

Patients' and Family Caregivers' Experiences with a Newly Implemented Hospital at Home Program in British Columbia, Canada

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The listed authors are part of the Alternatives to Traditional Hospital Care Offered in Monitored Environments (AT-HOME) Investigators Group



BACKGROUND

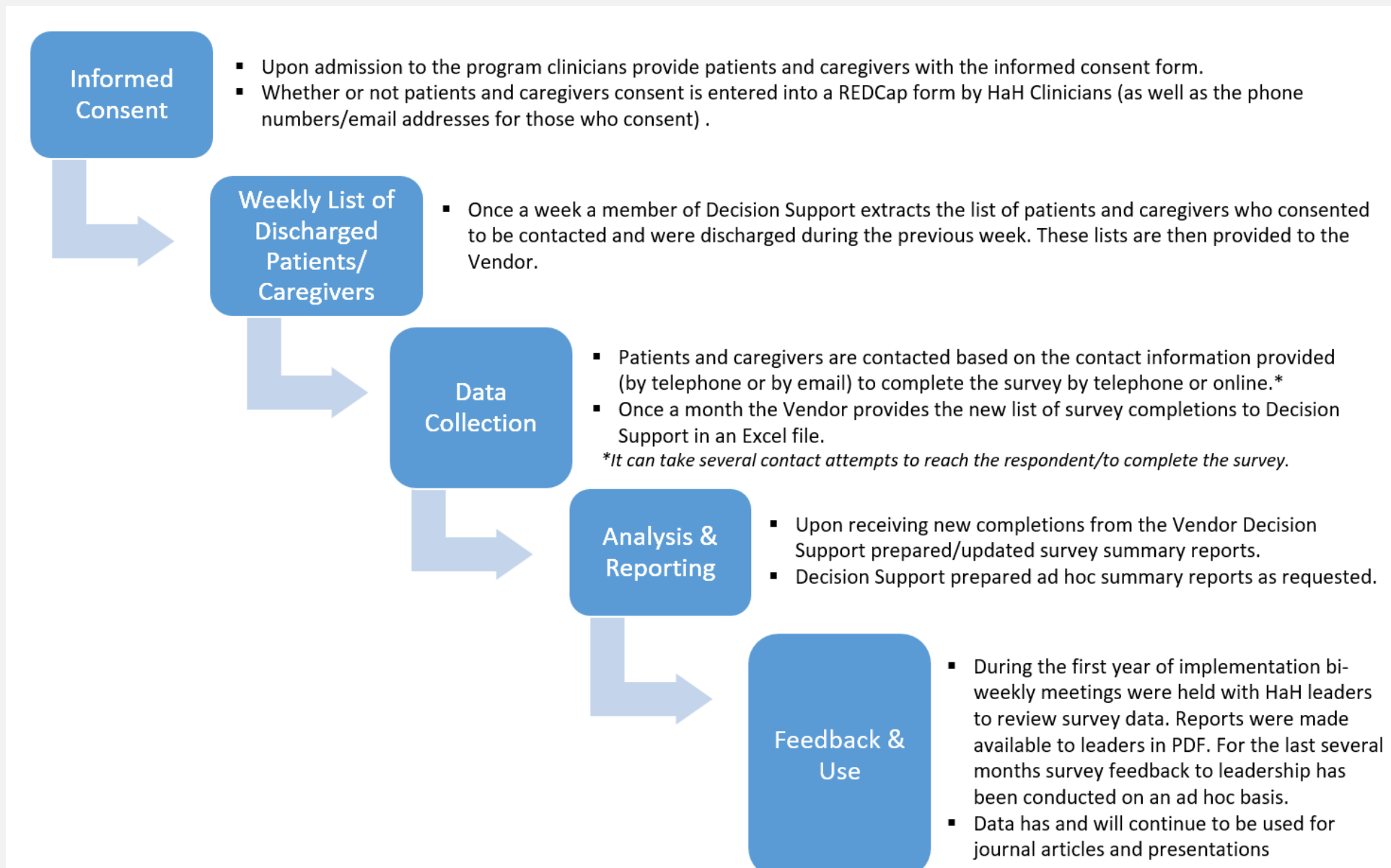
- In November 2020, Island Health, with the support of the British Columbia Ministry of Health, introduced Hospital at Home (HaH) at Victoria General Hospital (VGH). The program expanded to Royal Jubilee Hospital (RJH) in March 2021.
- HaH is an innovative model of acute care that provides hospital-level treatment and services to patients in their own homes.
- Patients living within a specified catchment radius receive a formal hospital admission and comprehensive hospital care all from the comfort and convenience of their own home.
- The Alternatives to Traditional Hospital Care Offered in Monitored Environments (AT-HOME) research group aimed to apply a patient-oriented approach to evaluate the patients' and family caregivers' (FCG) experiences with the program to inform program implementation and expansion in Canada.

