

Use of plain language summaries by healthcare professionals: an Open Pharma survey

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WHY WAS THIS NEEDED?

- Plain language summaries (PLS) are easy-to-read summaries of scientific research articles.¹
- Few articles are published with easy-to-read PLS.² However, healthcare professionals (HCPs) and other audiences value PLS,³⁻⁵ and pharmaceutical companies are increasingly writing PLS to accompany their articles.⁶
- While these studies show that HCPs value PLS, little is known about how HCPs use PLS and which platforms they use to find PLS. We developed a survey to find out.

WHAT DID WE DO?

AIMS

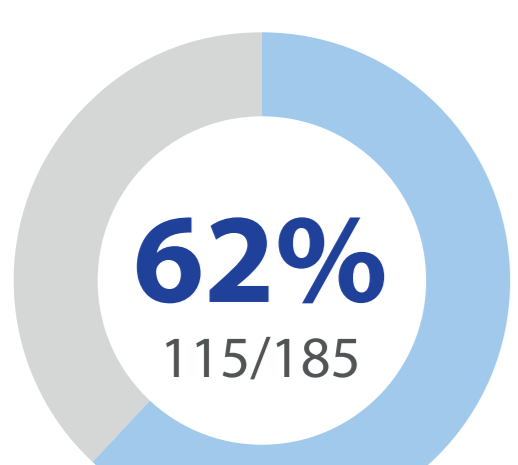
- We wanted to know:
 - how HCPs use text-based PLS, and how often
 - how HCPs find text-based PLS
 - what, if anything, could be done to improve how HCPs use and find PLS.

METHODS

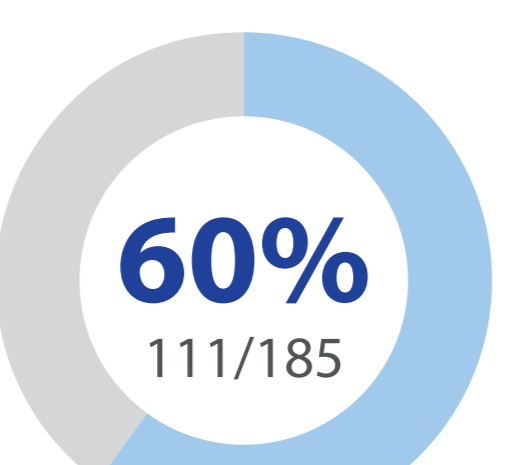
- The Open Pharma PLS and discoverability working group designed an 18-question global online survey.
 - A copy of the survey can be accessed by scanning the QR code at the bottom of this poster.
- The survey was sent by email to 5141 individuals who had previously contributed to articles sponsored by AstraZeneca, GSK or Ipsen.
 - Any HCP who had previously been involved with the development of a pharma-sponsored publication was eligible to respond.
- Each participating pharmaceutical company distributed the survey to their contacts.
- The survey was open from 24 April to 17 June 2024.

WHO RESPONDED TO OUR SURVEY?

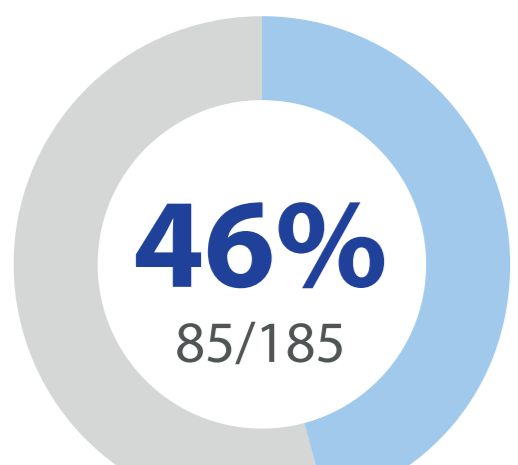
- A total of 188 people responded to our survey. Three (2%) were excluded because they were not HCPs.
- Of the 185 eligible respondents:



