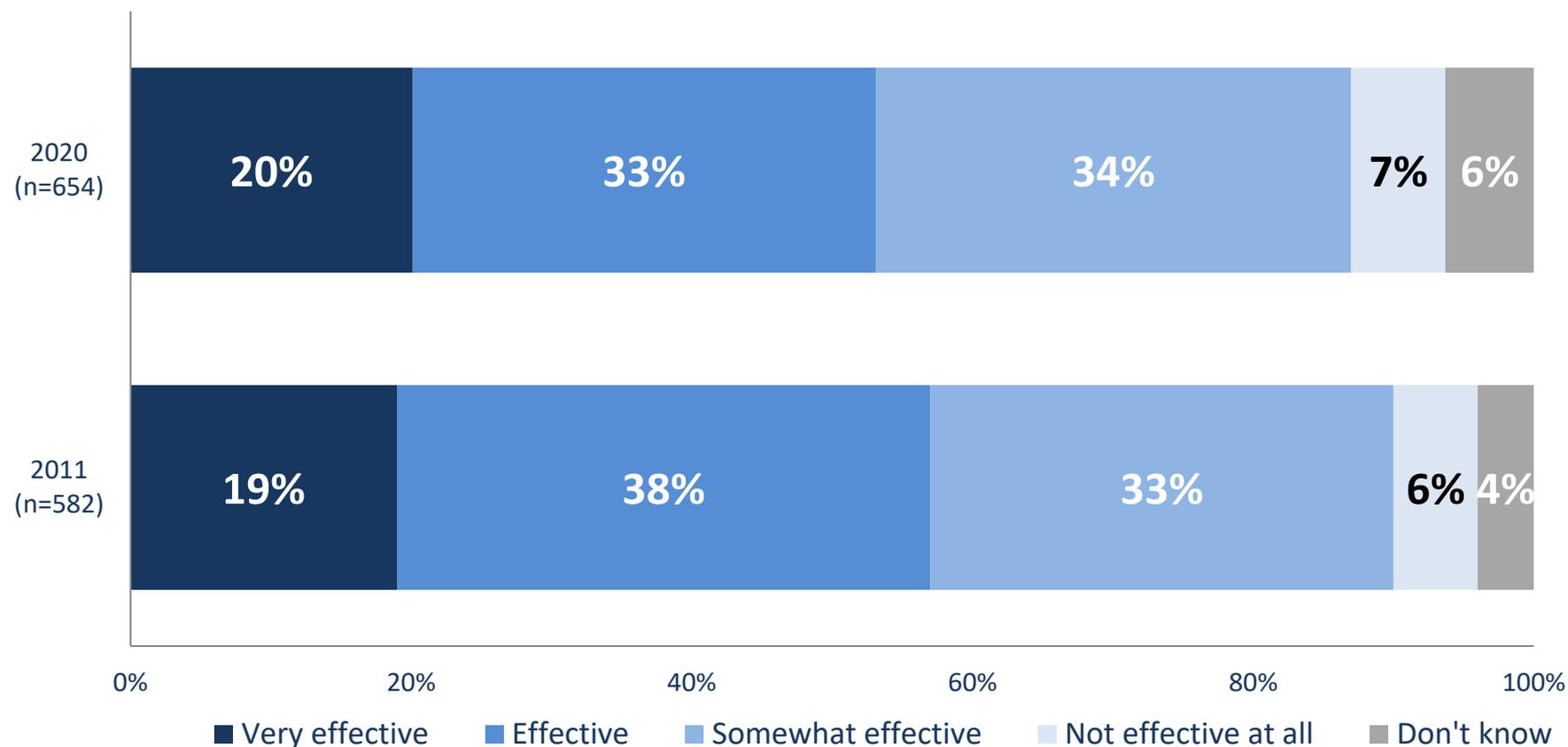
Effectiveness of psychologists in helping people



*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding

QUESTION – How effective do you feel psychologists are in helping people who are living with the following mental health problems or disorders? [RANDOMIZE]

Effectiveness of psychologists in helping people coping with addictions - Tracking

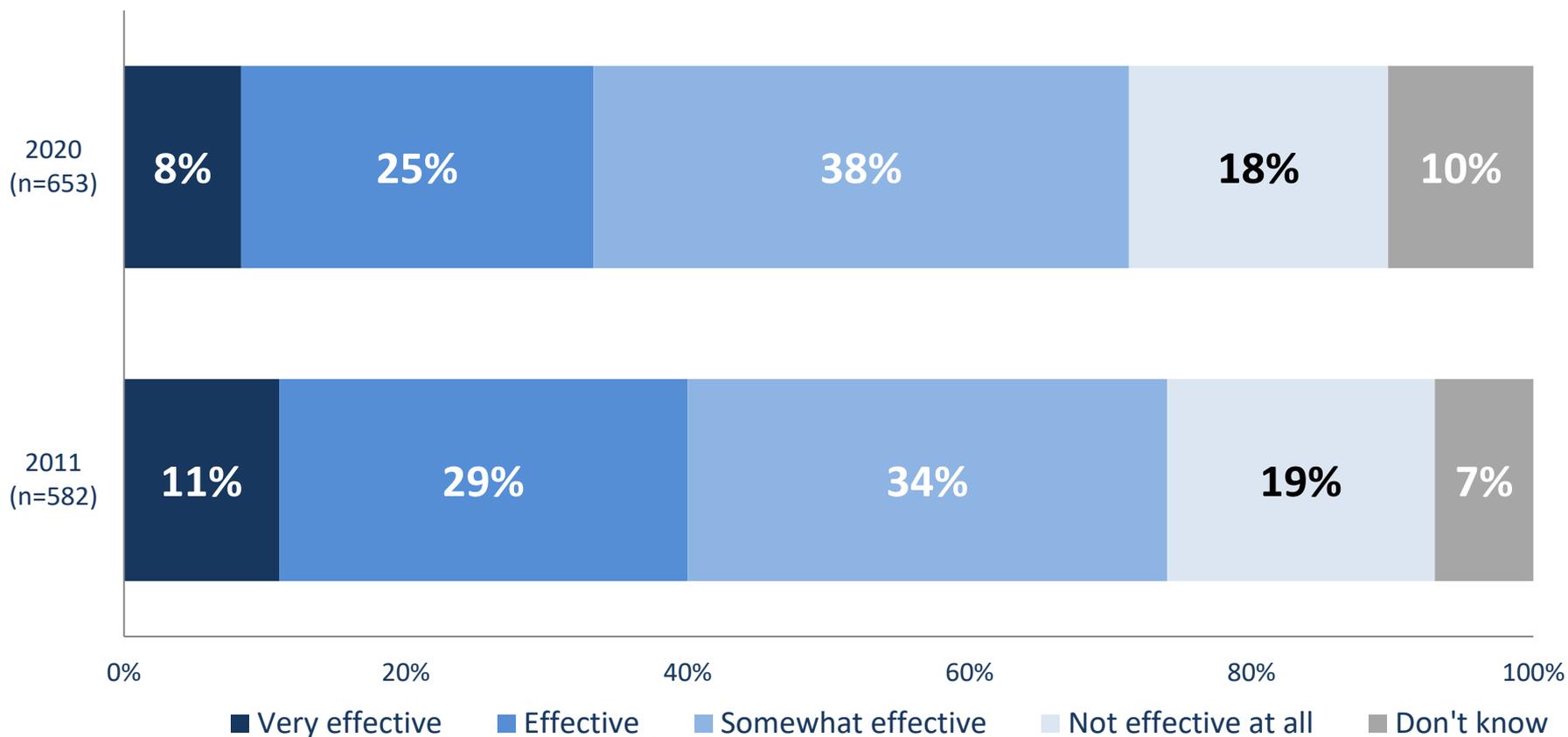


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QUESTION – How effective do you feel psychologists are in helping people who are living with the following mental health problems or disorders? [RANDOMIZE]

