



# Research and Advocacy: Washington's Commitment to Language Access in Health Care

Language Access Research for Community Health  
Coalition (LARCH)

# LATINO

CENTER FOR HEALTH



ENGAGING LATINO COMMUNITIES

RESEARCH • PRACTICE • POLICY



# LARCH

coalition

Language Access Research for Community Health

# W

UNIVERSITY *of*  
WASHINGTON



# WASCLA

Washington State Coalition for Language Access



WASHINGTON STATE  
UNIVERSITY



# HARBORVIEW

INJURY PREVENTION  
& RESEARCH CENTER

# The LARCH Team



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# Language Access is a Health Equity Issue



- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) is a social determinant of health
- Meaningful language access in healthcare remains difficult to access despite...
  - long-existing legal mandates for language services
  - extensive documentation of the harms and costs to individuals and systems when services are inadequate
- Metrics are fundamental to work for change
  - lack of data
  - barriers to obtaining data

# Language Access is a Health Equity Issue



- WASCLA receives frequent reports of:
  - Language services not being offered
  - Patients told to bring family or friend to interpret
  - Patients turned away or referred to other facilities
  - Ad-hoc interpreting by bilingual individuals whose skills have not been verified
  - Interpreters not available for certain languages
  - Interpreters not providing quality services
- Most reports are anecdotal; evidence is needed to ignite change
  - Start with provider perspectives...