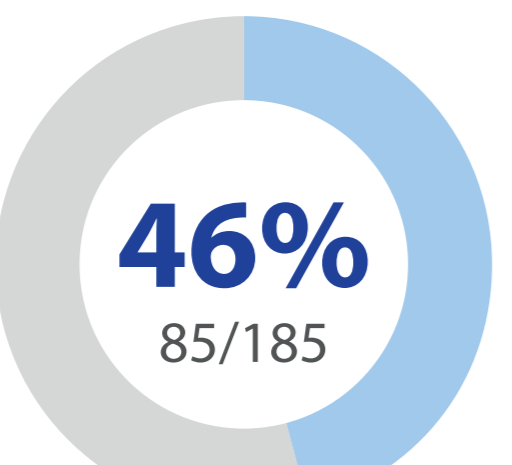
had more than 20 years' experience in clinical practice



did not speak English as their first language

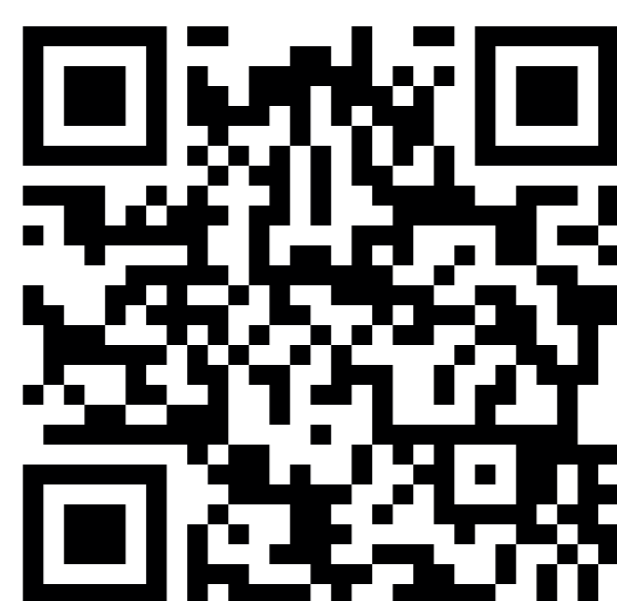


were oncologists



lived in Europe

VIEW THE E-POSTER AND SURVEY HERE



REFERENCES

1. Rosenberg A et al. *Curr Med Res Opin* 2021;37:2015-6; 2. Gattrell W et al. *Curr Med Res Opin* 2022;38(Suppl 2):41-2; 3. Lobban D et al. *Curr Med Res Opin* 2022;38(Suppl 1):32-3; 4. Southey L et al. Presented at the 2024 European Meeting of ISMP, London, UK; 5. Pushparajah D et al. *Ther Innov Regul Sci* 2018;52:474-81; 6. Ipsen. Available from: www.ipson.com/general/our-pledge-summaries-in-plain-language-for-all-journal-publications/ (Accessed 28 August 2024).

DECLARATION OF FUNDING

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the Open Pharma PLS and discoverability working group for their guidance during survey development and analysis of results.