Addictions

Effectiveness of psychologists in helping people coping with dementia - Tracking

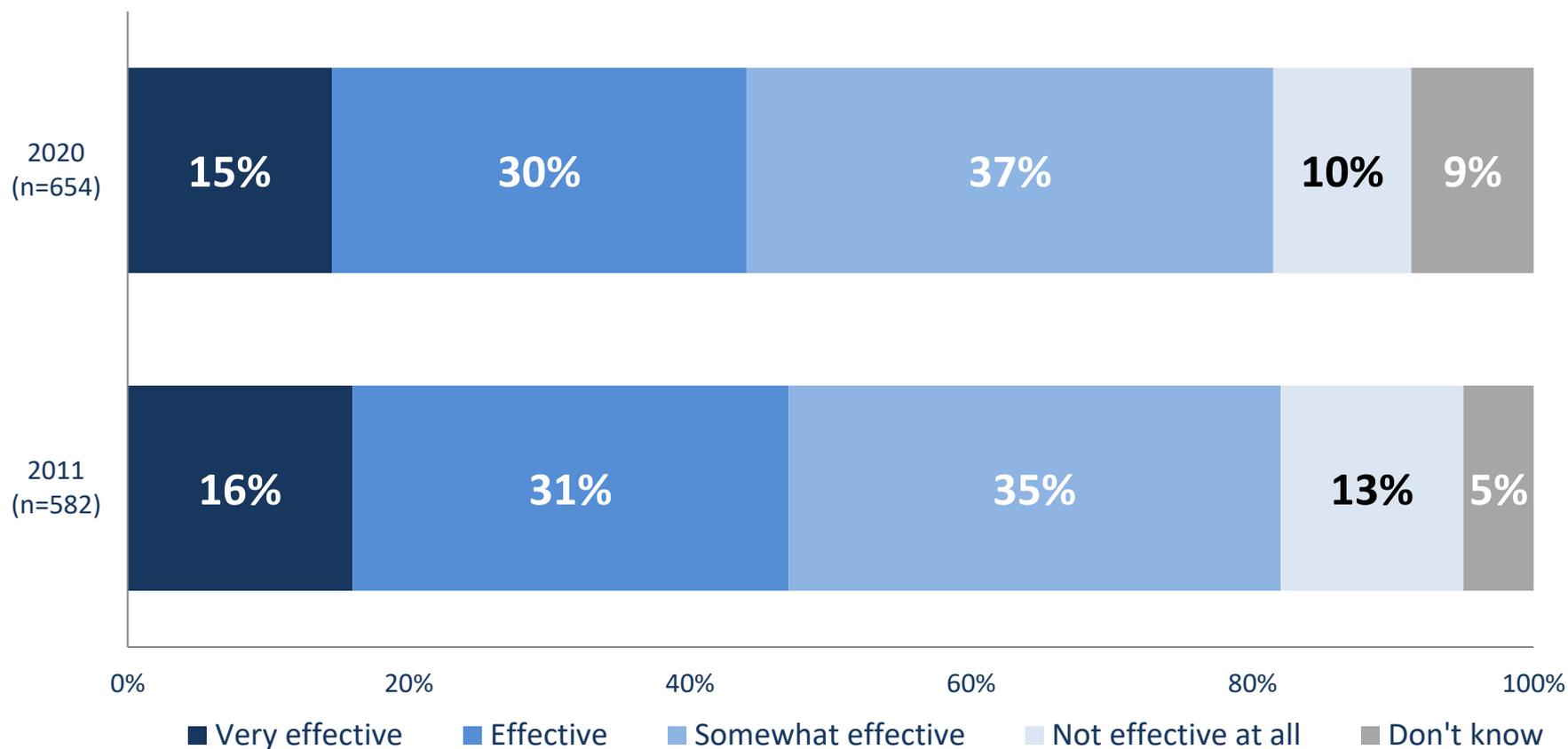


*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding

QUESTION – How effective do you feel psychologists are in helping people who are living with the following mental health problems or disorders? [RANDOMIZE]

Dementia

Effectiveness of psychologists in helping people coping with learning disabilities - Tracking

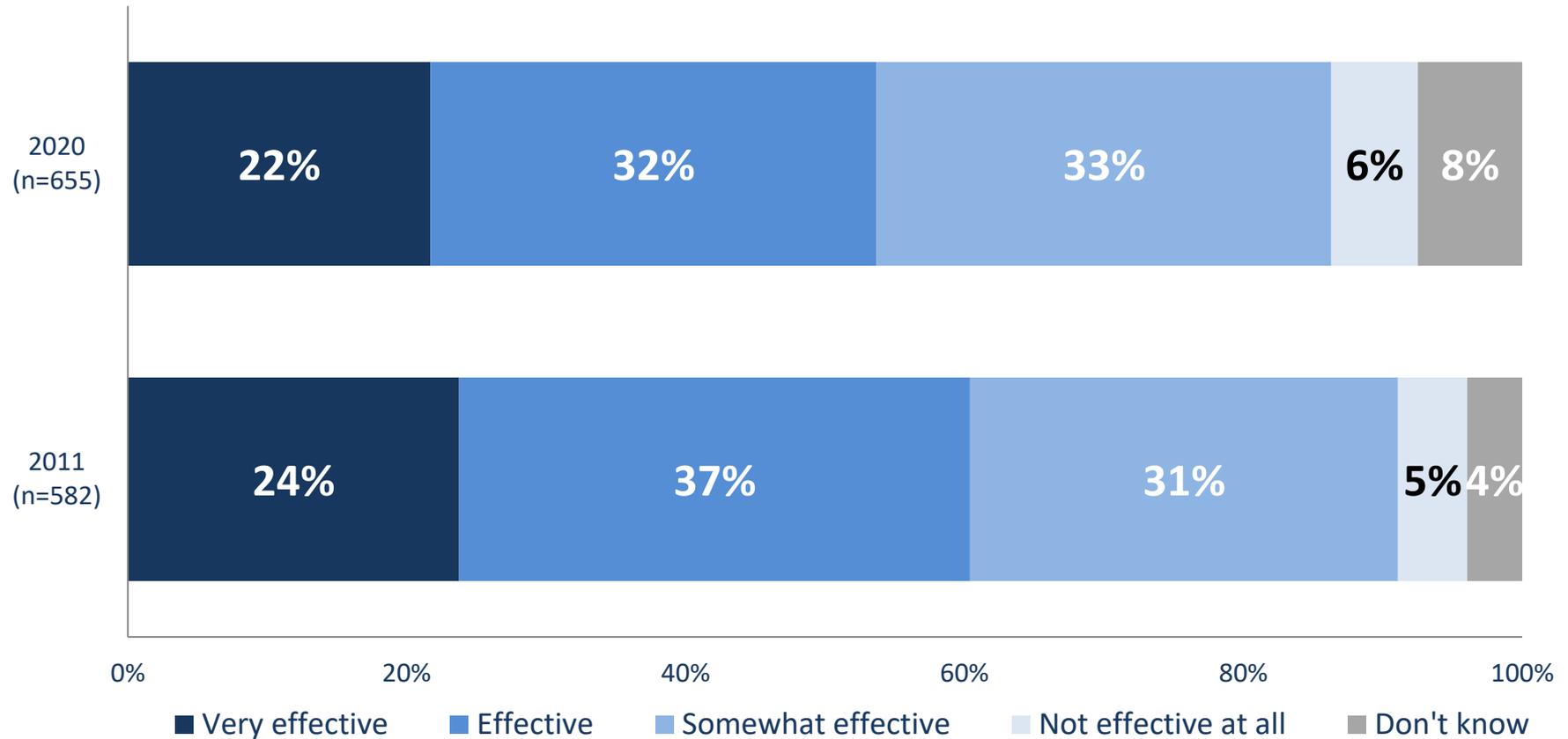


*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding

QUESTION – How effective do you feel psychologists are in helping people who are living with the following mental health problems or disorders? [RANDOMIZE]

Learning disabilities/ADHD

Effectiveness of psychologists in helping people coping with the stress of being diagnosed with a disease - Tracking

