



Audit Of Telephone Nursing Advice

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Goals of Telephone Triage

- Reduce unnecessary demand on existing health care resources by advising the caller on the most appropriate level of care for their current health concern
- Promote patient independence and self-confidence in their decision making
- Provide a standardized source for health information & availability of health services

The Triage Service

- 24 / 7
- Bilingual service
- Northern Ontario (pilot - 22 months)
- Trained registered nurses
- Clinical guidelines
- Health information topics
- Advise on the most appropriate level of care

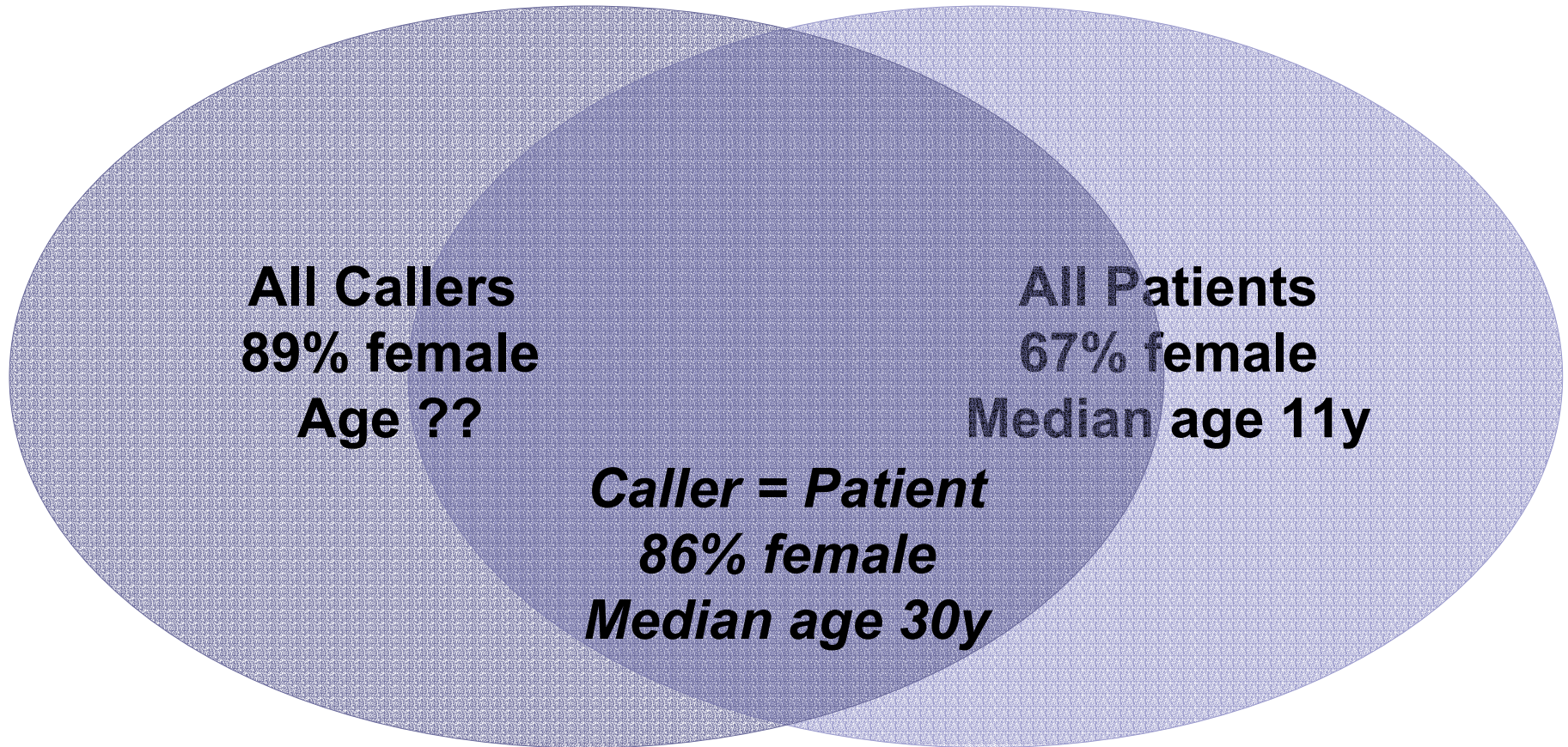
Methods - 1

- Audit checklist developed by CRaNHR
 - Assess
 - nurse-caller interaction
 - use and usefulness of the clinical software
 - appropriateness of advice
 - Pilot-tested by 2 FPs and 2 NPs