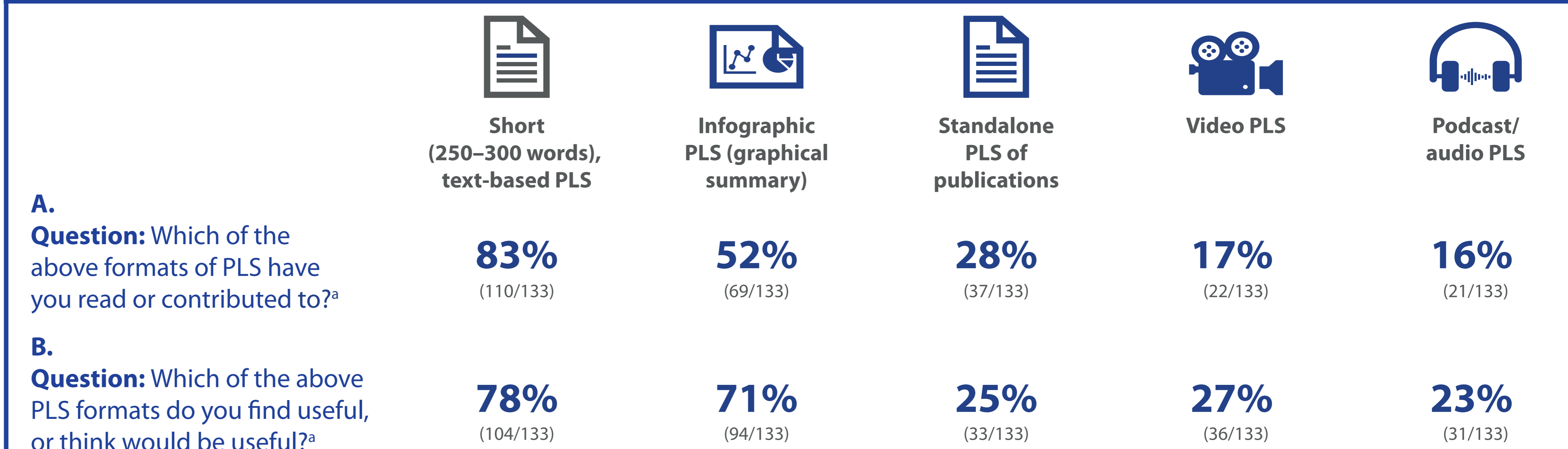
DISCLOSURES

PH is an employee and shareholder of AstraZeneca. ST is an employee and shareholder of Ipsen. GD (0000-0002-3508-9127) is an employee and shareholder of the GSK group of companies. SN (0009-0000-7816-0862), JG (0000-0002-1461-5714), TK (0000-0001-6152-7365) and VS (0009-0007-0946-6316) are employees of Oxford PharmaGenesis, where TK is also a shareholder. SB (0000-0001-8072-5690) is an employee of Alfasigma S.p.A.

HOW DO HCPs USE PLS?

- Most respondents (72%, 133/185) had read or contributed to at least one PLS; 28% (52/185) had not.
- Of the 126 HCPs who did read or contribute to PLS (Figure 2), 34% (43/126) were unsure of their institutional positions on sharing PLS with patients, 59% (74/126) were allowed to share PLS with patients and 7% (9/126) were not (data not shown).