OBJECTIVE

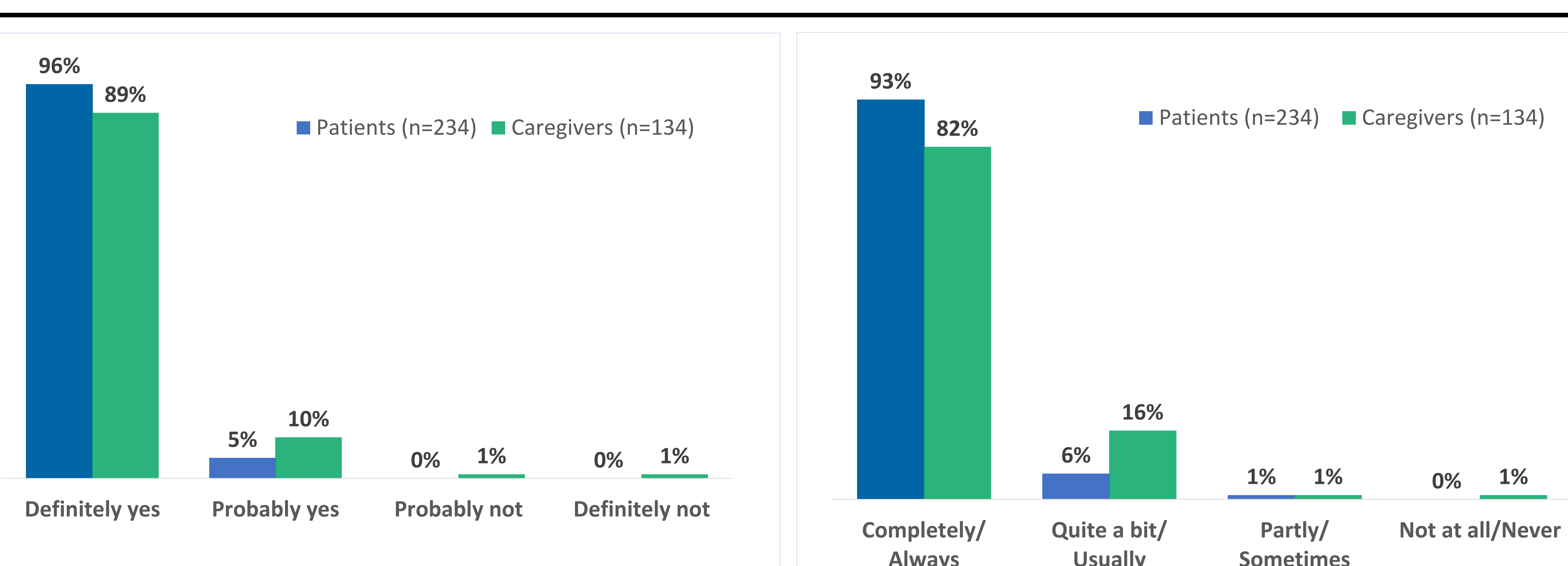
To use a mix of quality improvement approaches and research methodology to capture and report on the experiences of the patients and FCGs at the centre of this care model.

