

Transgender Health in Primary Care: An Educational Resident Activity

Boutin, R., Attah, R., Finkel, D., Dalla Piazza, M., Matassa, D., O'Connor, M., Gordon, E.

Background

According to the U.S Transgender Survey, 0.58% of U.S. adults identify as transgender. This survey reveals that 75% of these individuals seek gender affirming medical care. Medical providers with adequate knowledge of gender affirming therapy may initiate it under the informed consent model. Sadly, 50% of U.S. transgender patients report having to teach medical providers. Many recall negative experiences in healthcare. As a result, 28% of transgender individuals avoid health care facilities when sick and injured. This study seeks to assess physician comfort and knowledge of transgender health care needs in the primary care setting before and after an educational activity.

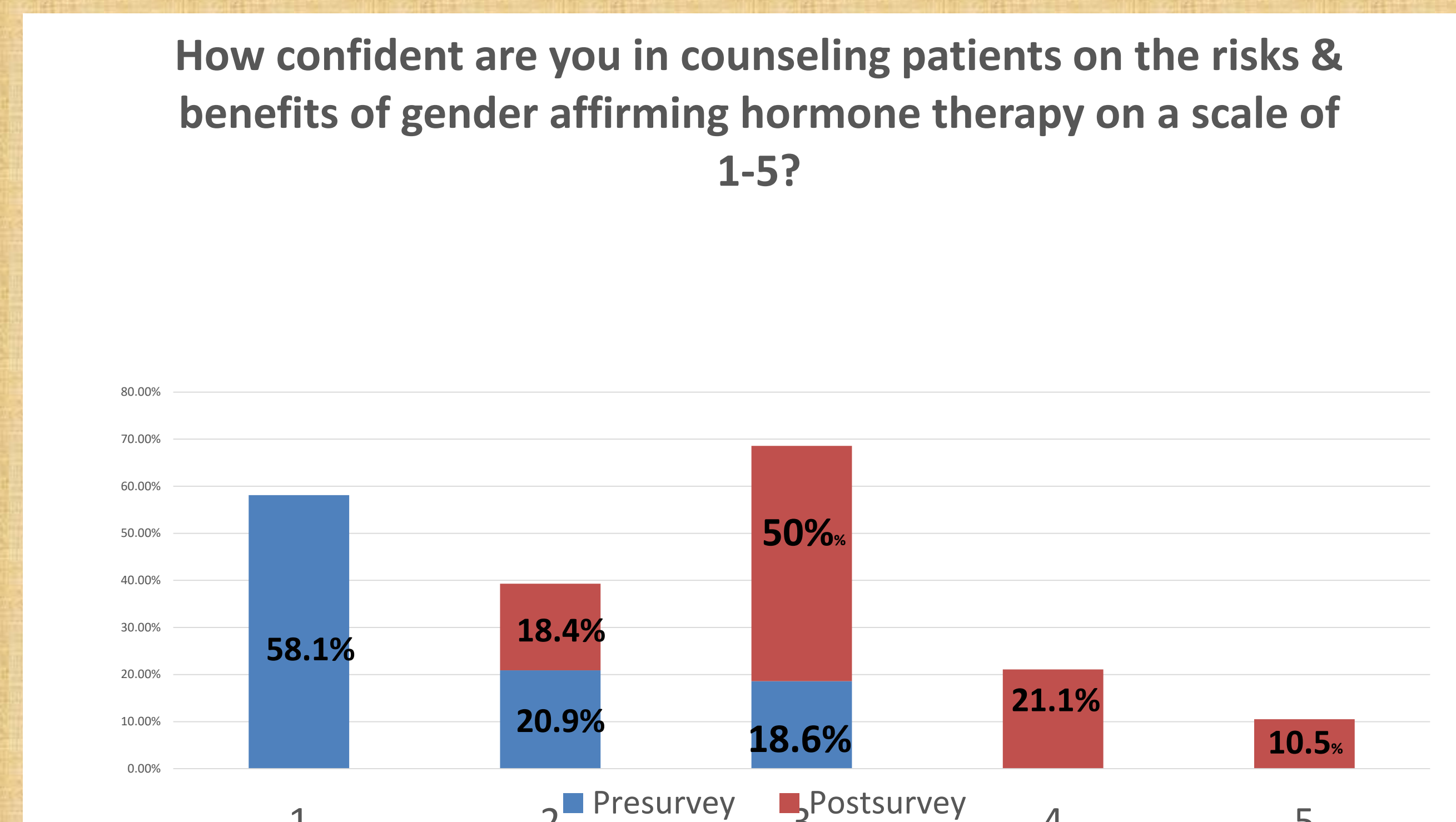
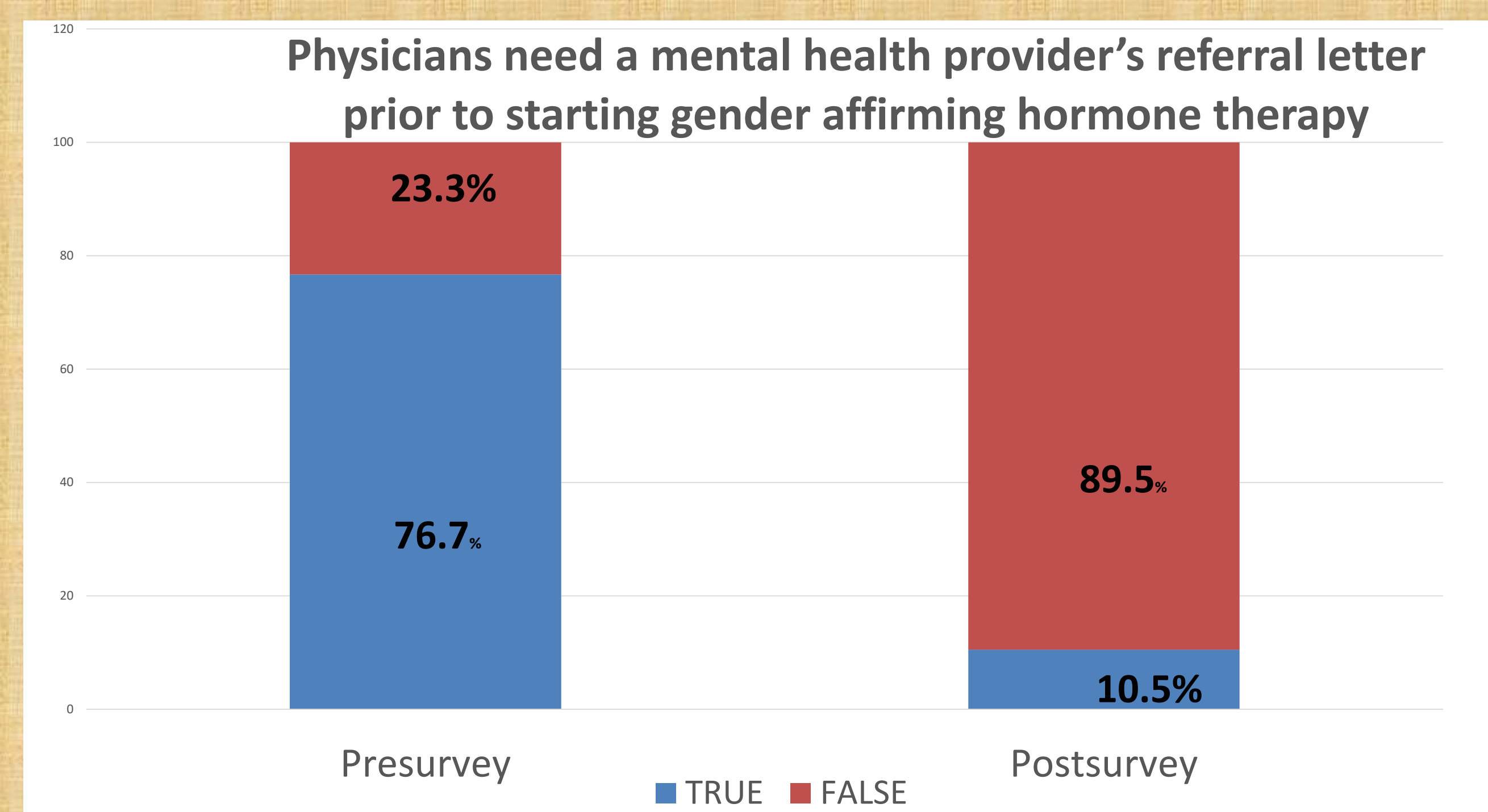
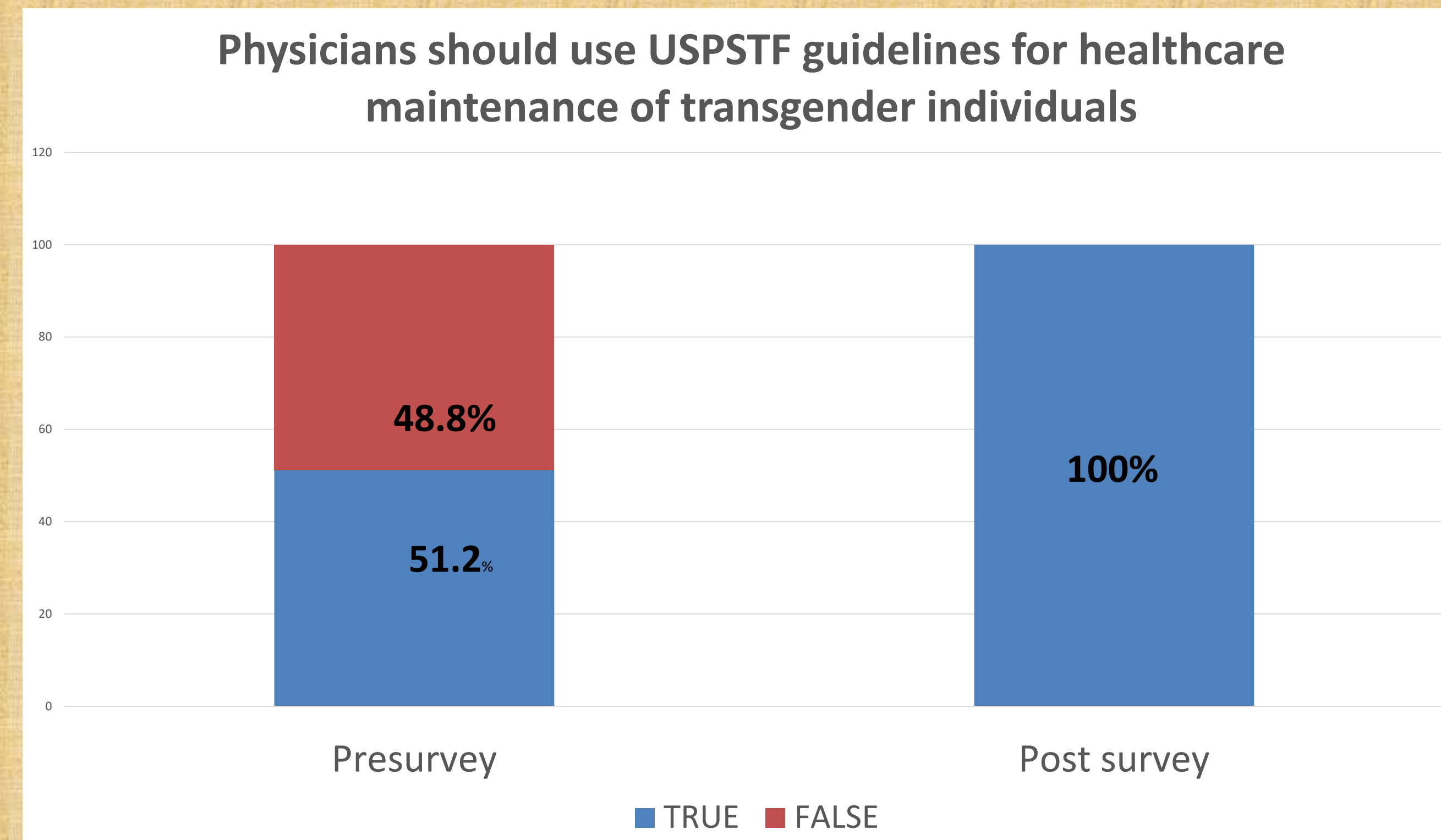
Methods