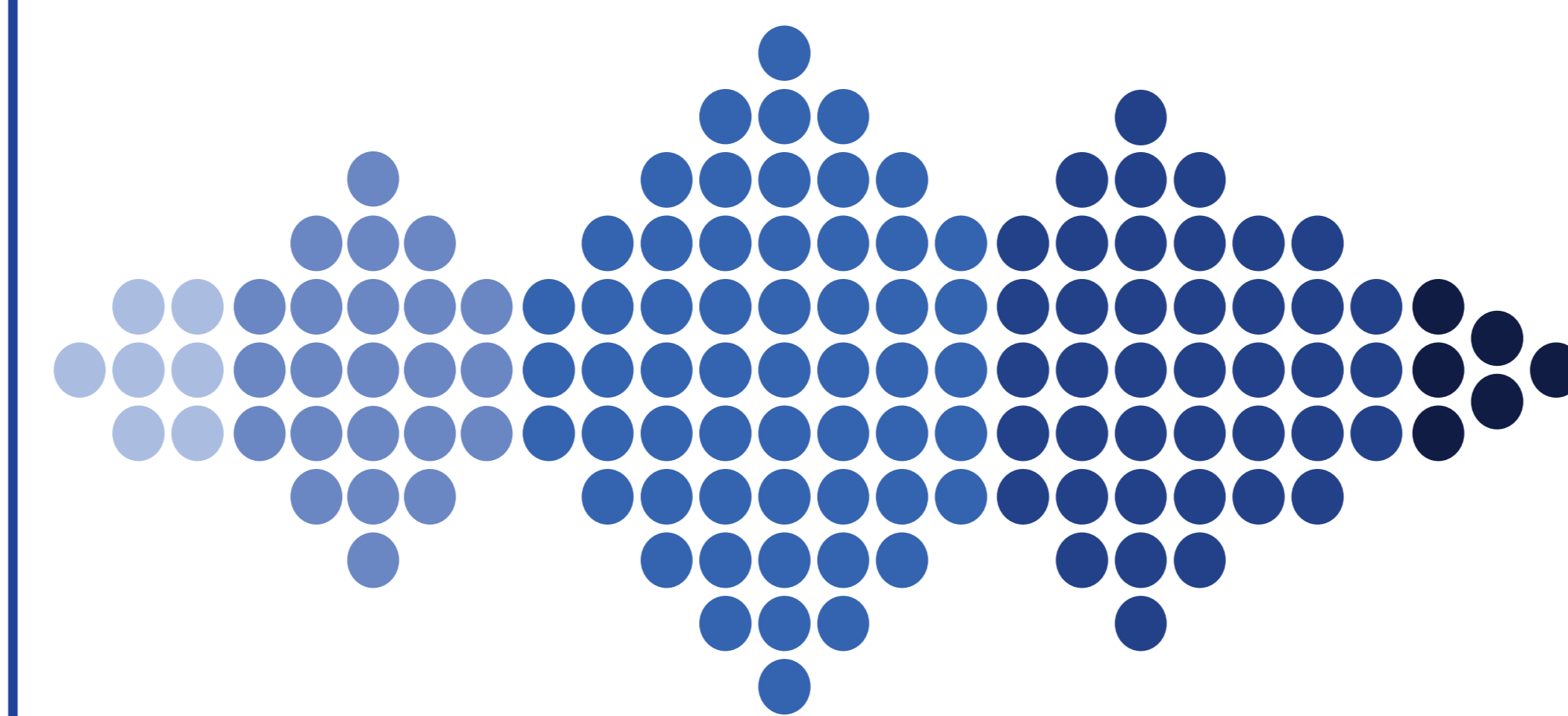
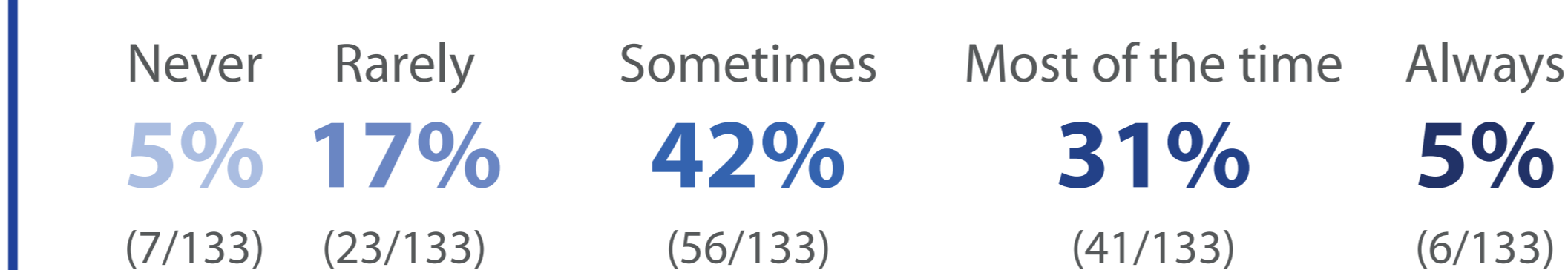
Figure 1. HCPs had mostly read or contributed to short, text-based PLS (A), but they considered both short, text-based and infographic PLS to be the most useful PLS formats (B).



^aRespondents could select one or more options from a predefined, multiple-choice list. The 133 respondents who had read or contributed to at least one PLS answered this question. HCP, healthcare professional; PLS, plain language summary(ies).

