

## DECIDE - Voluntary Health Scotland and SIGN: survey of patient and public awareness of guidelines

### Method

The Survey was developed by Voluntary Health Scotland in association with SIGN and carried out over two months in 2011. The Survey was promoted and distributed both online and by direct e-mailing to over 1,600 voluntary and community organisations (targeting equalities groups), NHS and local authority channels (including Public Partnership Forums, and Health Councils), CABx and many individuals. Bias in selection was addressed through wide distribution.

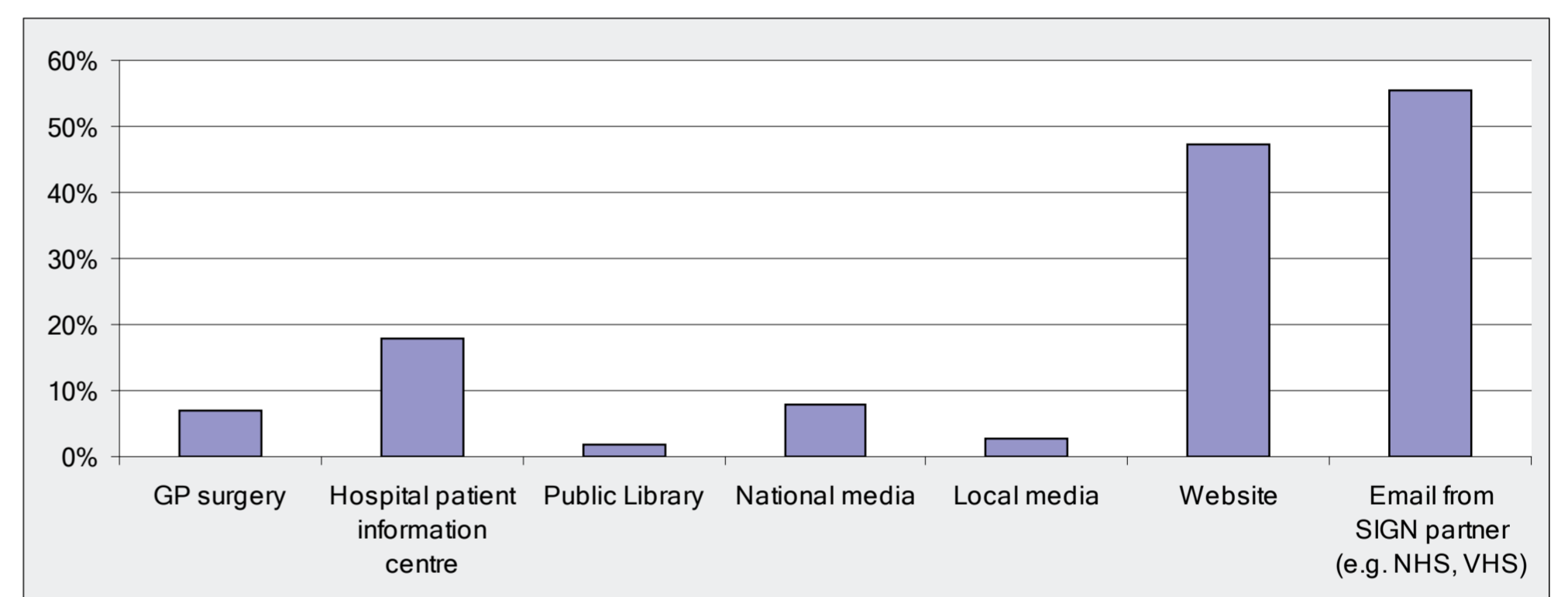
### Results

- 235 responses were received, mostly from older, female, white respondents – over 50% with disabilities or/and long-term health conditions
- 70% of respondents were aware of SIGN Guidelines and understood their purpose; best known Guidelines related to diabetes, aspects of mental ill-health, CHD, CVD and common cancers
- Guidelines were most commonly accessed via electronic mailings and the websites of SIGN and VHS; over 70% of respondents viewed Guidelines in electronic format, with 50% of these also seeing printed copies; awareness of patient versions of Guidelines was relatively low
- Patient participation in the work of SIGN is significant: nearly 40% of respondents contributed to Guideline development and review, commented on patient versions and attended Guideline public meetings
- Although few were aware of Guidelines being applied in their case, these respondents were confident of their value; Guidelines were applied by doctors, nurses and occasionally by allied health professionals and in both hospital and primary care settings
- 86% of respondents believed that SIGN Guidelines had made a considerable difference to healthcare in Scotland. They were keen that Guidelines should be promoted and implemented across Scotland, that evidence of the effectiveness of Guidelines be sought and resources maintained to safeguard SIGN's work