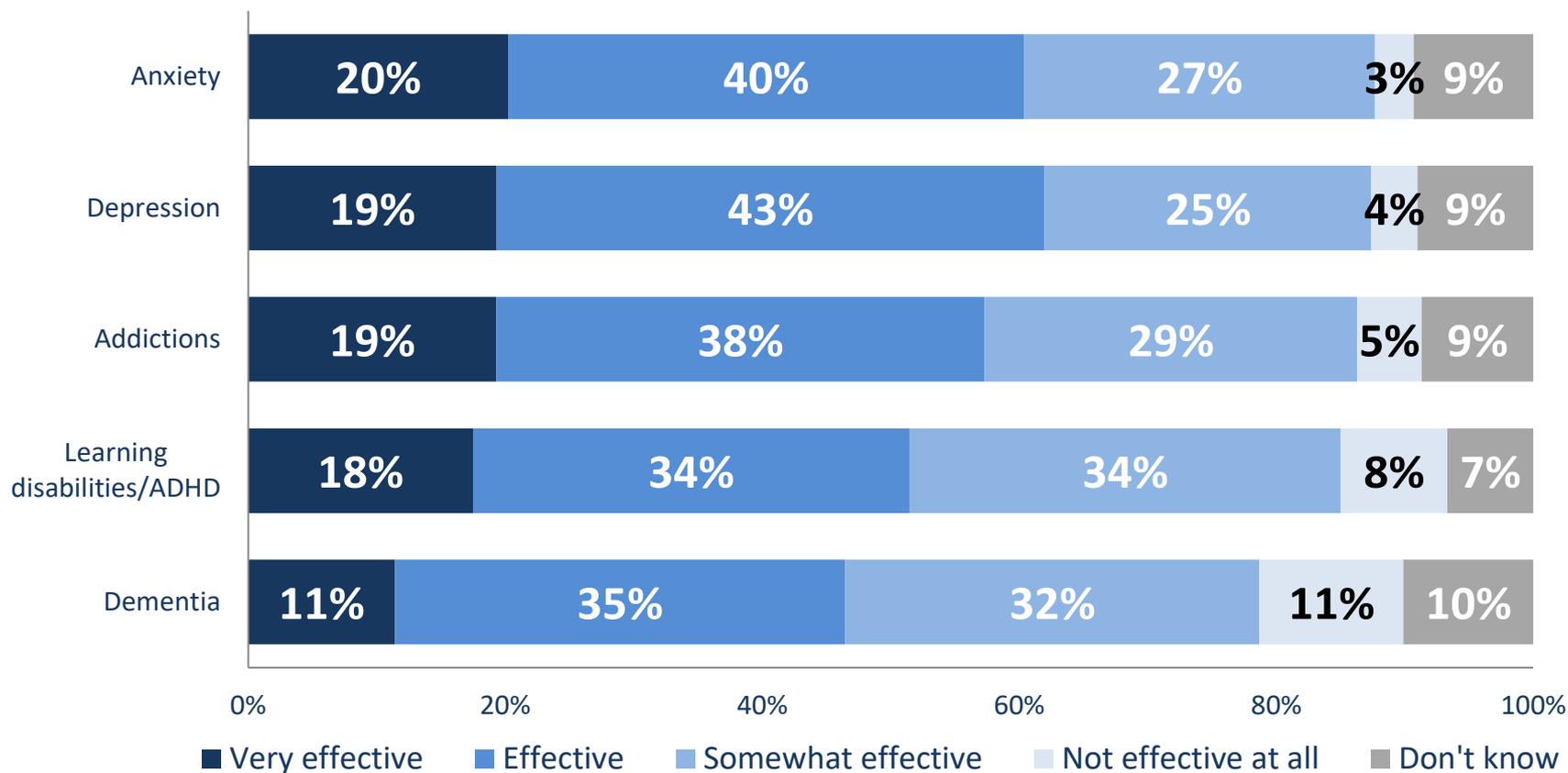


*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding

QUESTION – How effective do you feel psychologists are in helping people who are living with the following mental health problems or disorders? [RANDOMIZE]

Stress of being diagnosed with a disease like cancer

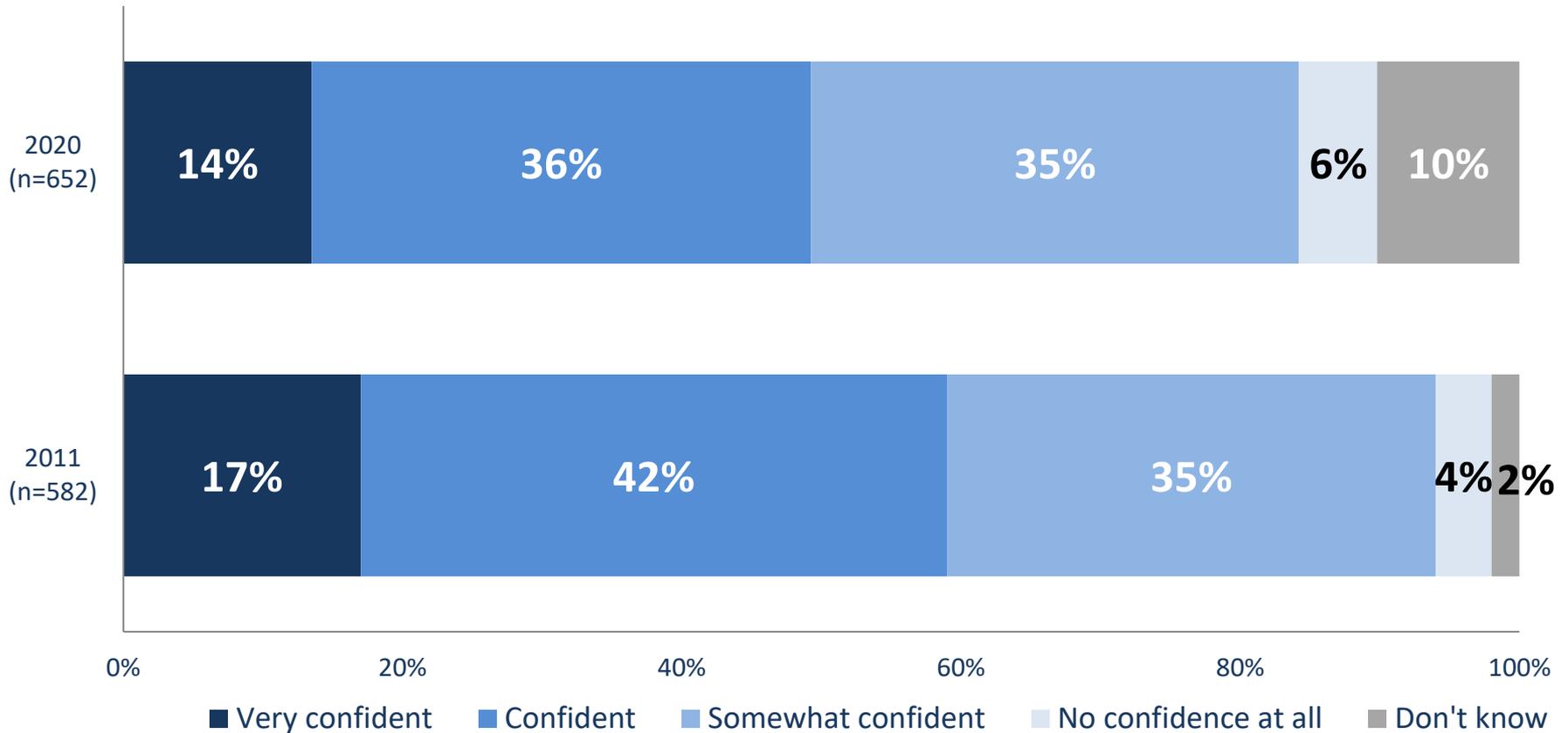
Effectiveness of psychologists in diagnosing people