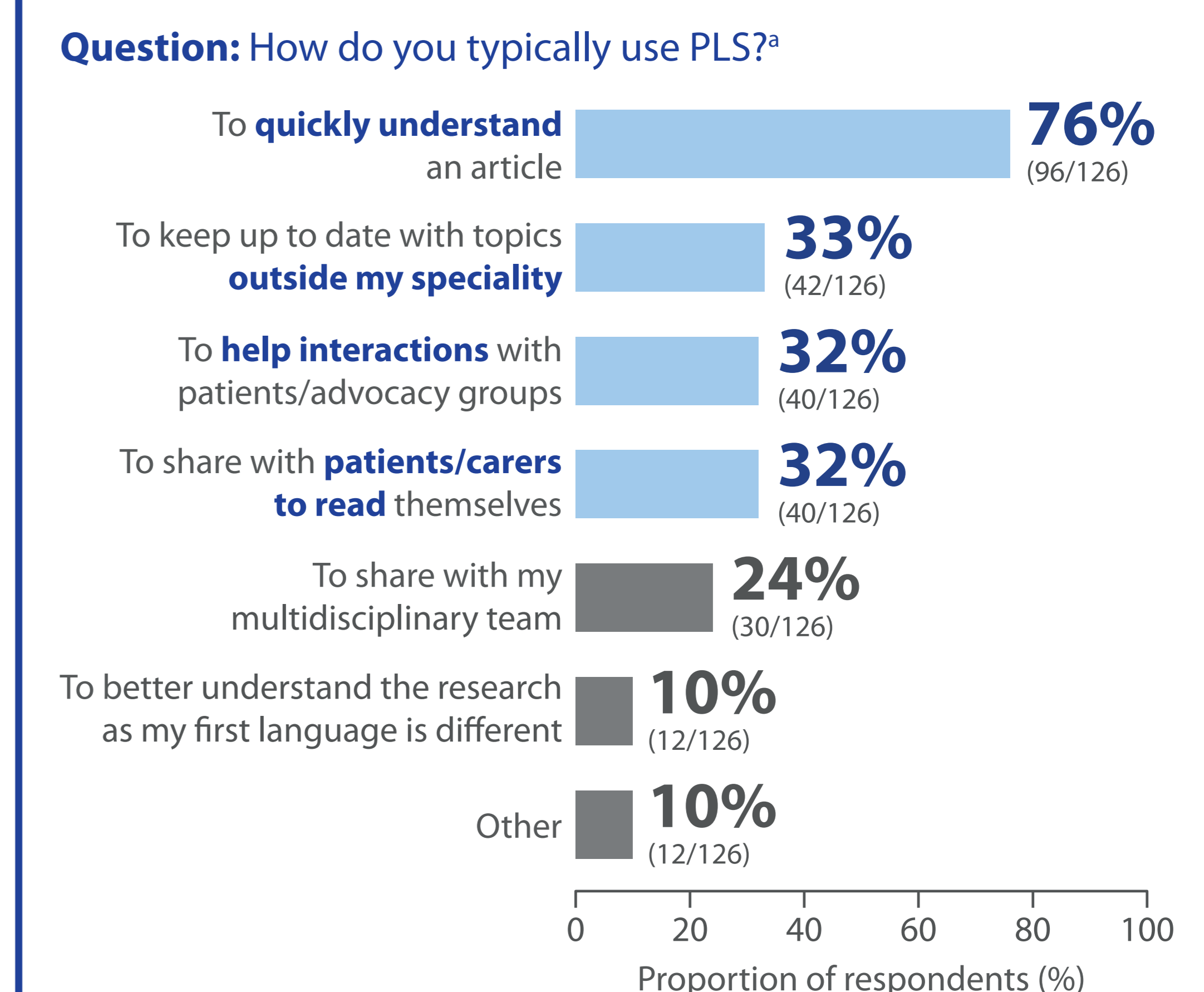
Figure 2. Just 5% of HCPs had never read or used a PLS when an article included one.

Question: When reading articles with a PLS, how often do you typically read and/or use the PLS?^a



Each circle represents one respondent.
^aThe 133 respondents who had read or contributed to at least one PLS answered this question. HCP, healthcare professional; PLS, plain language summary(ies).

Figure 3. Most of the 126 HCPs who did read or use PLS used them to gain a quick understanding of publications.