# WA Provider Survey Research Process



Grantwriting



Survey Design



Recruitment



Analysis



Dissemination



**1,458**  
**MDs/NPs**



**981**  
**Pharmacists**

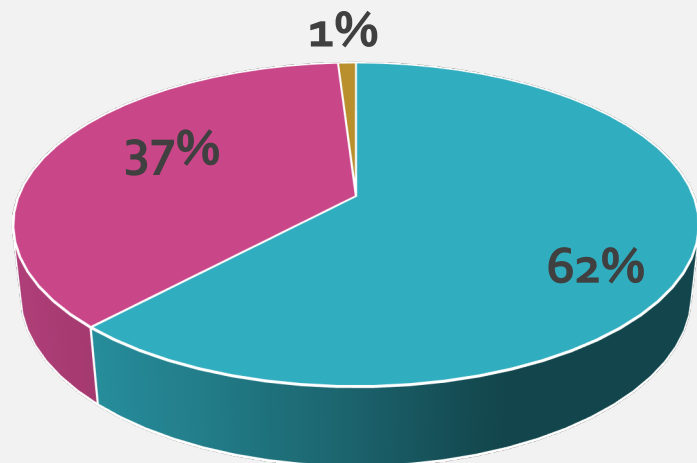


**594**  
**Dentists**



# Survey Participants

3,033 practicing  
medical providers  
in WA

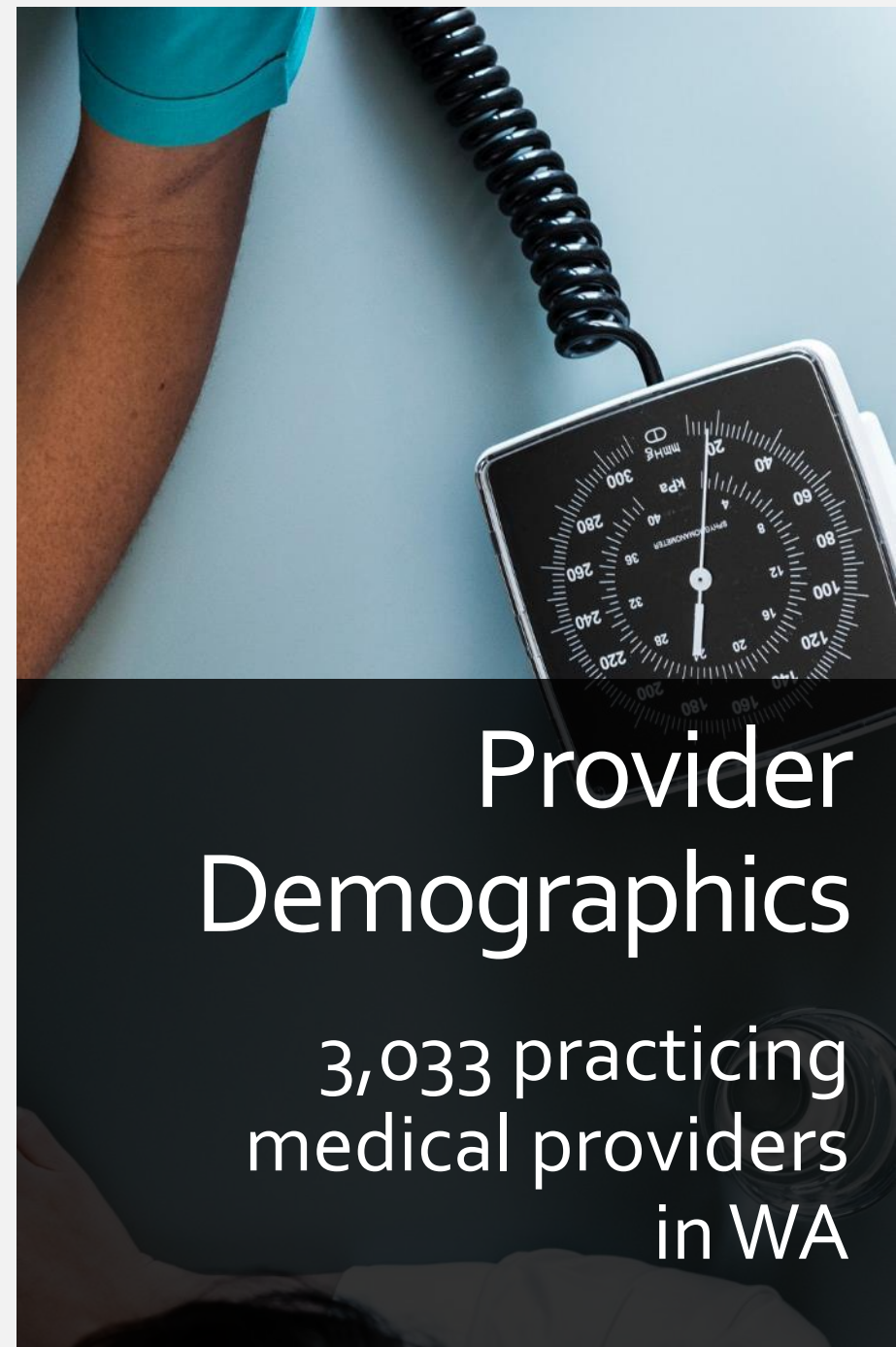
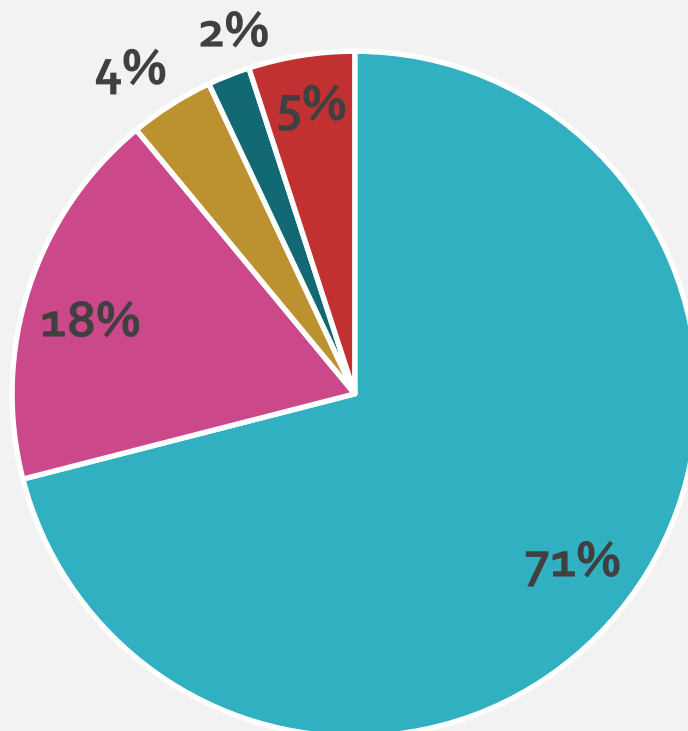


## Gender

- Female = 62%
- Male = 37%
- Other = 1%

## Race/Ethnicity

- White = 71%
- Asian = 18%
- Hispanic/Latino = 4%
- Black/African American = 2%
- Other = 5%



# Provider Demographics

3,033 practicing  
medical providers  
in WA





42% of providers speak at least two languages



Most common second/third languages:

Spanish

French

German

Mandarin

Vietnamese



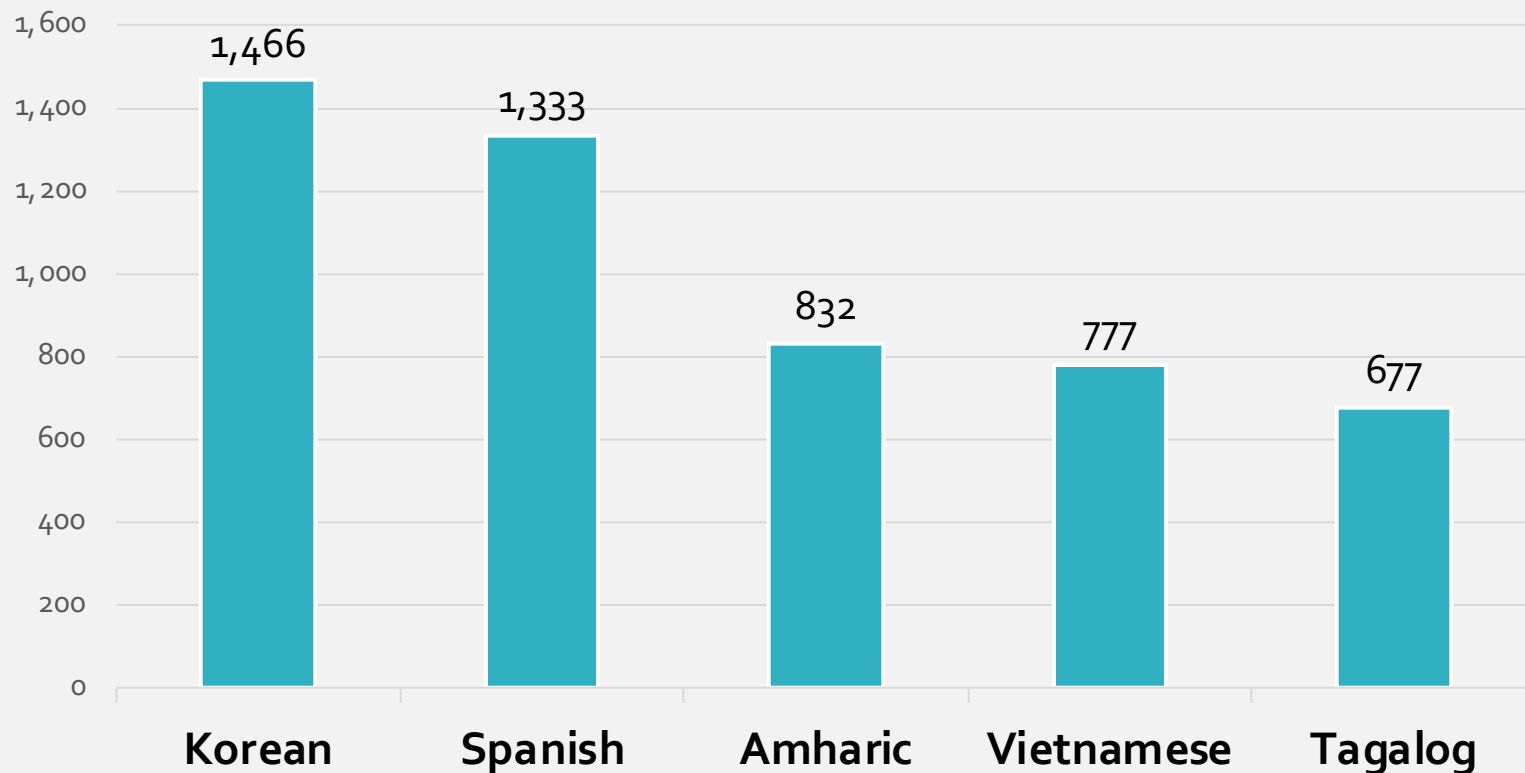
Provider  
Language Skills



**89.8% of providers reported seeing patients in the last