METHODS

- Prospective, observational mixed methods study.
- Data collection began 10 months after the program launched (October 2021 – December 2022).

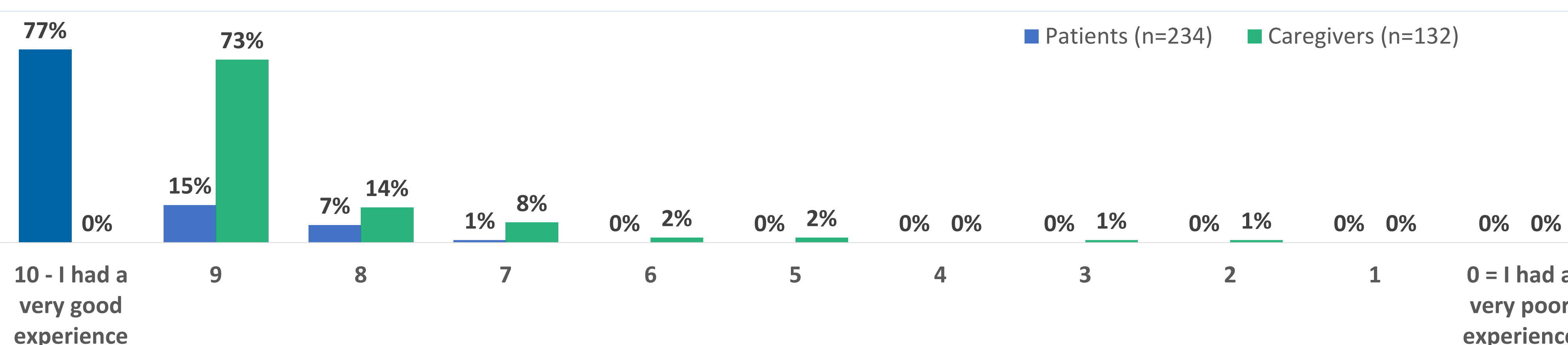


RESULTS FROM PATIENT AND FAMILY CAREGIVER EXPERIENCE SURVEYS

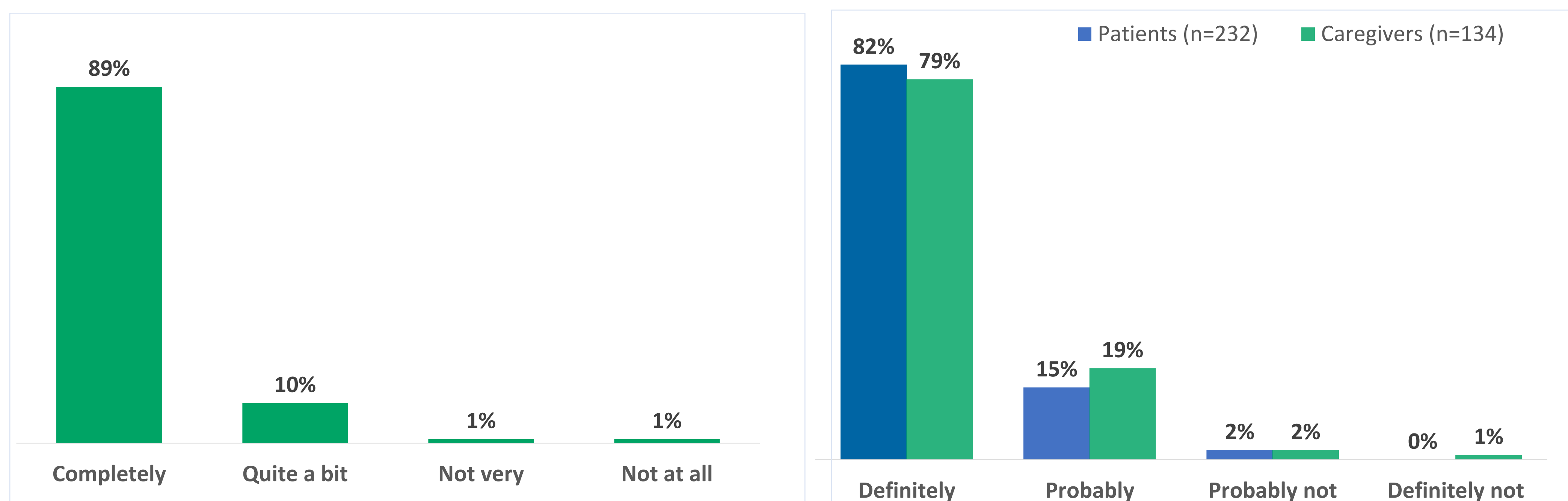


Graph 1. Would you recommend HaH to your friends and family?

Graph 2: How safe did you feel while receiving care through the HaH Program? To what extent did you feel that your family member/friend was receiving safe care as a HaH patient?



Graph 3: On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is "I had a very poor experience" and 10 is "I had a very good experience", what was your overall experience as a HaH patient/caregiver?



Graph 4. Overall, how comfortable were you in assisting your friend/family member with their medications? (n=133)

Graph 5: If you were in the same position again... (and you met the criteria assessed by your doctors) would you choose to be admitted into HaH instead of receiving care in a hospital building? ... would you agree to be the caregiver for a family member or friend receiving care through the HaH program?

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE PROGRAM?

HOW CAN THE PROGRAM IMPROVE?

QUOTES:

- "The professionals who treated me with respect, they explained everything well, they were knowledgeable, calm, factual and respectful made so much sense I was so much happier at home. Freed up a bed at hospital for someone else."
- "Being able to recover at home sooner while still feeling completely supported by a very competent care team genuinely interested in my continued recovery. Seamless support services."
- "This is an excellent program with a committed staff. I very much hope it continues on after the pandemic."
- "Compassion caring and friendly staff, the confidence and the concern showed, no judgement very professional, really helped the patients healing it was faster... The patient was involved in their care progress and that helped them heal faster by doing his own healing by understanding their condition better. Patient felt empowered."