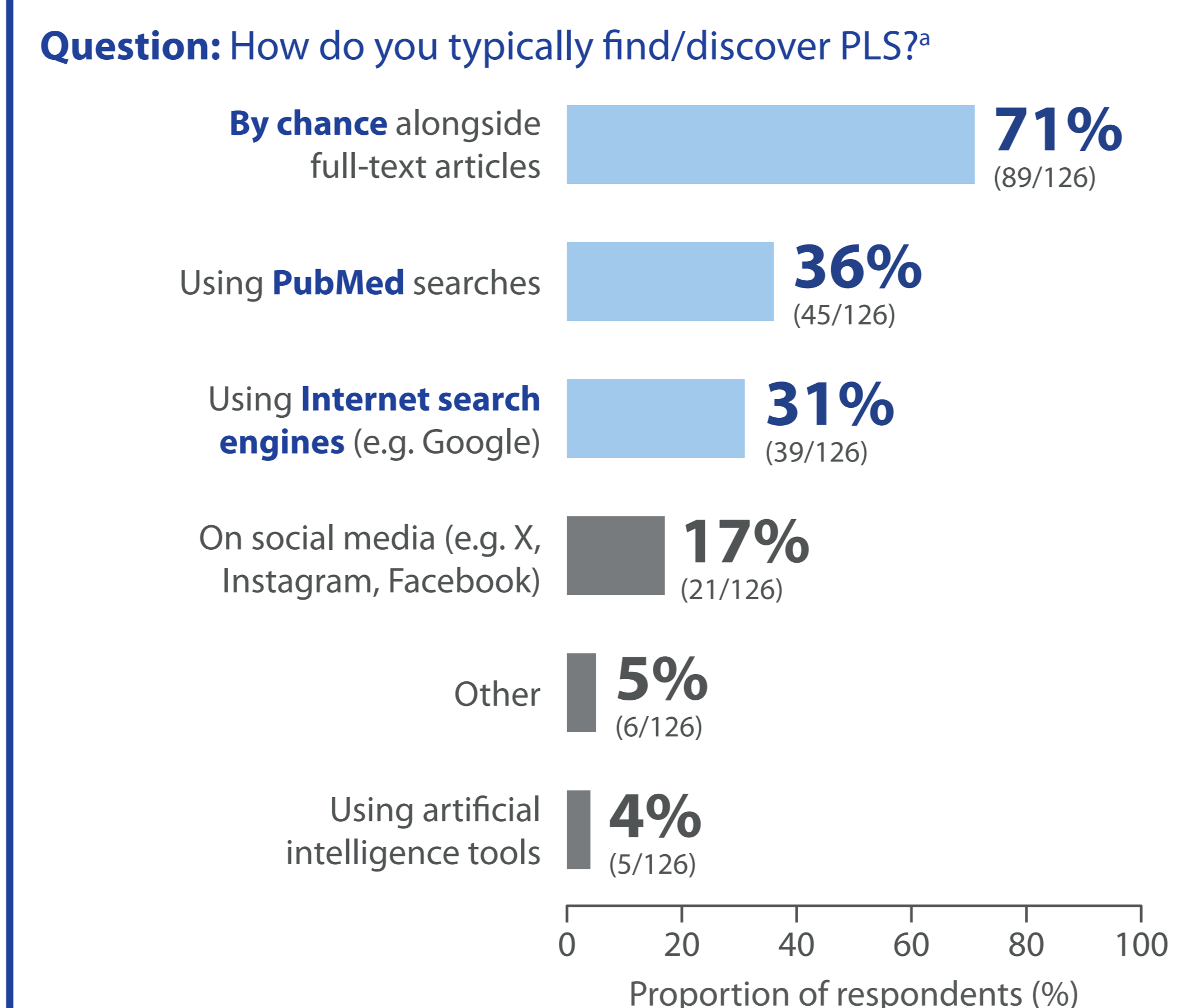


^aRespondents could select one or more options from a predefined, multiple-choice list. Respondents who had 'never' read a PLS (5%, 7/133; Figure 2) did not answer this question. HCP, healthcare professional; PLS, plain language summary(ies).

HOW DO HCPs FIND PLS?