month who did not speak English well**

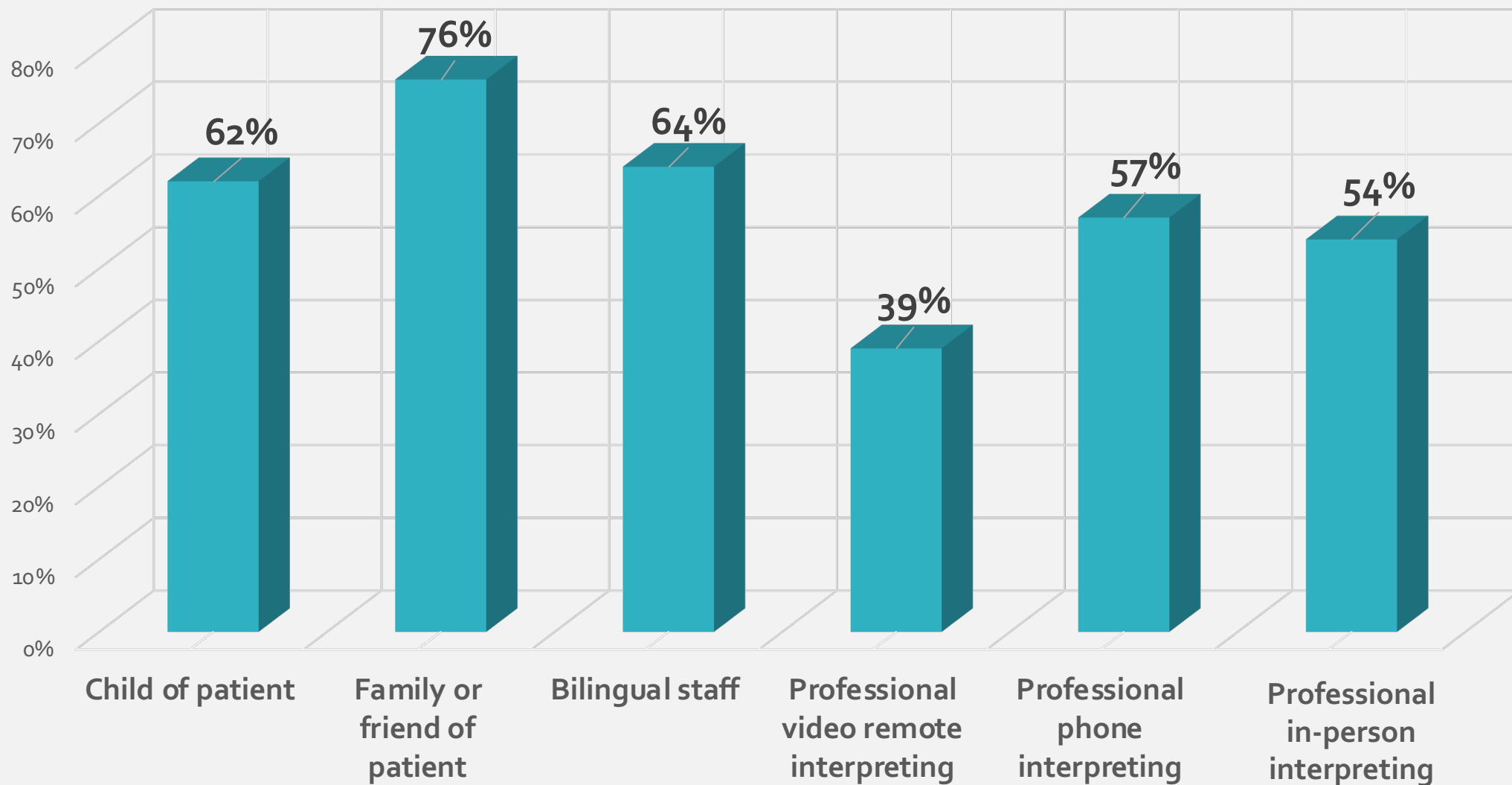


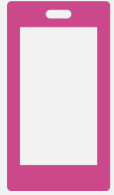
**Number of providers reporting each patient language**