*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding

QUESTION – How effective do you feel psychologists are in diagnosing people who are living with the following mental health problems or disorders? [RANDOMIZE]

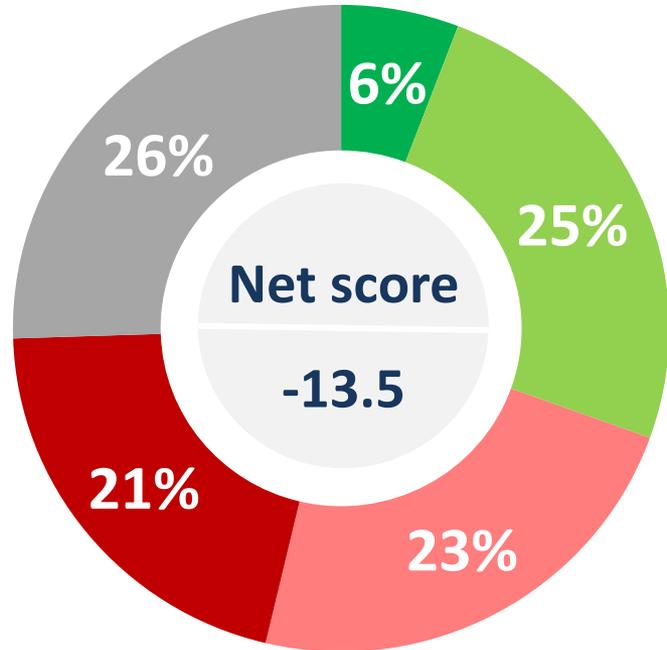
Confidence in psychologists and the care they provide



*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding

QUESTION – How much confidence do you have in psychologists and the care they provide when it comes to mental health?

Amount of time needed for Canadians to get access to psychological services in the publicly-funded health care system

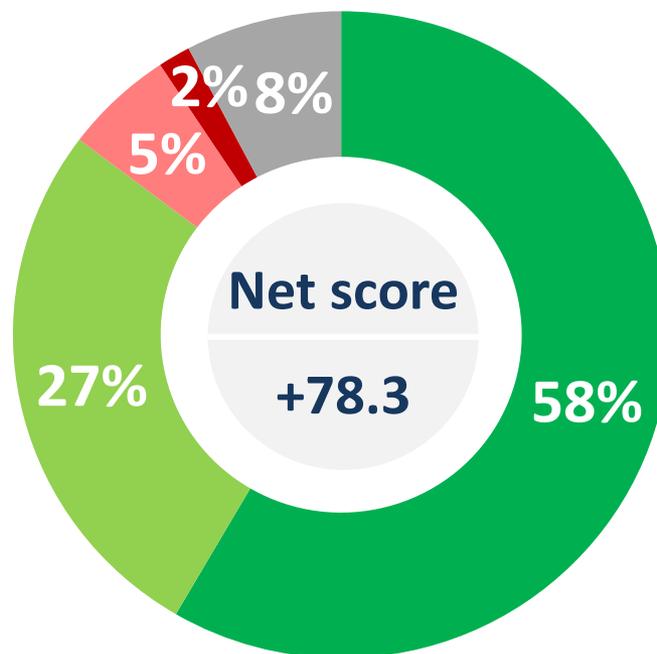


- Reasonable
- Somewhat reasonable
- Somewhat unreasonable
- Unreasonable
- Don't know

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

QUESTION – To the best of your knowledge, are Canadians able to access the services of a psychologist in the publicly-funded health care system within a reasonable, somewhat reasonable, somewhat unreasonable, or unreasonable period of time?

Support for improving access to psychologists through the publicly-funded health care system

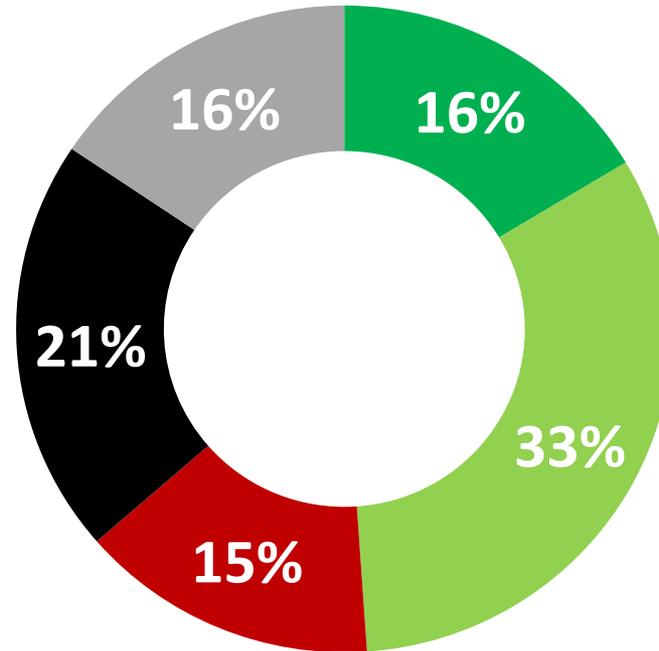


- Support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Oppose
- Unsure

QUESTION – Do you support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or oppose improving access to psychologists through the publicly-funded health care system?

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Access to a psychologist through employer health benefit plan

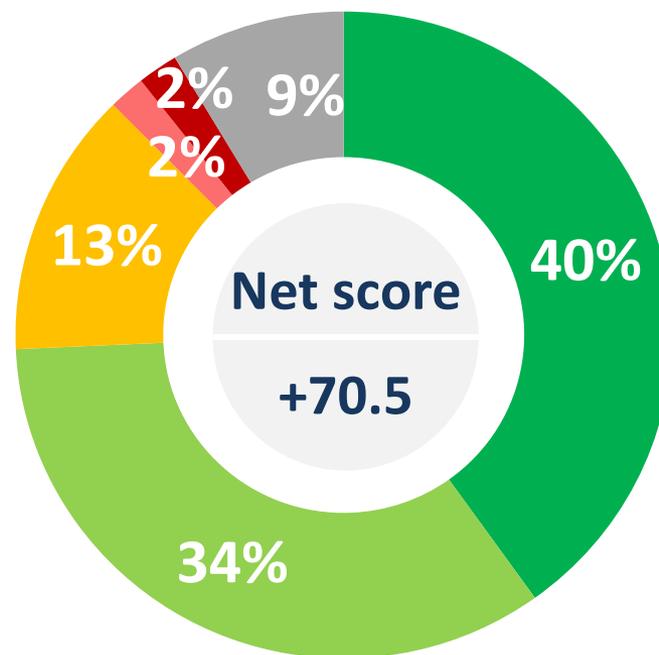


- Yes, definitely
- Yes, I think so
- No
- I am not employed
- Don't know

QUESTION – To the best of your knowledge, are you able to access a psychologist through your employer's health benefit plan within a reasonable period of time?

