

Emergency Preparedness and Response: Tabletop Exercises in Public Health and General Preventive Medicine

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Abstract

Tabletop exercises (TTX) are a way to facilitate a collaborative practice. Preventive medicine residents participate in some aspect of an emergency response and need to understand the steps in responding to an infectious disease outbreak. The goal was to ascertain whether TTX could be an effective modality using a video teleconferencing system and to meet educational requirements.

Background

TTX are facilitated discussions intended to promote the evaluation of programs, policies, and procedures.

Benefits of TTXs:

- Increase readiness to respond to an emergency
- Develop better understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Practice skills and improve performance
- Assess effectiveness of response plan
- Identify gaps and resource needs

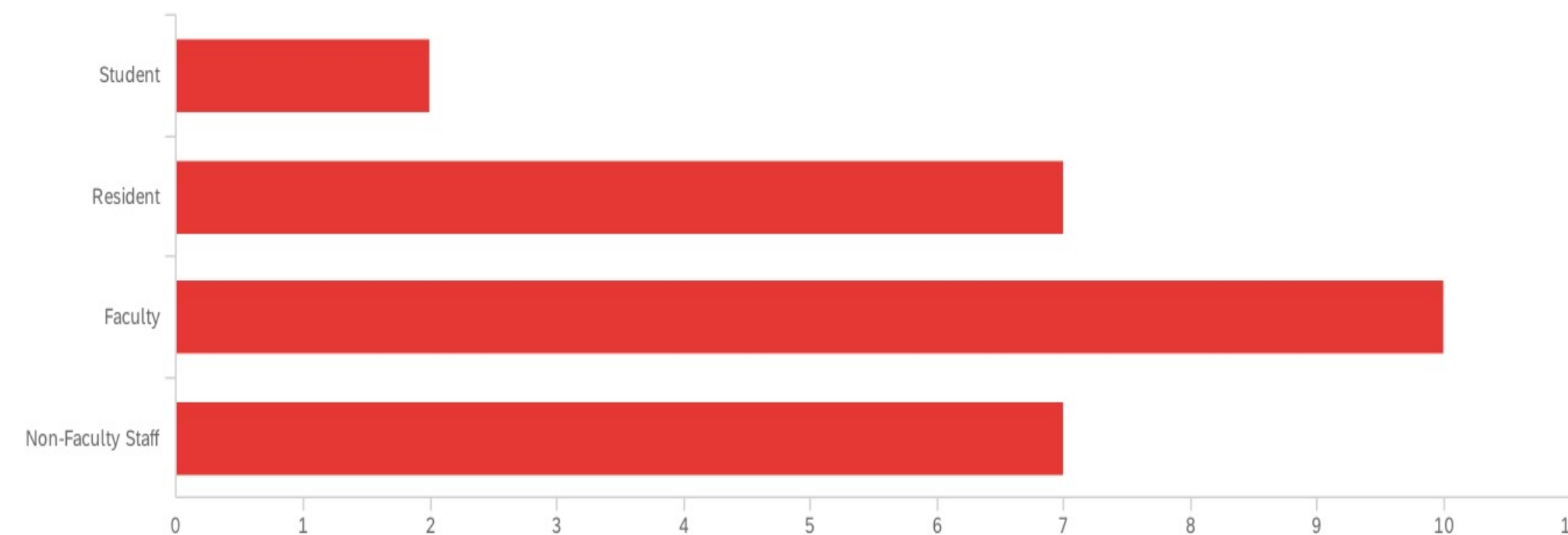
Methods

- Target audience was preventive and occupational medicine residents, faculty and others from the NJ public health community.
- Discussion-based exercise:
 - Pre-survey prior to attendance
 - Two-hour multi-part program
 - Interactive group discussion
 - Outbreak scenario
 - Post-exercise survey