**Reported Patient Languages**

# Language Assistance Services used with LEP patients (yes/no)

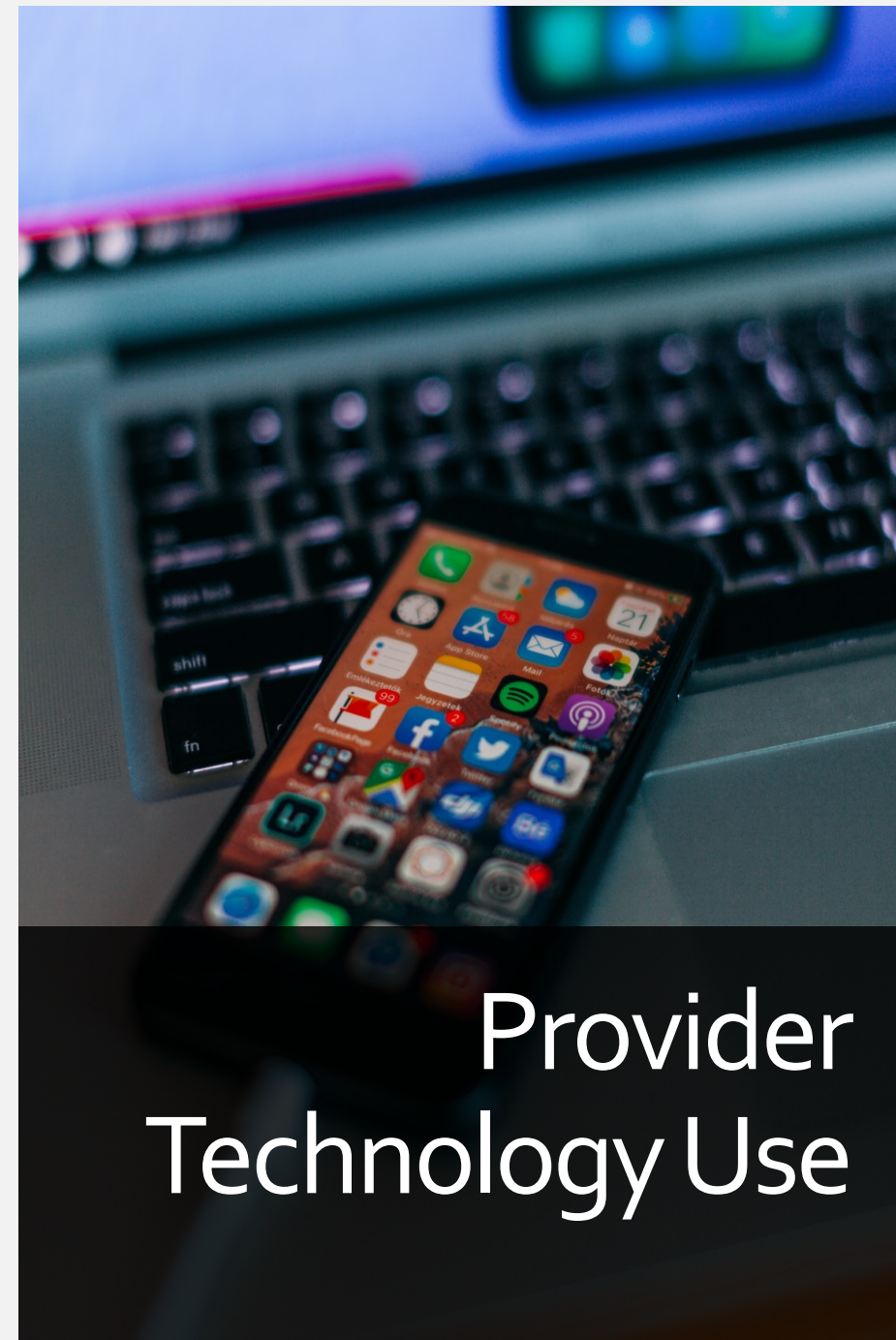




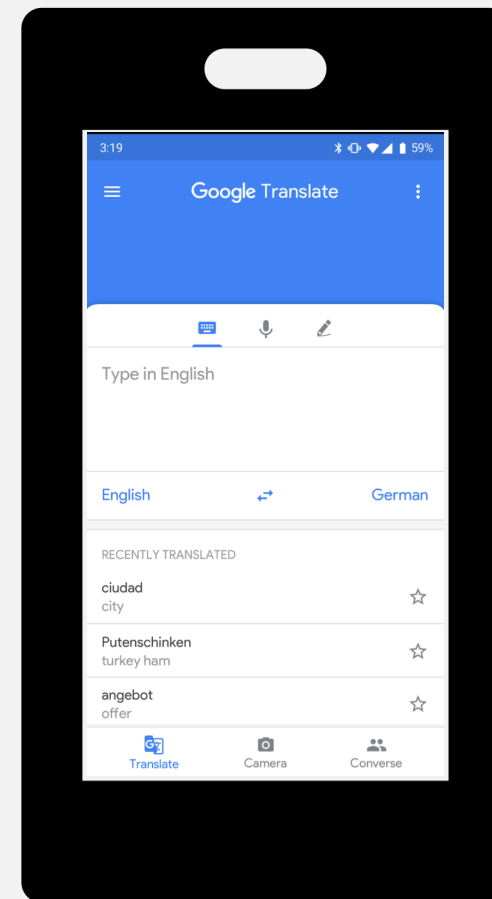
**35%** of providers using a digital tool (mobile app or website) to communicate with a patient who did not speak English well.



**72%** of providers would be comfortable using a digital tool to improve communication with a patient who does not speak English well.



Provider  
Technology Use







**60%** of providers encourage their patients to access online health information

**i Top 5 websites recommended to patients:**

WebMD

Google (general, images, scholar)

American Dental Association (ADA)