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Providing greater access to psychologists through employer health benefit plans

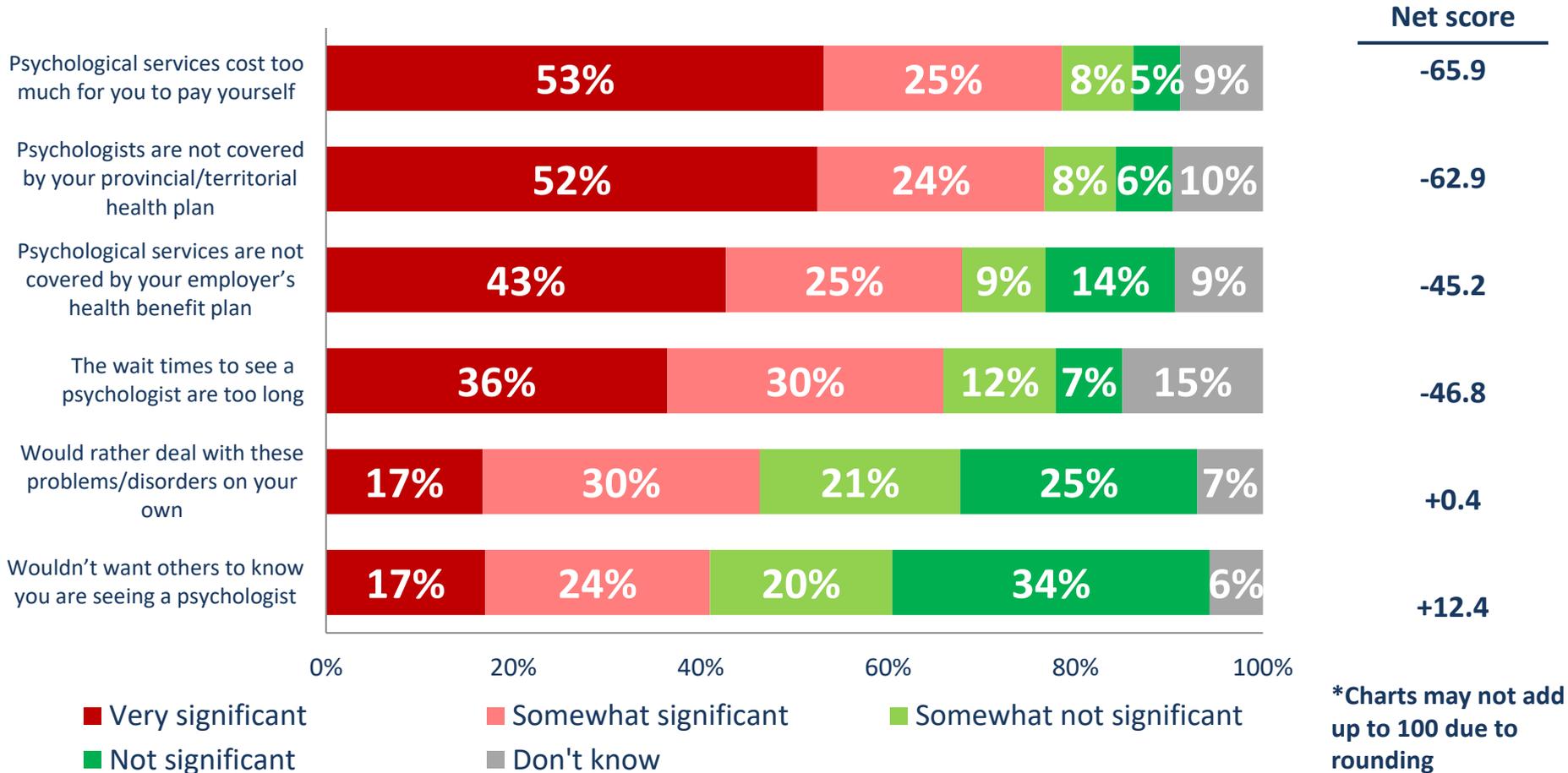


- Very good idea
- Good idea
- Average idea
- Poor idea
- Very poor idea
- Don't know

QUESTION – Is providing greater access to psychologists through employer health benefit plans (e.g., more sessions, higher financial caps) a very good idea, good idea, average idea, poor idea or a very poor idea?

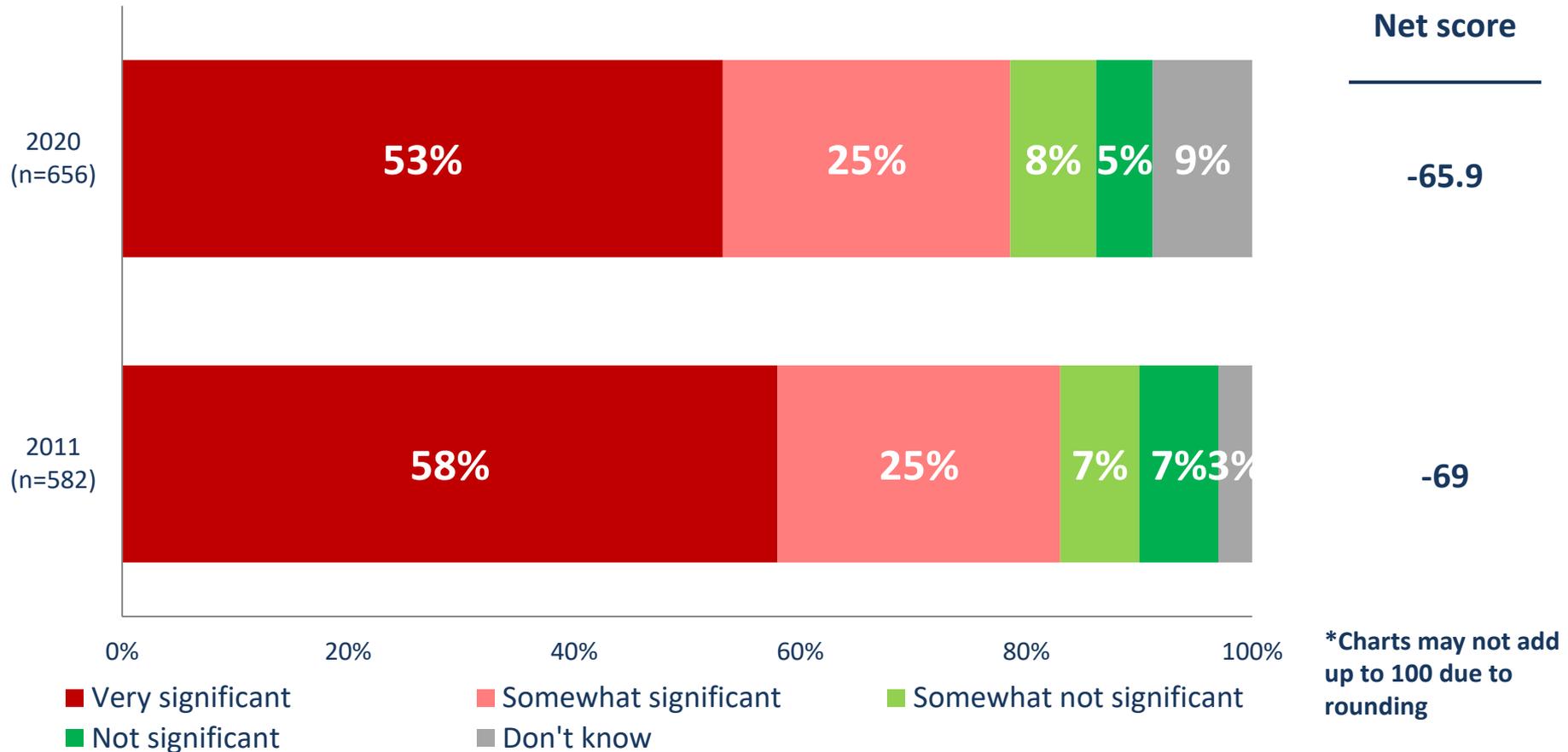
*Weighted to the true population proportion.
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Significance of barriers in deciding to access a psychologist



QUESTION – For each of the following barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not. [RANDOMIZE]