- "I liked having the patient at home, me not having to go to the hospital to visit because of COVID. I like the whole program, we felt confident, I liked the binder, all the information was provided, the visits by the HCP, the ease and confidence with the program."

QUOTES:

- "Medication common names were not on the bottle to match the paper work. Or they are too small on the pill bottle. It's a good program."
- "The only thing I could add is after discharge a follow up call to check on and find out if the tests and appointments have been followed up."
- "...There is a lot of stress on the caregiver at the start. I was quite stressed at the start. By the second day I was fine. But initially more information to the caregiver to ease the stress."
- "I don't see any need for improvement - except for expanding the program around the country!"

DISCUSSION

- The preliminary results show that the Island Health HaH program, newly implemented in BC, is being well received by patients and their FCGs and has provided positive patient and FCG experiences over 15 months of data collection.
- The expansion of the program is supported from both patients' and FCGs' perspectives. This is evident by the quantitative data, but also through direct quotes from patients and FCGs. (Data not shown)
- FCGs, while acknowledging the time commitments and the impact on their own quality of life, recognized the benefits, for the patients' health, recovery and comfort, and also the advantages the program provided them.
- FCGs noted that by having the patients at home and not having to make trips to the hospital, their own experiences as a caregiver were improved.

CONCLUSION

- Overall, the experiences of patients' and FCGs' during 15 months of Island Health's Hospital at Home program show that the program has been positively received by patients and FCGs thus far.
- Over 97% of those surveyed would probably or definitely participate in the program again if in the same position.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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