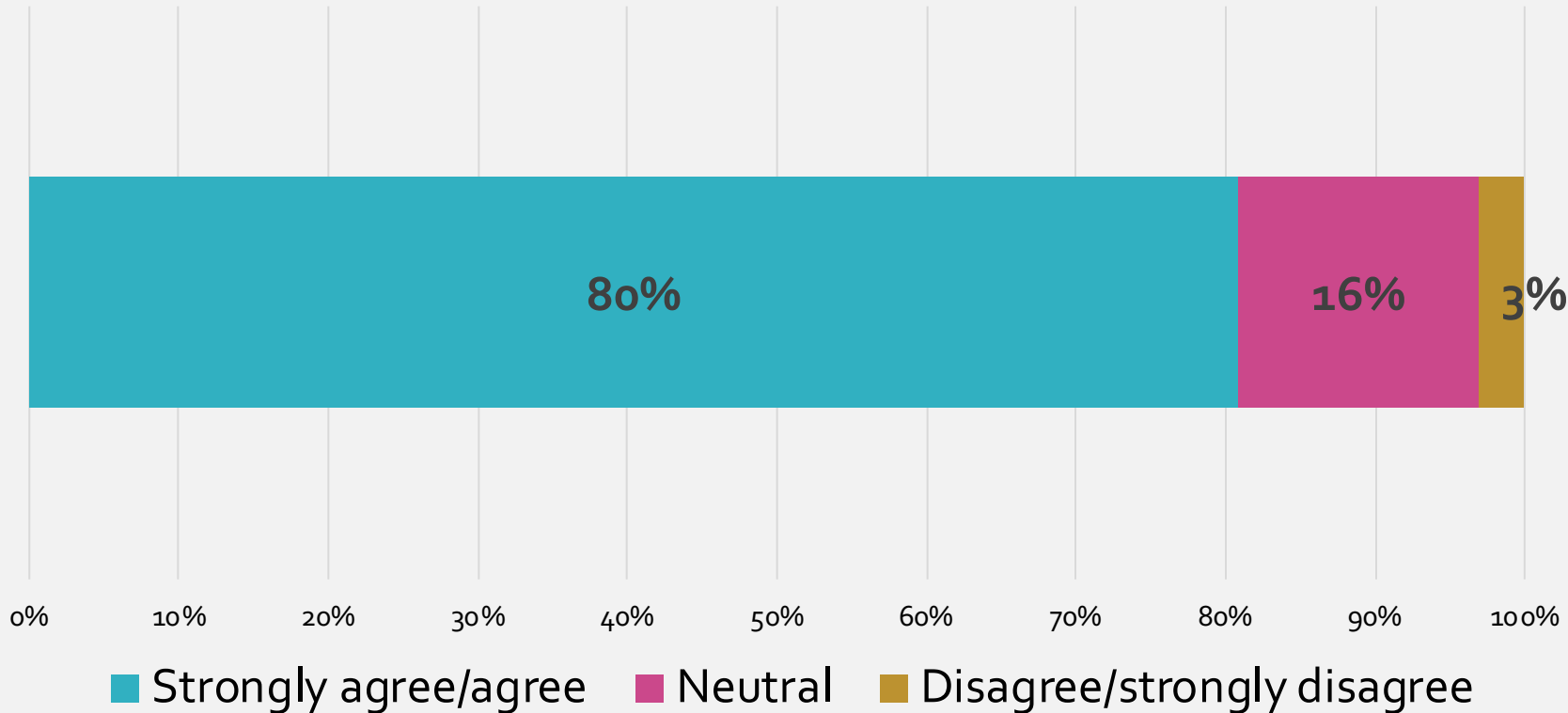
Mayo Clinic

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)



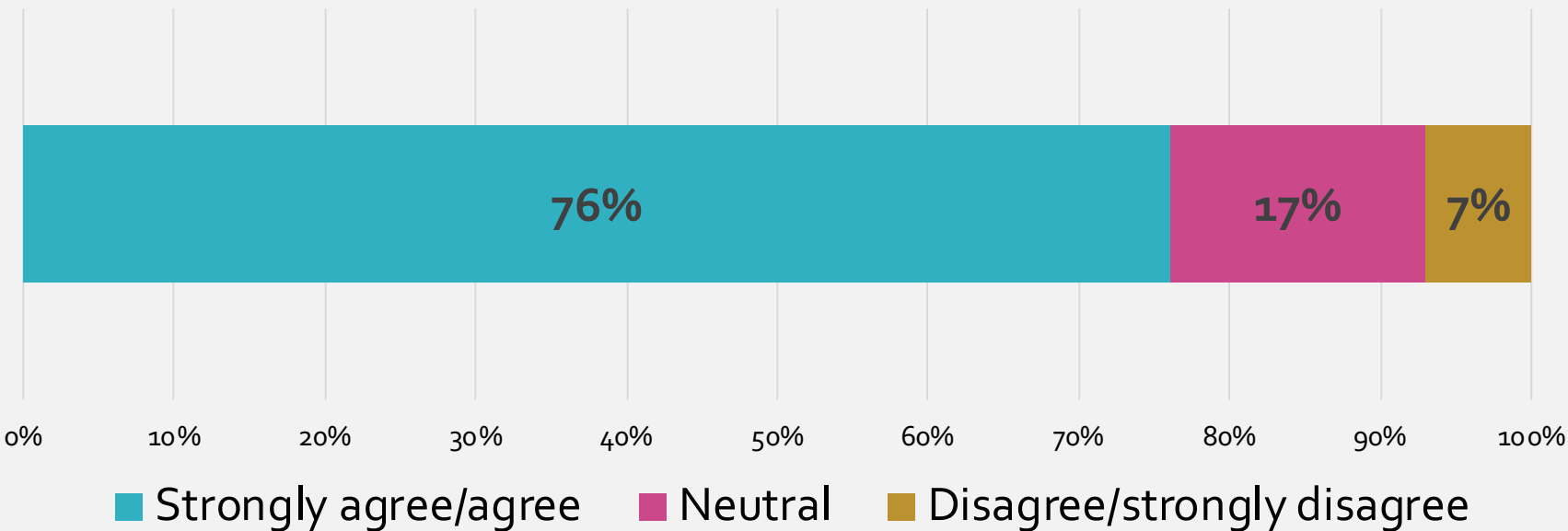
**Provider  
Technology Use**

I believe there is a form of technology that could help me communicate with my patients who do not speak English well.