- Rutgers NJMS Internal Medicine residents participated in a 15-minute presentation on transgender healthcare according to WPATH and Endocrine Society standards during their academic half day.
- Forty-three residents participated in the presentation and provided responses to a survey before the presentation. Of those residents, 38 responded to a similar survey after the presentation.
- Aspects of physician comfort level and knowledge of care standards for transgender patients were assessed via true/false and Likert scale questions.

Objective

- Determine the impact of an educational activity on resident confidence and knowledge of transgender primary care needs.

Figures



Results/Discussion

- Prior to presentation, 48% of residents believed that transgender patients required a letter from a mental health professional before initiating gender-affirming therapy. This number was reduced to 10% after the presentation.
- 23.3% of residents were unaware that USPSTF guidelines are the current standard for healthcare maintenance of trans patients pre-presentation. Afterwards, 100% understood that USPSTF guidelines applied to transgender patients.
- Confidence in counseling patients on the risks and benefits of gender affirming therapy resulted in a modest increase after the activity: 58% of residents reported having zero confidence pre-presentation. No one reported this post-presentation. On average, the residents recorded confidence at 1.7/5 pre-survey and 3.3/5 post survey.

Future Directions

- Assess the impact of providing additional clinical experience for residents with transgender patients at the ID practice.
- Incorporate a more in-depth formal curriculum on transgender health for all Internal Medicine residents.