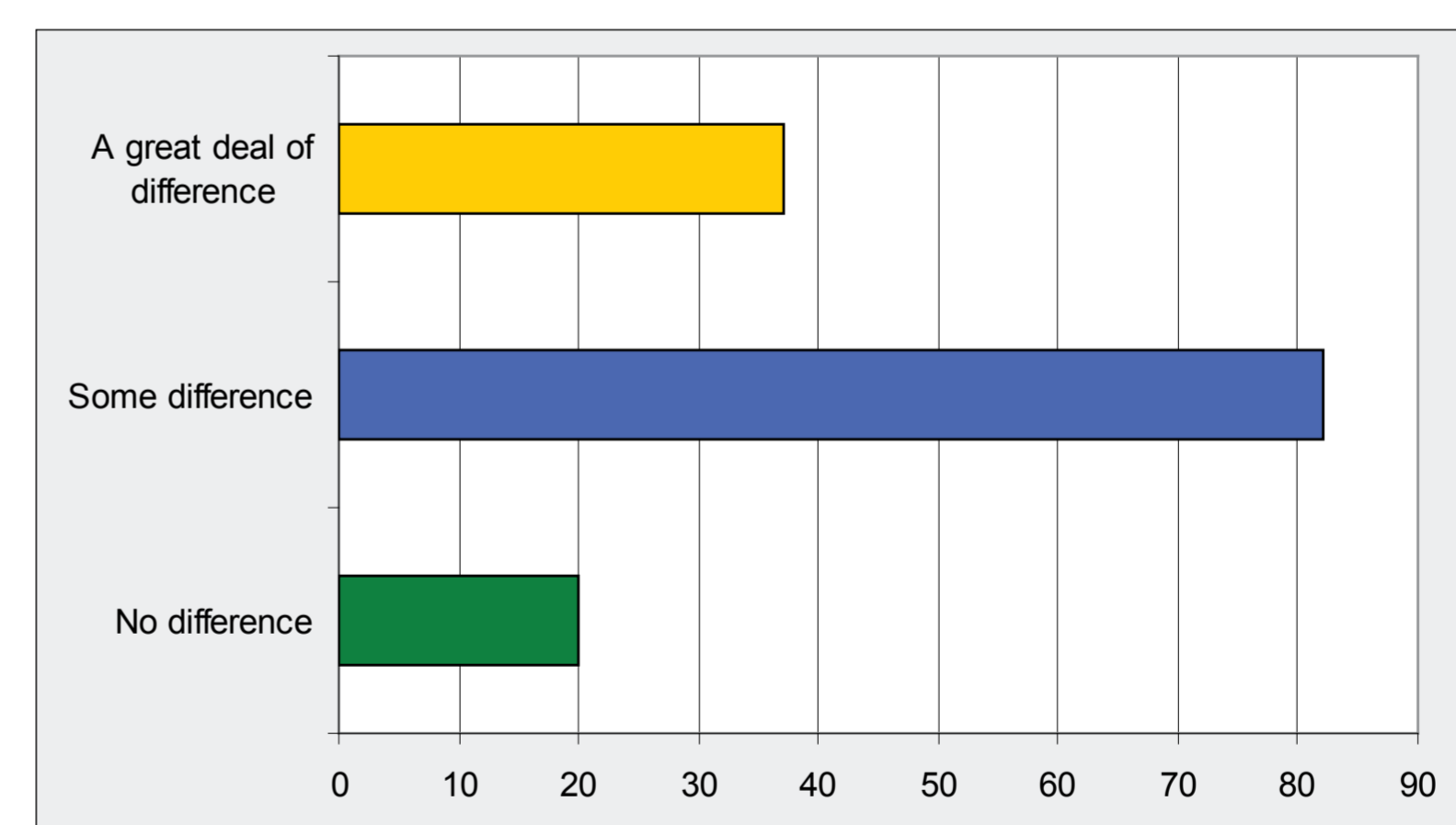
### Quotes

- “ It is important that healthcare staff at all levels are made more aware of the Guidelines...and that SIGN is properly funded and resourced in its valuable work ”
- “ Professionals do know of them, and where they are implemented, they make a lot of difference. Carer groups have used them to lobby for better care locally and they are referenced ”
- “ When applied by GPs, they can make a great deal of difference ”