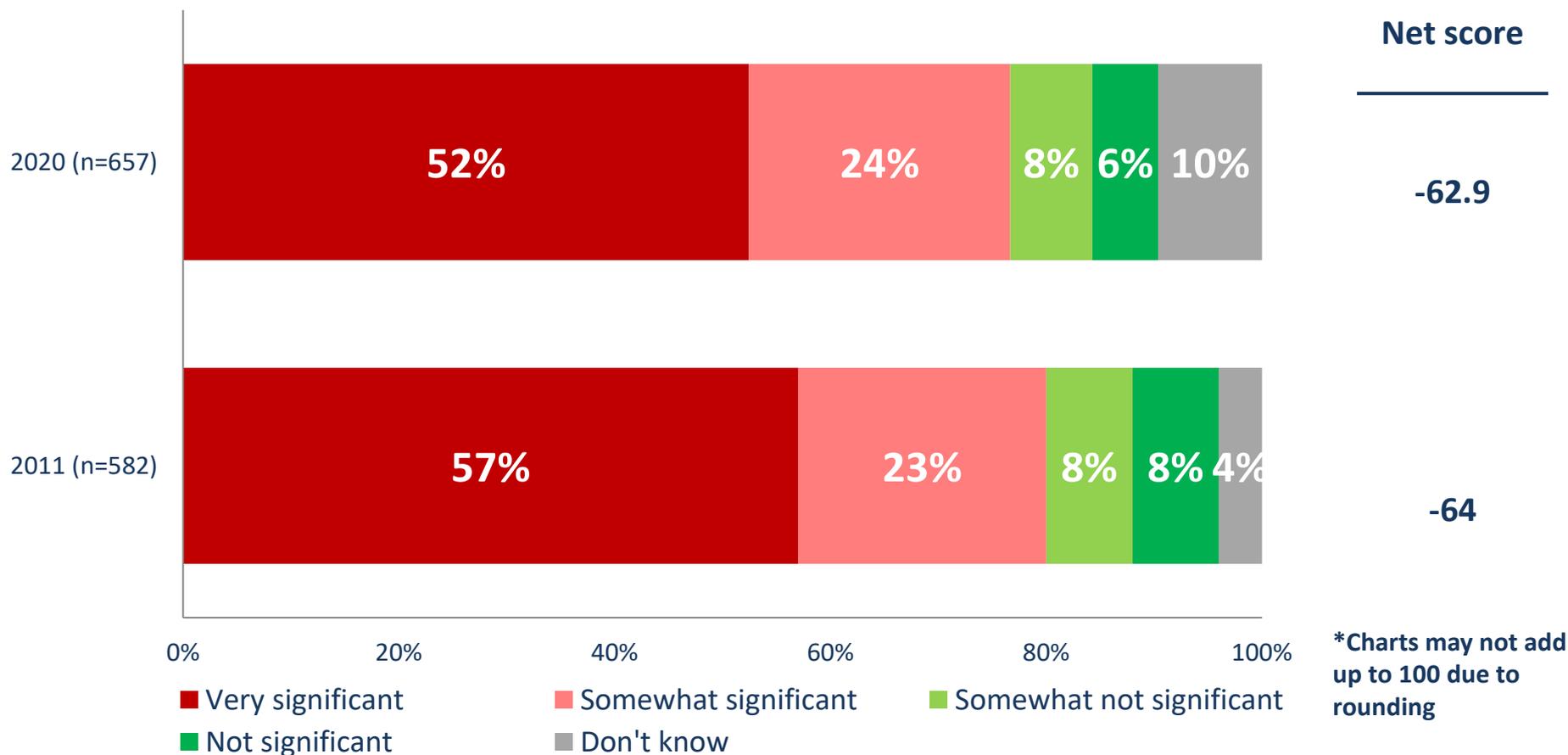
Significance of cost barriers in deciding to access a psychologist



QUESTION – For each of the following barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not. [RANDOMIZE]

Psychological services cost too much for you to pay yourself

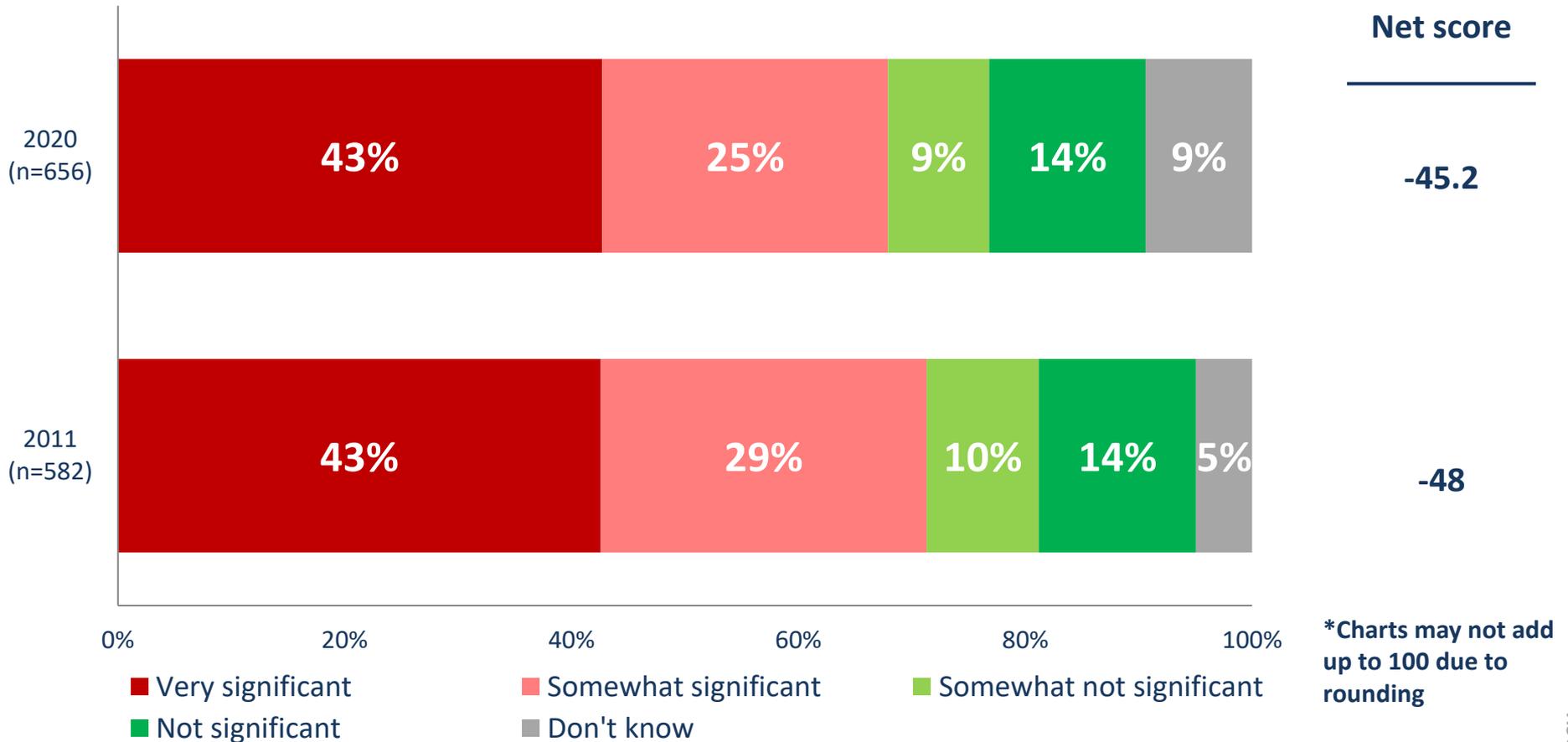
Significance of health plan coverage barriers in deciding to access a psychologist



QUESTION – For each of the following barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not. [RANDOMIZE]