Methods - 2

- 73 taped calls (selected from ~350)
 - Complete call was recorded (n=~300)
 - Caller consent (n=101)
 - Nurse consent (n=73)
- Each call was audited by 1 FP, 1 NP and 1 RN
(Note: RNs with teletriage experience)
- 73 calls x 3 auditors/call = 219 audits
- Each auditor assessed 28-44 calls

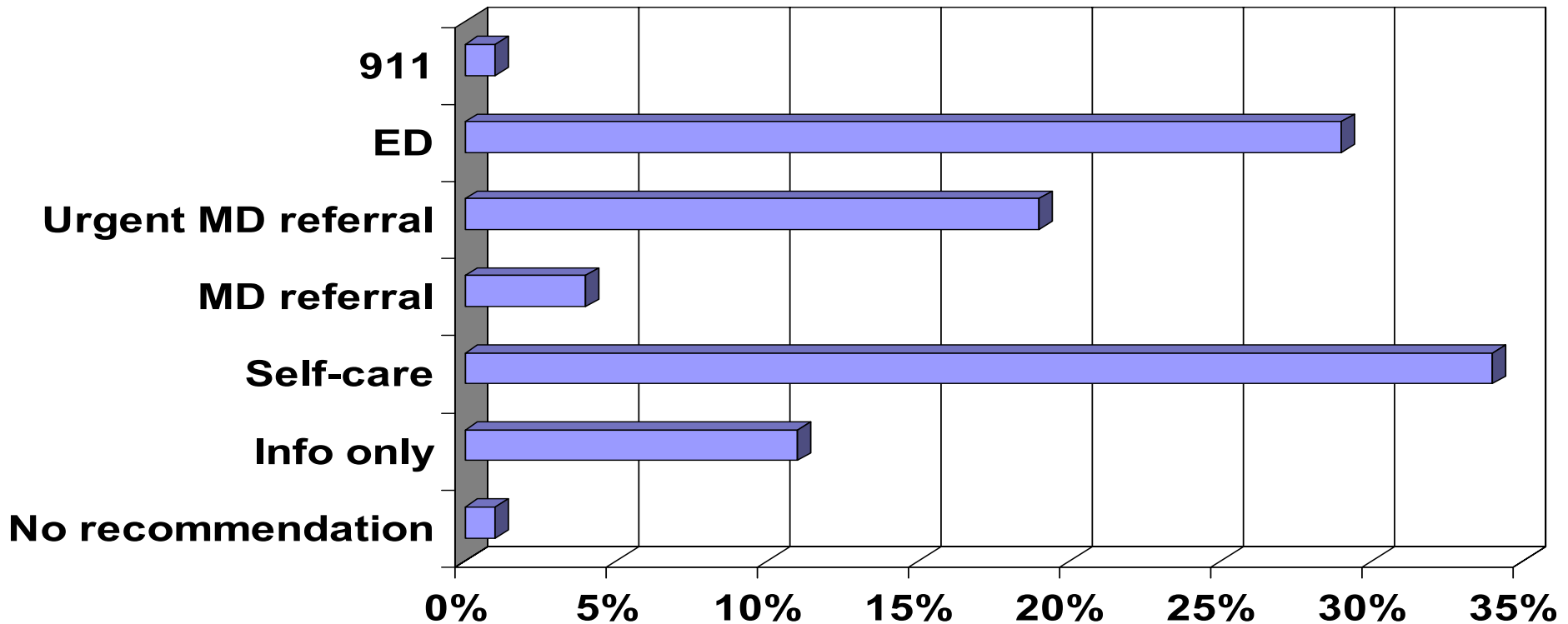
Callers and Patients (audited calls)