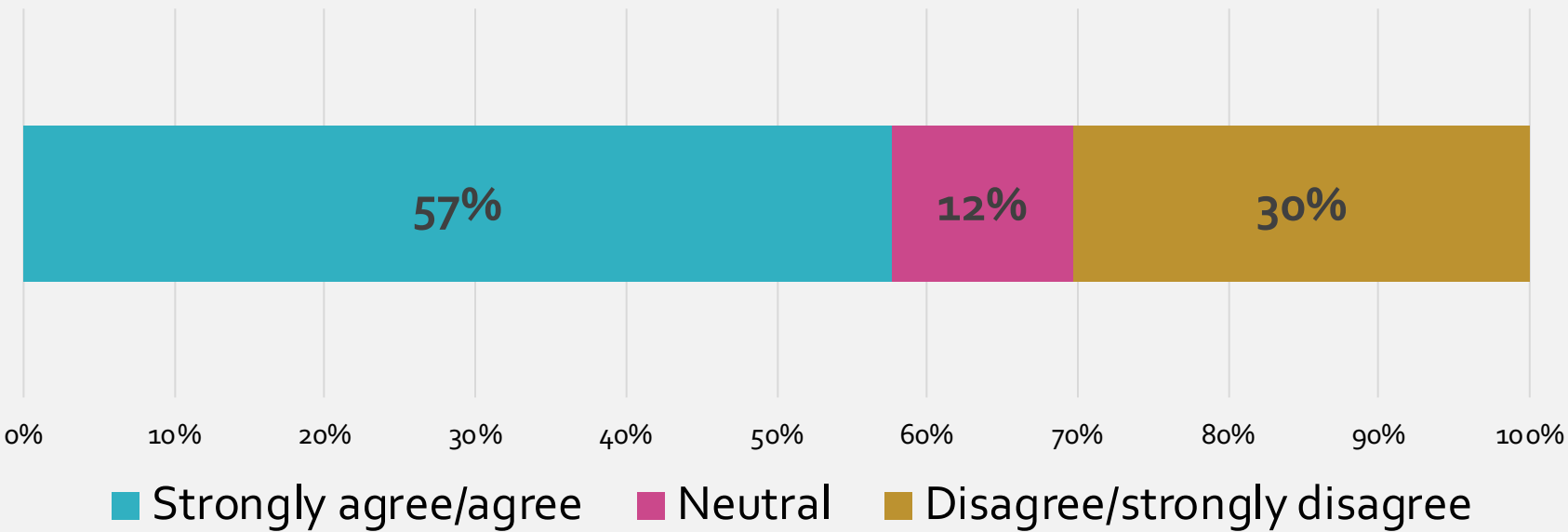
Provider  
Reflections

I am open to testing new applications or platforms that would help me better communicate with my patients who do not speak English well.



Provider  
Reflections

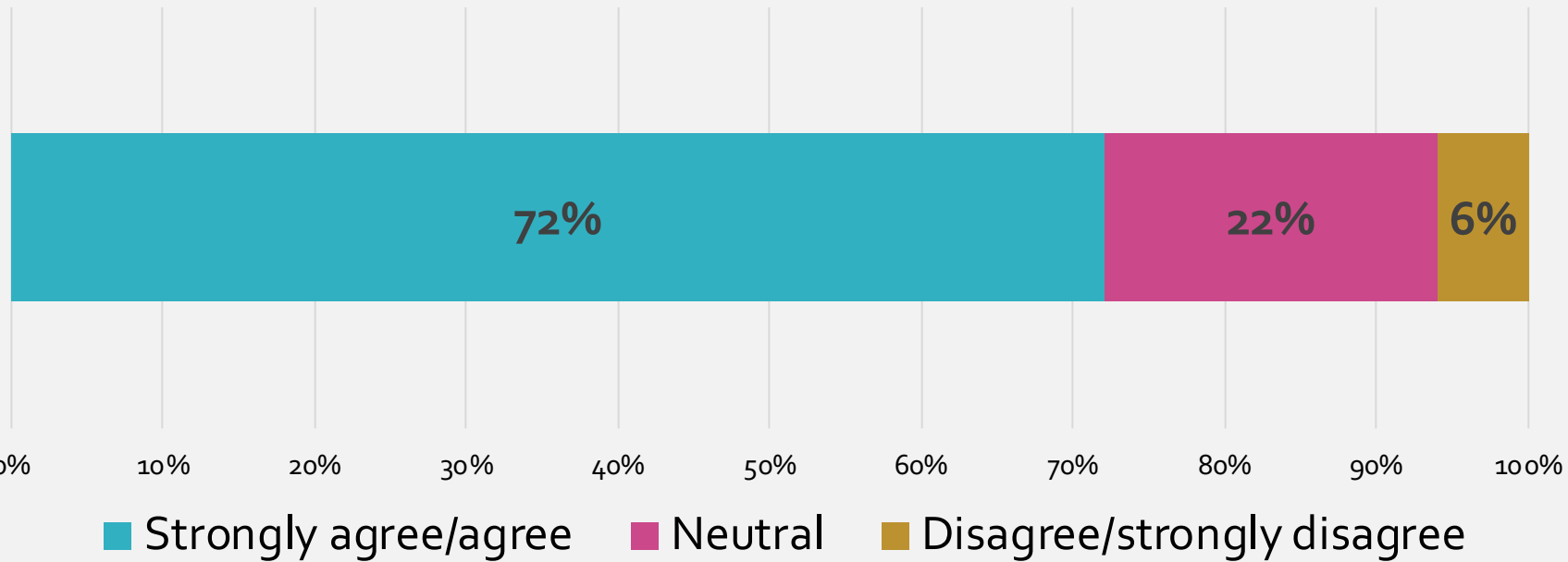
I am satisfied with the ways in which my facility communicates with patients who do not speak English well.