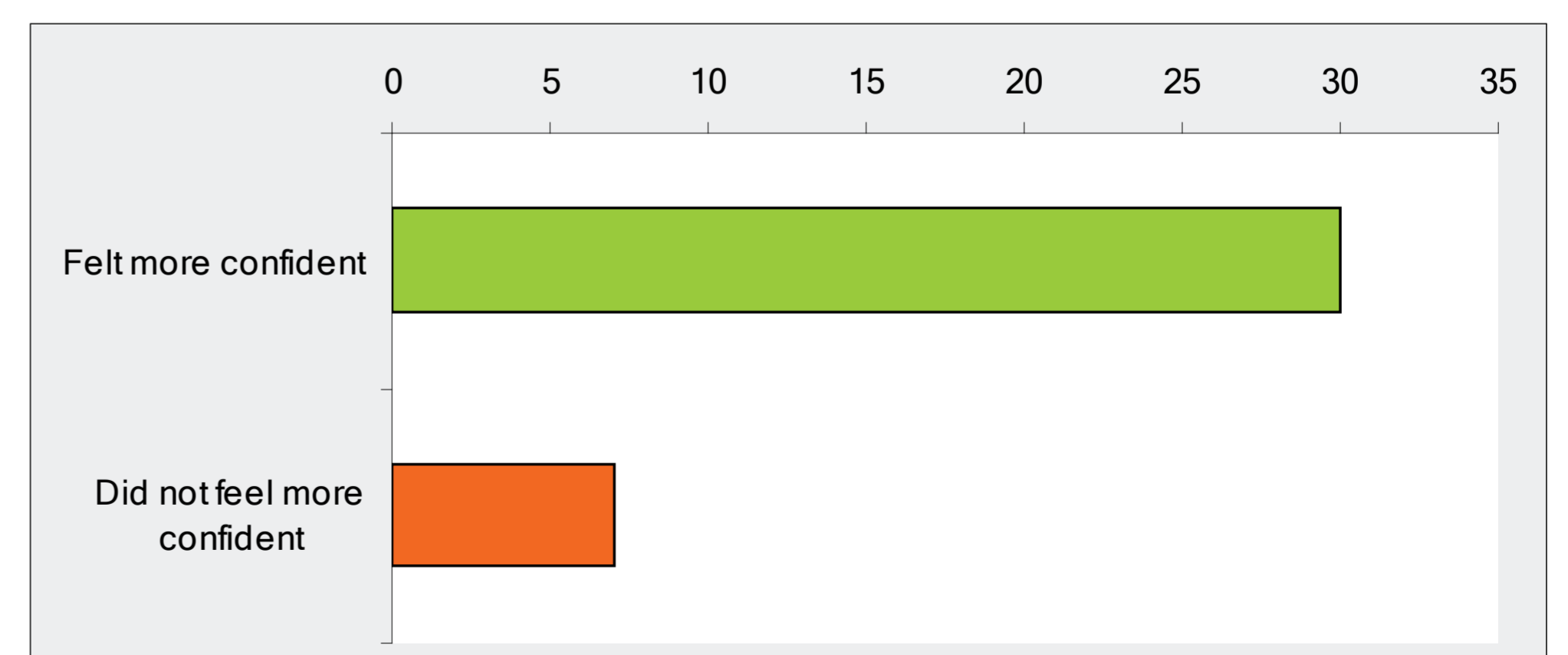
### Figures



Routes to public awareness of SIGN Guidelines



Impact of SIGN Guidelines on healthcare in Scotland



Patient confidence in SIGN Guidelines