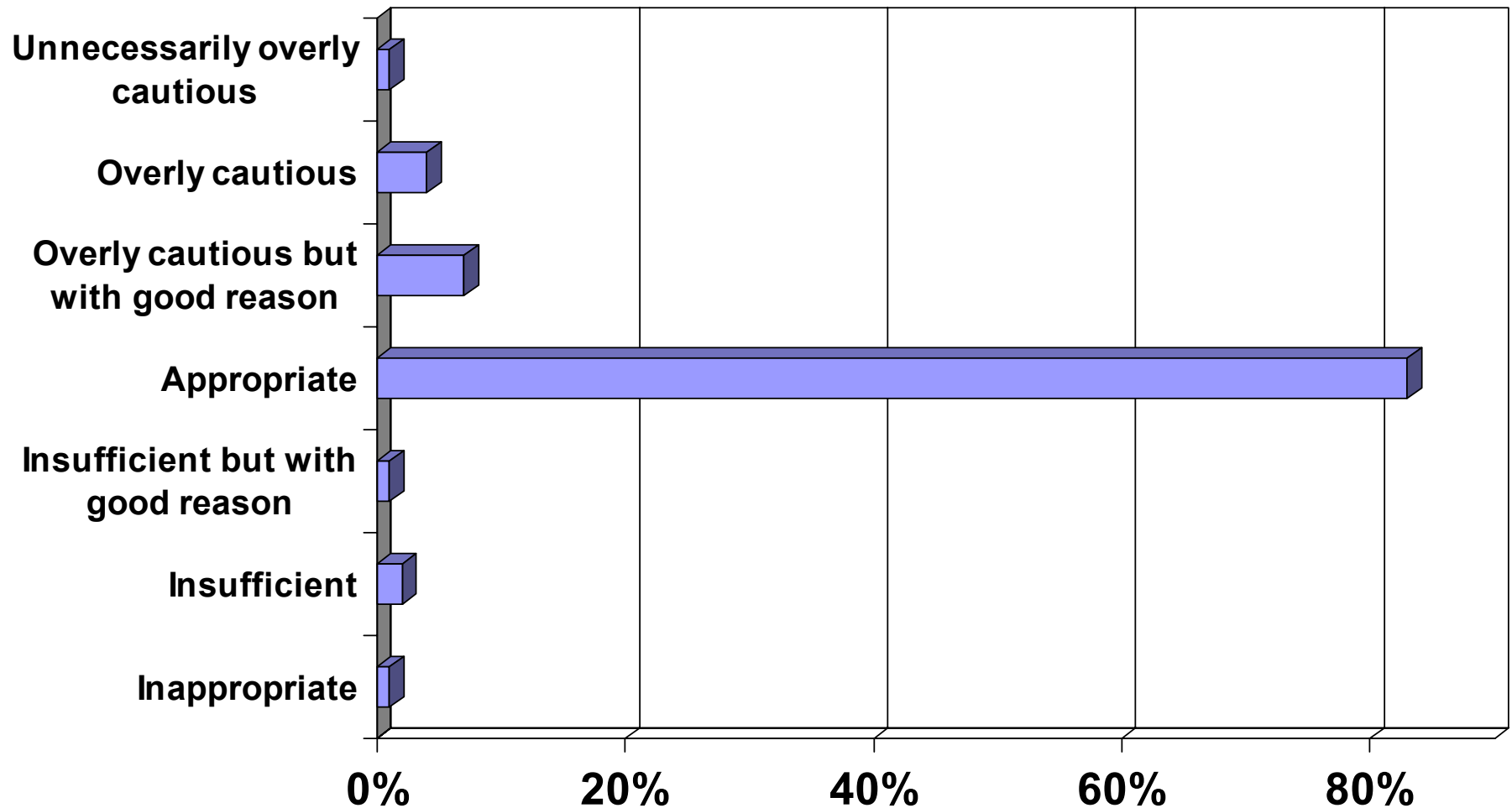
Type of Calls

- 41 clinical guidelines (used 1-3 times)
 - 15 pediatric guidelines used in 30 calls
 - E.g., Cough/ hoarseness/ strider
 - Guidelines for Trauma & Genitourinary symptoms were used several times
- 14 health information topics used in 14 calls

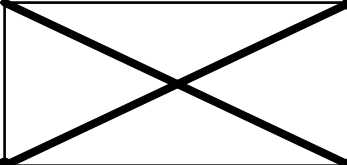
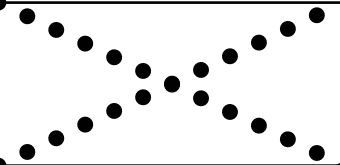
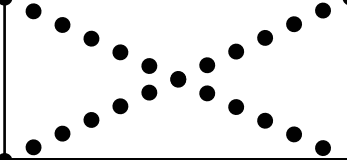
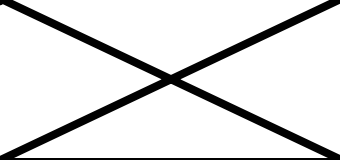
Teletriage Advice (73 calls)