Provider  
Reflections



I believe my facility can better utilize technology to send written health education materials home with our patients who do not speak English well.



Provider  
Reflections



# Summary of Findings

3,033 practicing medical providers in Washington State



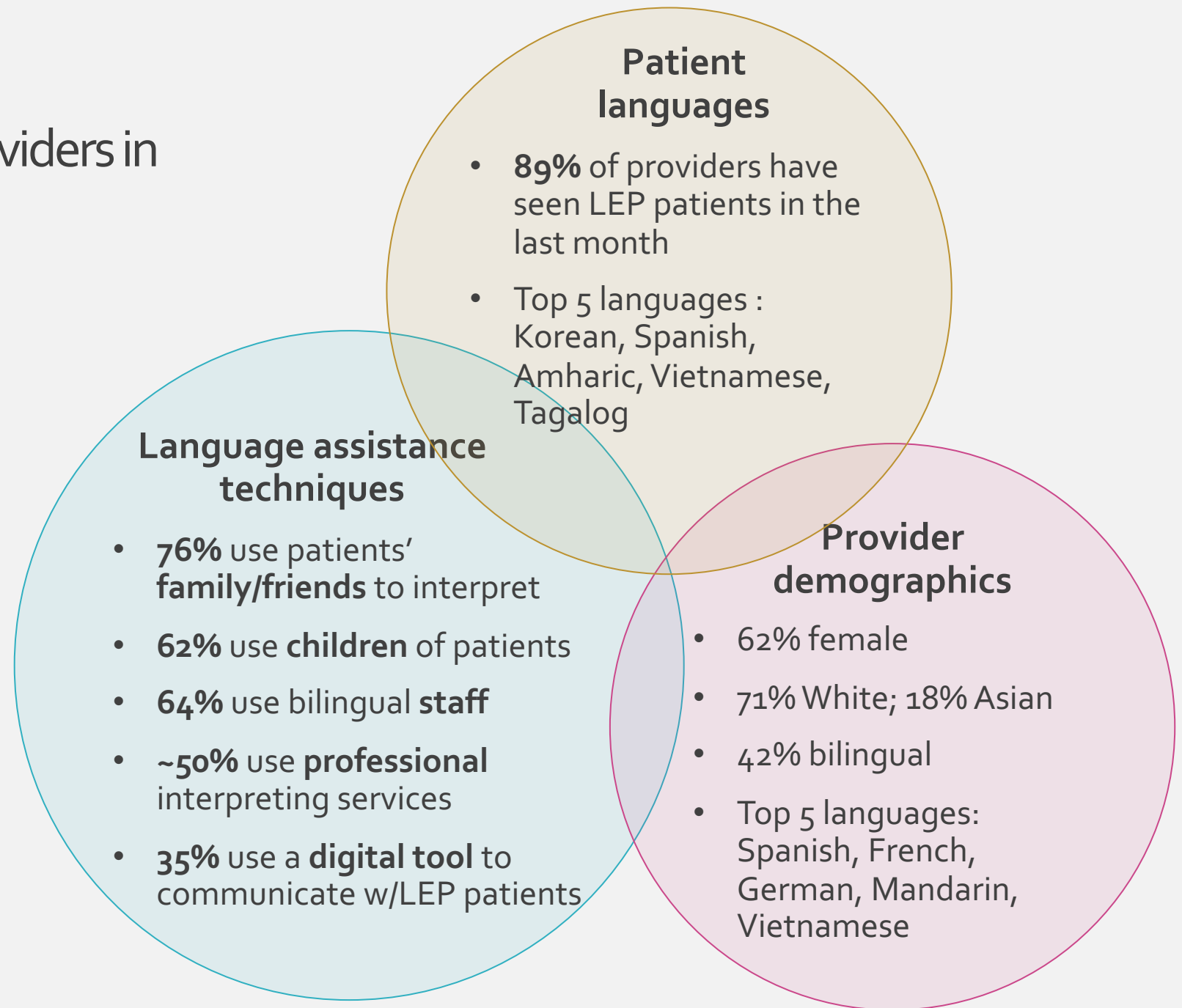
1,458 MDs/NPs



981 Pharmacists



594 Dentists



# Thank you!



survey  
respondents



student  
researchers



funders



university



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# Collective Data Analysis Workshop

# Collective Data Analysis

In groups of 4, walk through the following data analysis steps together (see accompanying handout for guidance)

## Step 1. Data Organization

- Identify the data point(s) that are most relevant and/or interesting to your group
- Focus on one data category or one specific survey question with multiple results



## Step 2. Data Analysis

- What are some possible explanations for these survey findings?
- What kinds of additional analyses would be valuable?
- What is missing from the survey overall?



## Step 3. Presentation

- Design a paper prototype for how your group's data analysis can be shared
- Focus on a specific audience (e.g., practitioners, patients, policymakers, researchers, community orgs, etc.)