Results

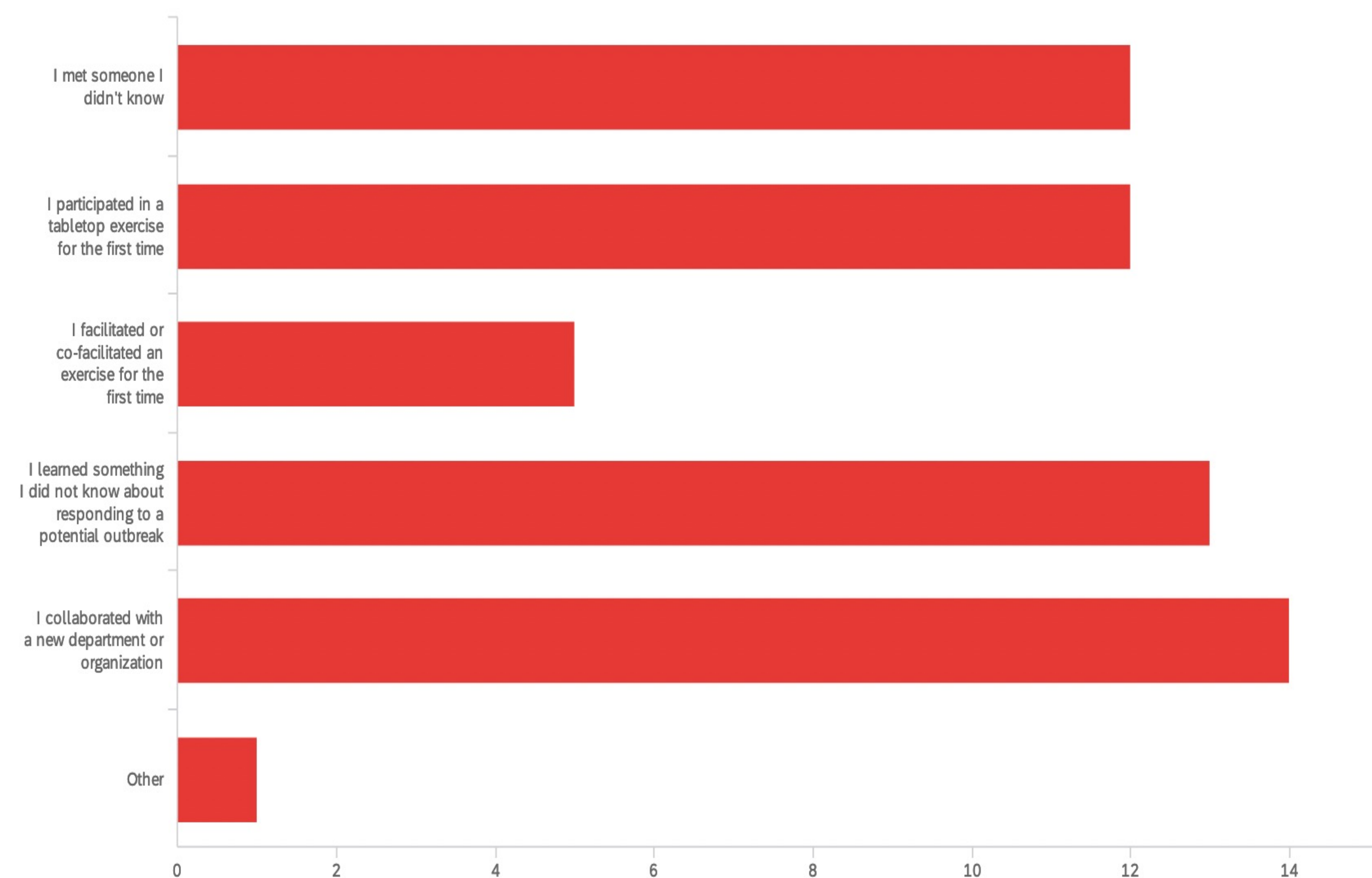
Pre-exercise survey response (N=26)

What is your primary role in your current job?