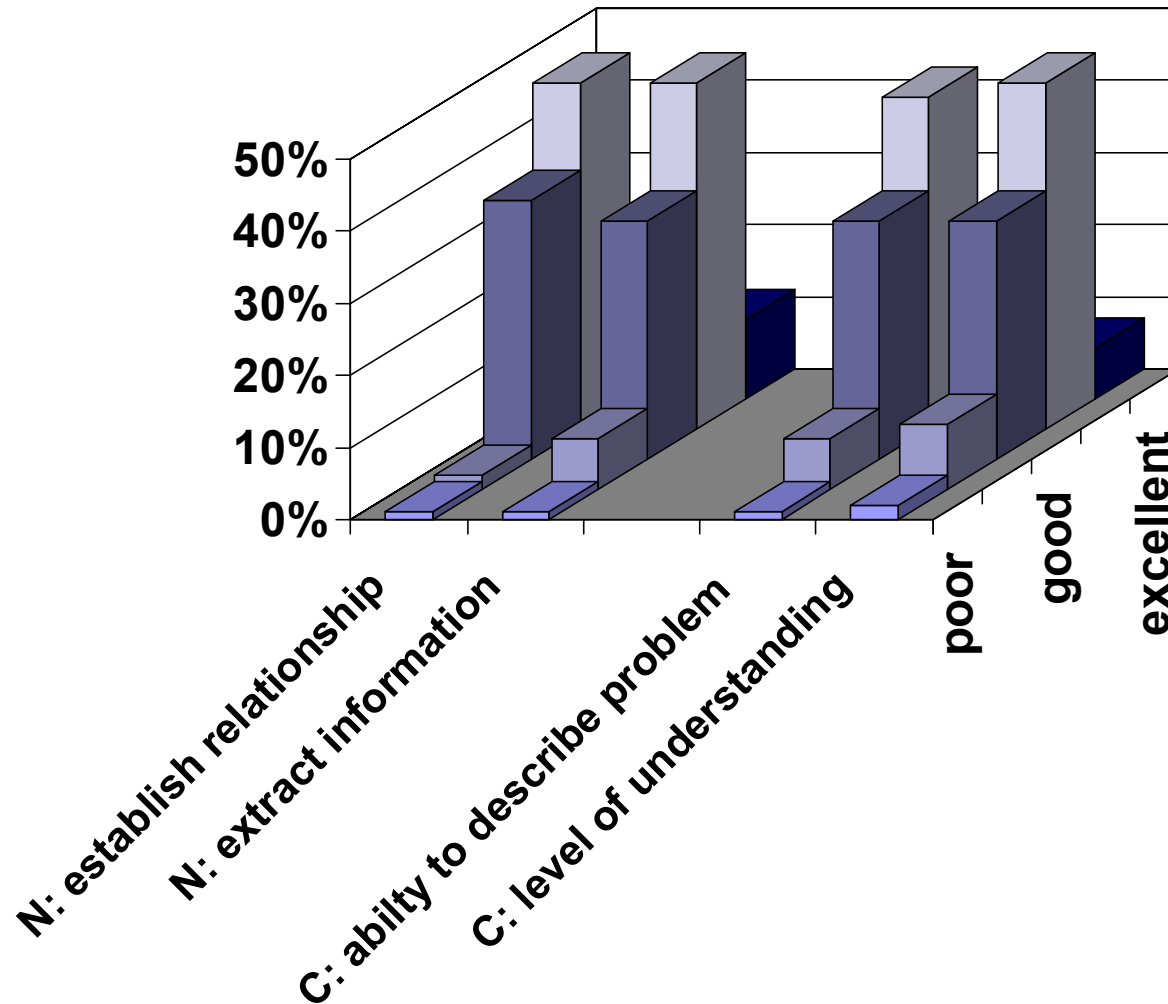
Appropriateness of Advice (219 audits)