Psychologists are not covered by your provincial/territorial health plan

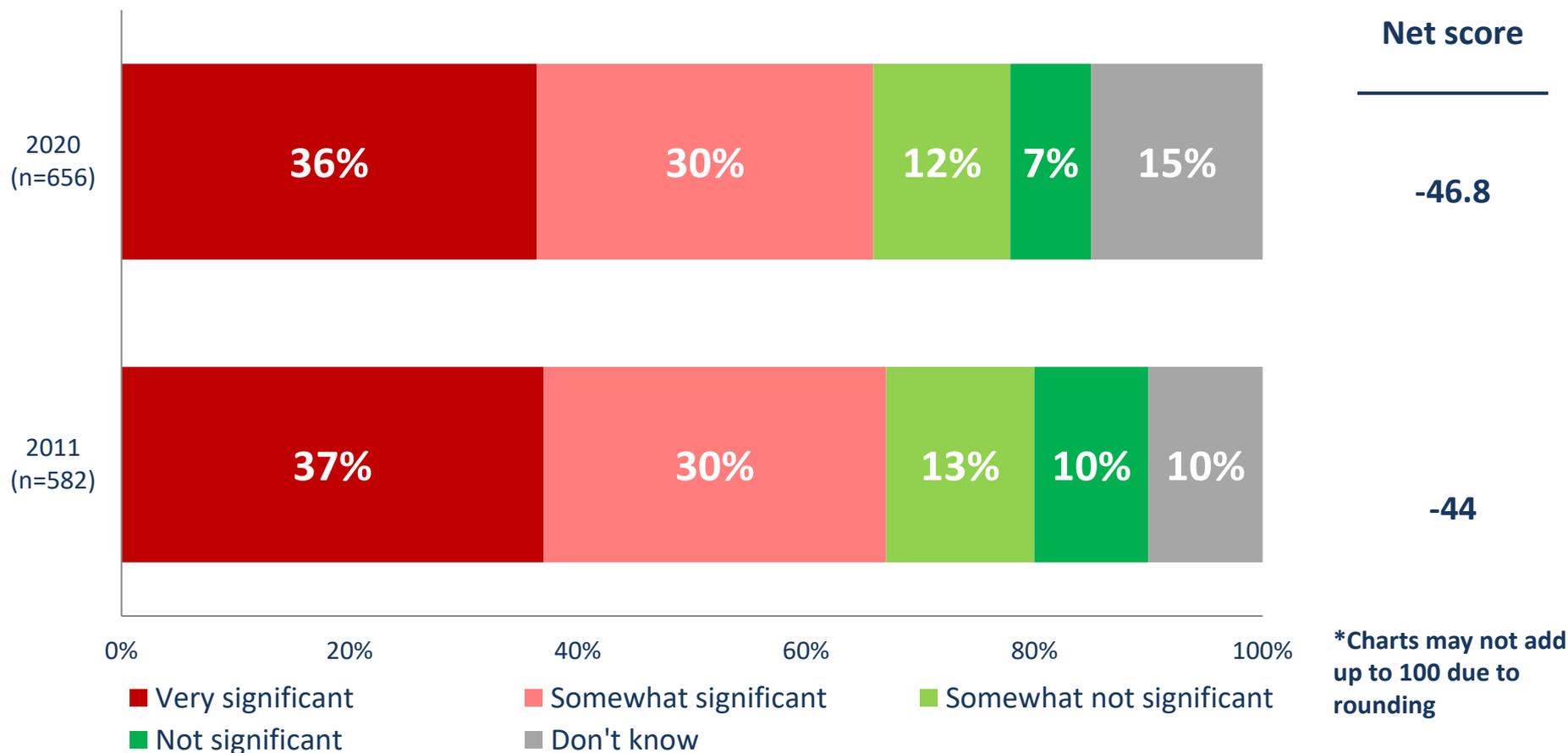
Significance of employer health benefit plan coverage barriers in deciding to access a psychologist



QUESTION – For each of the following barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not. [RANDOMIZE]

Psychological services are not covered by your employer’s health benefit plan

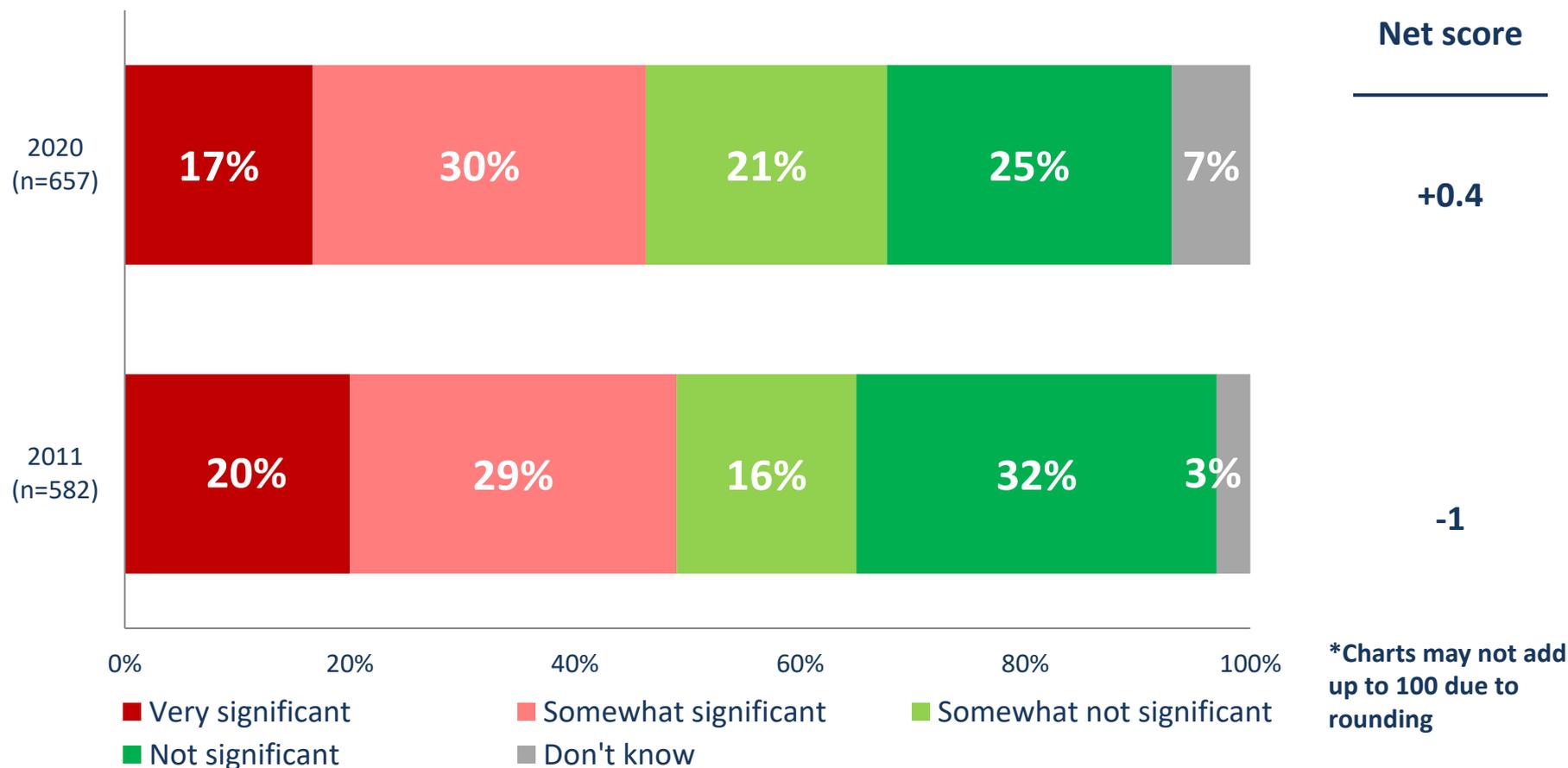
Significance of long wait times in deciding to access a psychologist



QUESTION – For each of the following barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not. [RANDOMIZE]