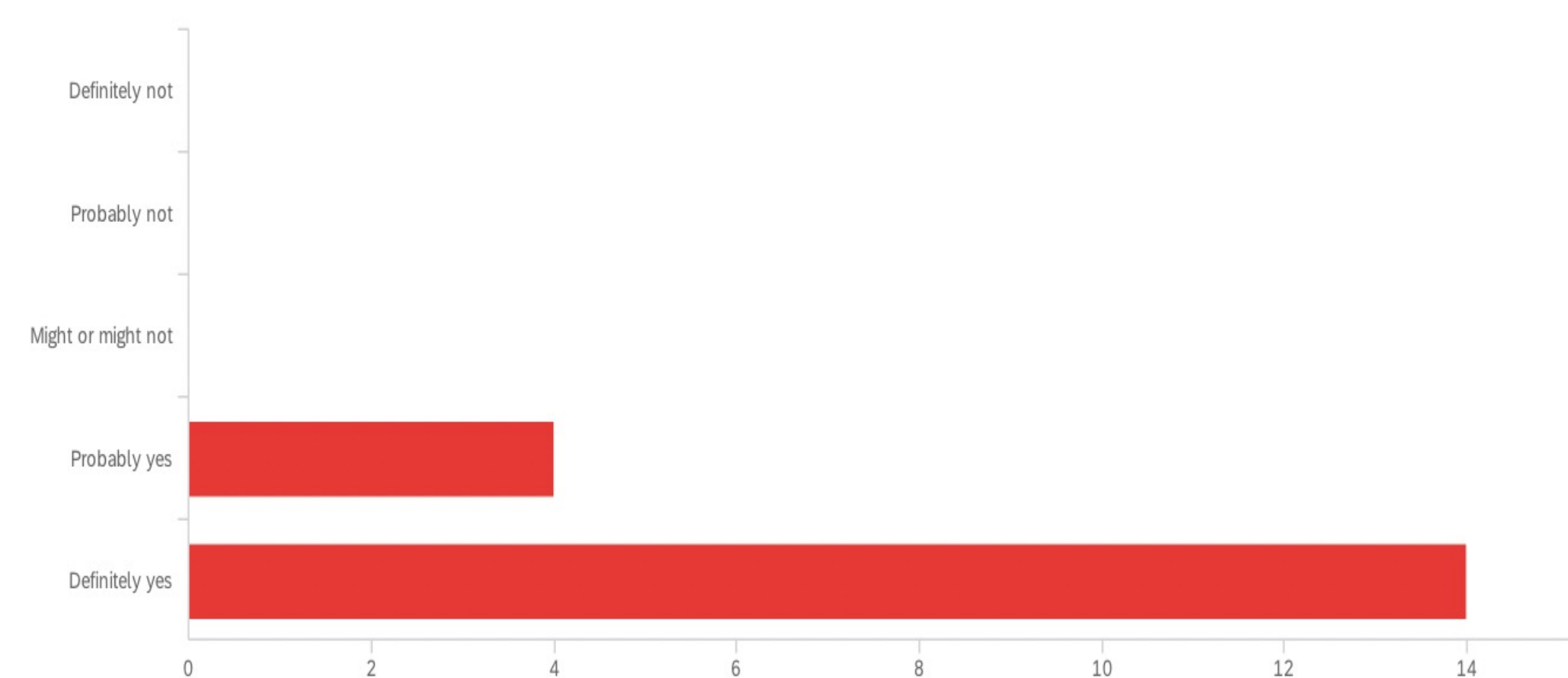
Post-exercise survey (N=18)

What did you take away from today's event? Select all that apply.



Post-exercise survey (N=18)

Are you interested in attending a future tabletop exercise?



Future Direction

- The exercise was acknowledged as a useful learning tool by both those with and without prior training.
- TTX can provide improved preparedness skills and better training for the future public health workforce.

Acknowledgements

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References

<https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/readiness/healthcare/index>
<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/exercises/tools>