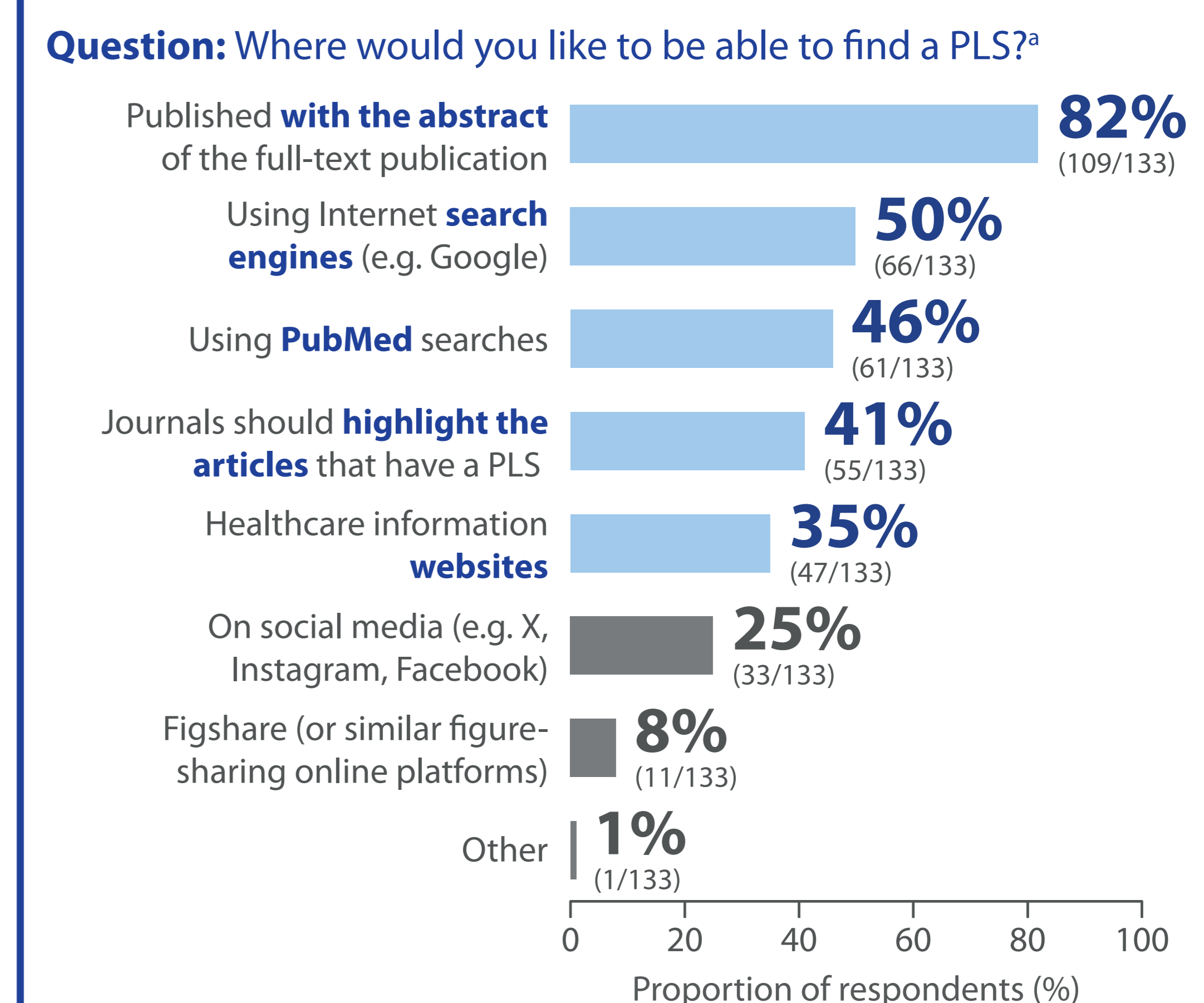
- Most HCPs would like all phase 3 (73%, 97/133) and real-world evidence (54%, 72/133) articles to include a PLS (data not shown).

Figure 4. Most HCPs found PLS by chance alongside full-text articles, while one-third used PubMed or Internet searches.



^aRespondents could select one or more options from a predefined, multiple-choice list. Respondents who had 'never' read a PLS (5%, 7/133; Figure 2) did not answer this question. HCP, healthcare professional; PLS, plain language summary(ies).

Figure 5. Most HCPs would like a PLS to be published alongside the abstract of a full-text article.



^aRespondents could select one or more options from a predefined, multiple-choice list. The 133 respondents who had read or contributed to at least one PLS answered this question. HCP, healthcare professional; PLS, plain language summary(ies).

WHAT DOES THIS TELL US?

- PLS are a helpful method of communicating scientific research to time-poor HCPs.
- Most HCPs find PLS by chance alongside full-text articles.
- HCPs would like to see more biomedical research publications include a short, text-based PLS, and they would like PLS to be published alongside the abstract in the full-text article.
- Publishing more PLS and improving how they are found will help broaden the impact of scientific research.