The wait times to see a psychologist are too long

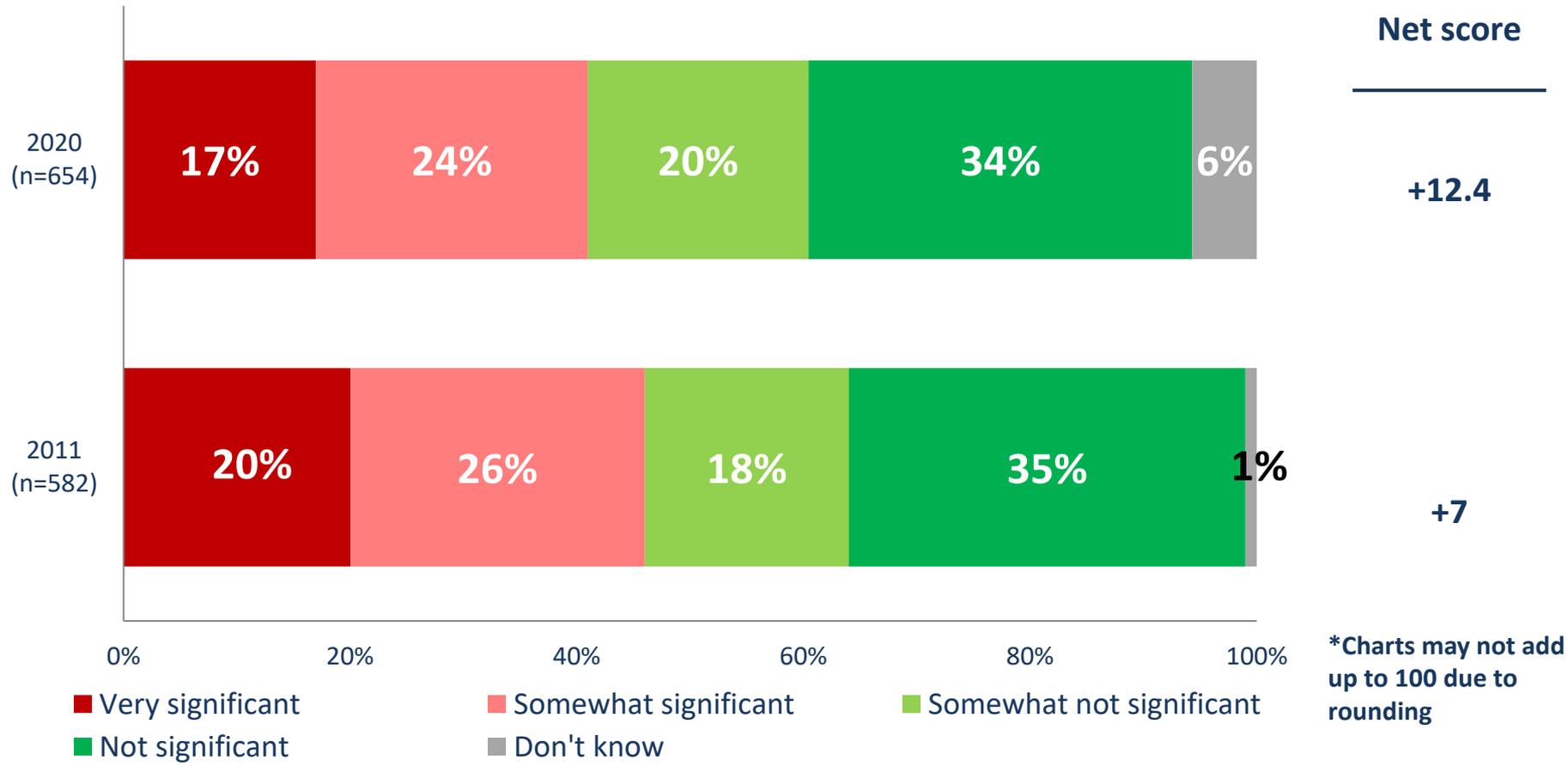
Significance of dealing with problems/disorders themselves in deciding to access a psychologist



QUESTION – For each of the following barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not. [RANDOMIZE]

Would rather deal with these problems/disorders on your own

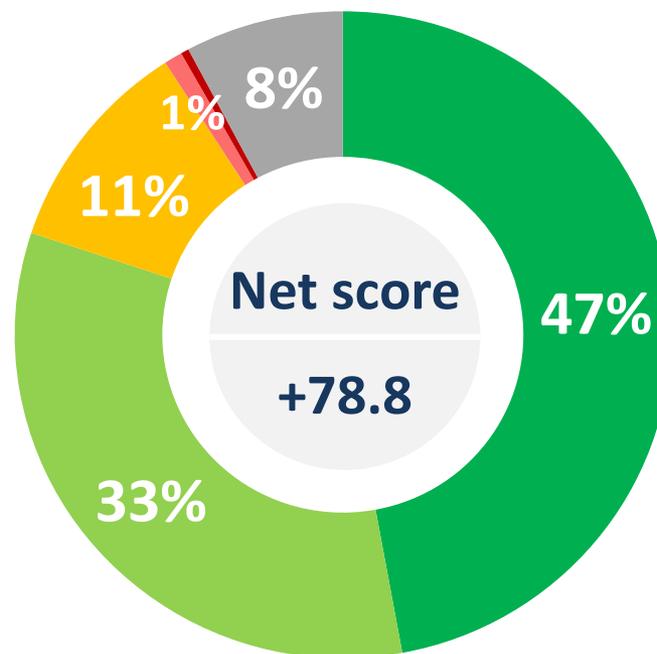
Significance of not wanting others to know they are seeing a psychologist in deciding to access a psychologist



QUESTION – For each of the following barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not. [RANDOMIZE]

Wouldn't want others to know you are seeing a psychologist

Support for psychologists working collaboratively with health professionals



- Very good idea
- Good idea
- Average idea
- Poor idea
- Very poor idea
- Don't know

QUESTION – Are psychologists working collaboratively with other health professionals, such as family physicians in primary care teams a very good idea, good idea, average idea, poor idea or a very poor idea?

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

METHODOLOGY

PATH
FORWARD!

WINNING
CONDITIONS

VALIDATE

TEST IDEAS

REVIEW RESEARCH

DIAGNOSE
ENV

Nanos conducted an online representative survey of 657 residents of Ontario between September 25th, 2020 and October 2nd, 2020. This was part of a larger national study of 3,070 Canadians 18 years of age or older, between September 25th, 2020 and October 2nd, 2020. The results were statistically checked and weighted by age and gender using the latest Census information and the sample is geographically stratified to be representative of the population. The sample is geographically stratified to be representative of the population.

The research was commissioned by the Canadian Psychological Association and the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists and was conducted by Nanos Research.

This is Ontario report two (2) of two (2).

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The complete tabulations are appended to the national reports one and two. To view the national reports, please visit www.nanos.co.

TECHNICAL NOTE

Element	Description
Research sponsor	Canadian Psychological Association and the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists
Population and Final Sample Size	657 residents of Ontario as part of a larger national study of 3,070 Canadians drawn from a panel.
Source of Sample	Asking Canadians
Type of Sample	Representative non-probability
Margin of Error	No margin of error applies to this research.
Mode of Survey	Online survey
Sampling Method Base	Non-probability.
Demographics (Captured)	Ontarians; Men and Women; 18 years or older. Six digit postal code was used to validate geography.
Demographics (Other)	Age, gender, education, income
Field Dates	September 25 th to October 2 nd , 2020.
Language of Survey	The survey was conducted in both English and French.
Standards	Nanos Research is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and confirms that this research fully complies with all CRIC Standards including the CRIC Public Opinion Research Standards and Disclosure Requirements. https://canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/standards/

Element	Description
Weighting of Data	The results were weighted by age and gender using the latest Census information (2016). See tables for full weighting disclosure.
Screening	Screening ensured potential respondents did not work in the market research industry, in the advertising industry, in the media or a political party prior to administering the survey to ensure the integrity of the data.
Excluded Demographics	Individuals younger than 18 years old; individuals without internet access could not participate.
Stratification	By age and gender using the latest Census information (2016) and the sample is geographically stratified to be representative of the population.
Estimated Response Rate	Not applicable
Question Order	Question order in the preceding report reflects the order in which they appeared in the original questionnaire.
Question Content	This is report two (2) of (2). This report contains questions 1 to 34 and report 2 contains questions 35 to 54 in the questionnaire.
Question Wording	The questions in the preceding report are written exactly as they were asked to individuals.
Research/Data Collection Supplier	Nanos Research
Contact	Contact Nanos Research for more information or with any concerns or questions. http://www.nanos.co Telephone:(613) 234-4666 ext. 237 Email: info@nanosresearch.com.

METHODOLOGY - Previous wave



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Survey of 582 Ontarians as part of a larger national survey conducted of 2,832 Canadians by EKOS in 2011 for the Canadian Psychological Association.



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