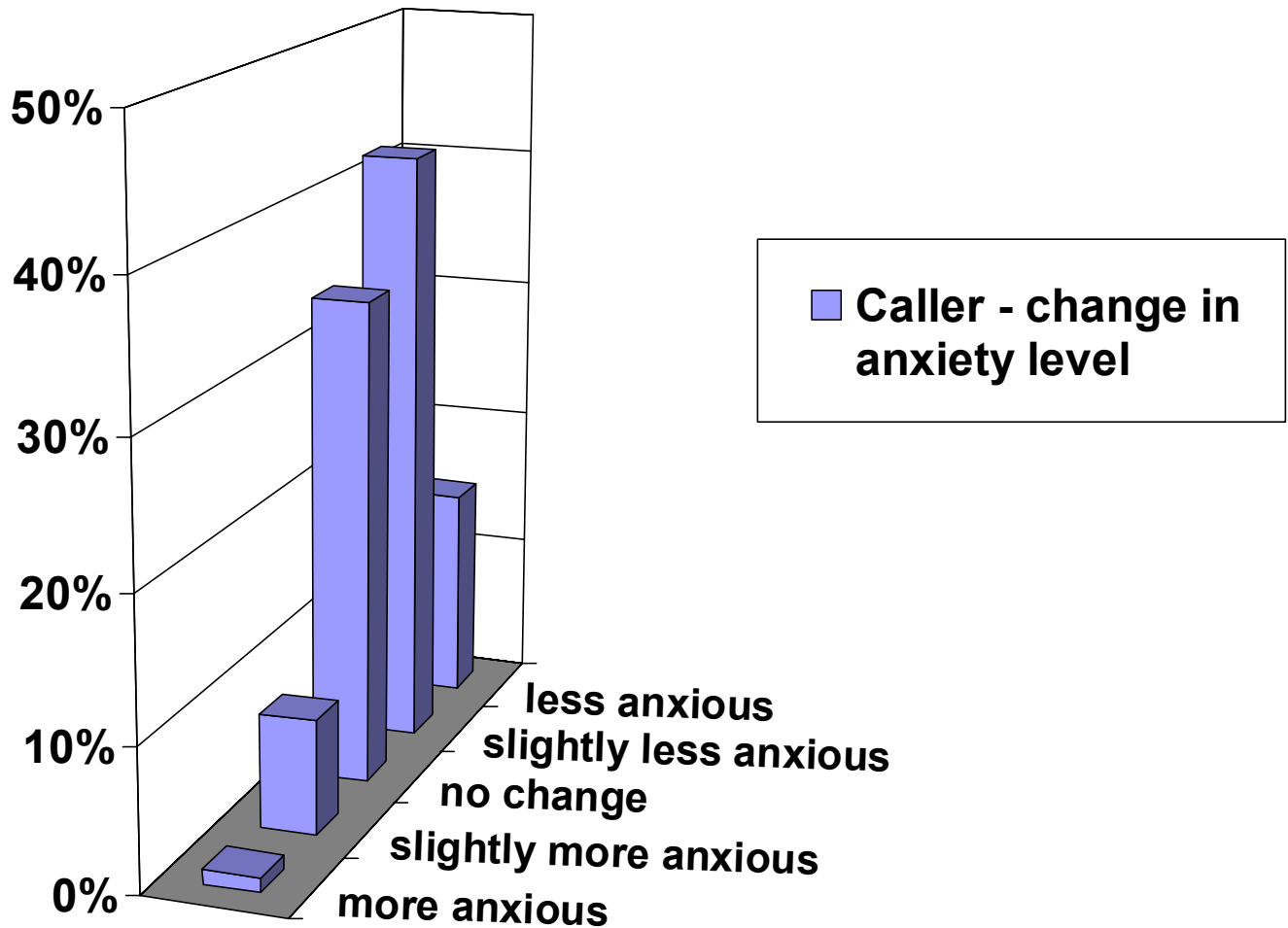
Auditor Agreement (n=13-23 calls)

| | NP1 | NP2 | RN1 | RN2 |
|-----|---|--|-----|-----|
| FP1 | 77% | 73% | 72% | 76% |
| FP2 | 69% | 63% | 33% | 83% |
| NP1 |  |  | 79% | 64% |
| NP2 |  |  | 65% | 86% |

Nurse-Caller Interaction (219 audits)



Nurse-Caller Interaction (219 audits)



Conclusions - 1

- Caveat: non-random sample
- Representative sample
- In over 90% of the 219 audits, the teletriage nurses' advice was rated as
 - “*appropriate*” **or**
 - “*insufficient*” but with good reason **or**
 - “*overly cautious*” but with good reason

Conclusions - 2

- At least 2 of 3 auditors rated the advice as “*appropriate*” in over 90% of the 73 calls
- All 73 calls were rated as “*appropriate*” by at least 1 auditor
- Where auditors and teletriage nurses disagreed, it was the auditor’s judgment that the teletriage nurse tended to err on the side of caution (3x as likely)

Conclusions - 3

- The nurse-caller interaction was judged to be “*good*” or better in over 90% of the audits
 - Nurse’s ability to establish a relationship and extract information
 - Caller’s willingness to describe problem and level of understanding
- Caller’s became less anxious in 57% of the audits

Acknowledgements

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