

The State of Healthcare Communications

Spok has surveyed healthcare professionals each year since 2011 to assess how clinical communication is handled in their organizations, as well as the trends, challenges, and predictions shaping this critical capability. Since 2020, we've also analyzed the effects of COVID-19, especially regarding how protected health information (PHI) is handled, how the pandemic has affected IT spending, and COVID's impact on clinician burnout.

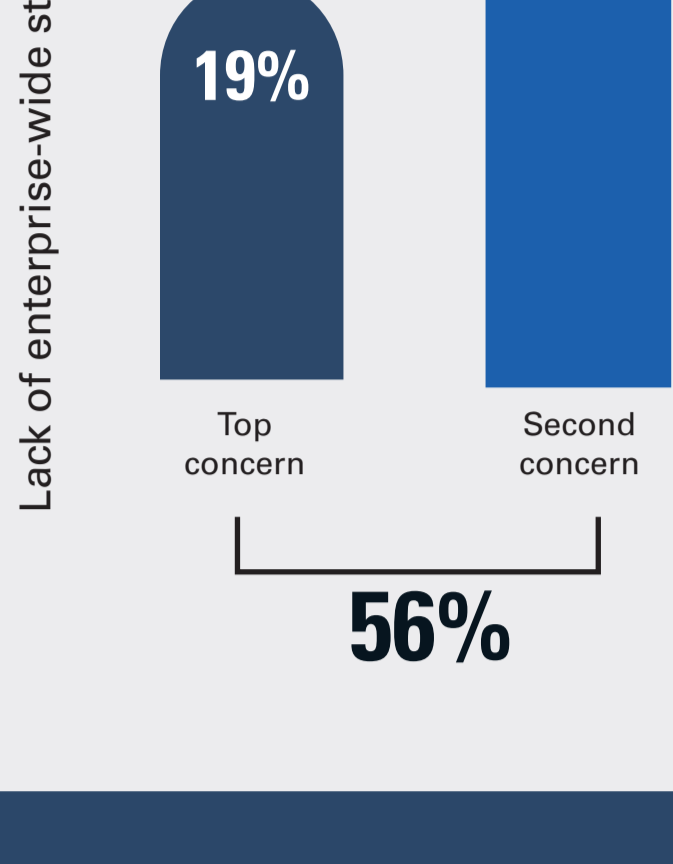
1. An enterprise-wide strategy or technology solution is key to advancing hospital communications and mitigating the risk of burnout.

What do you perceive are the biggest obstacles to advancing your hospital communications?

For the third year in a row, respondents cited budget and resource constraints as the No. 1 obstacle to advancing hospital communications. Consistent with previous years, this obstacle far outranks all others.



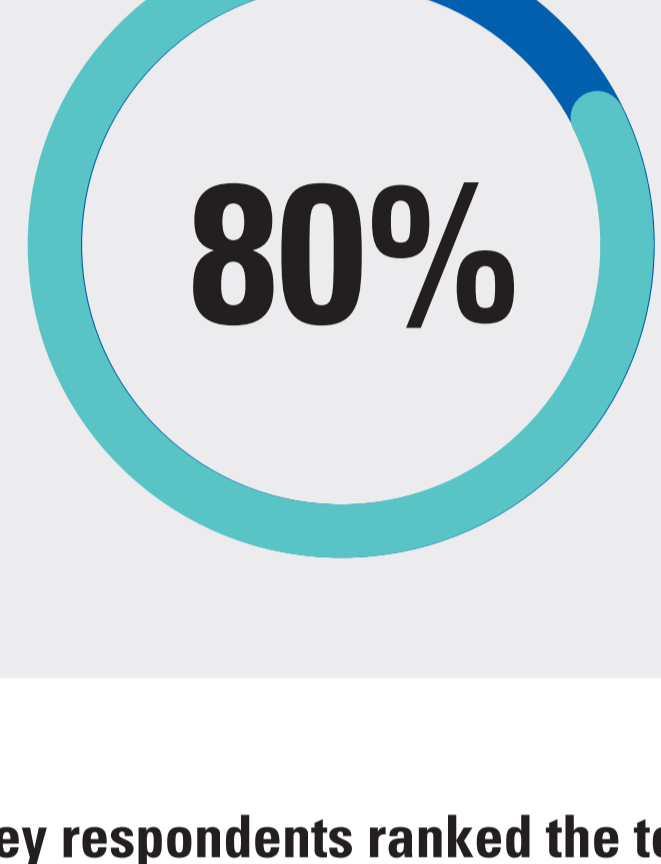
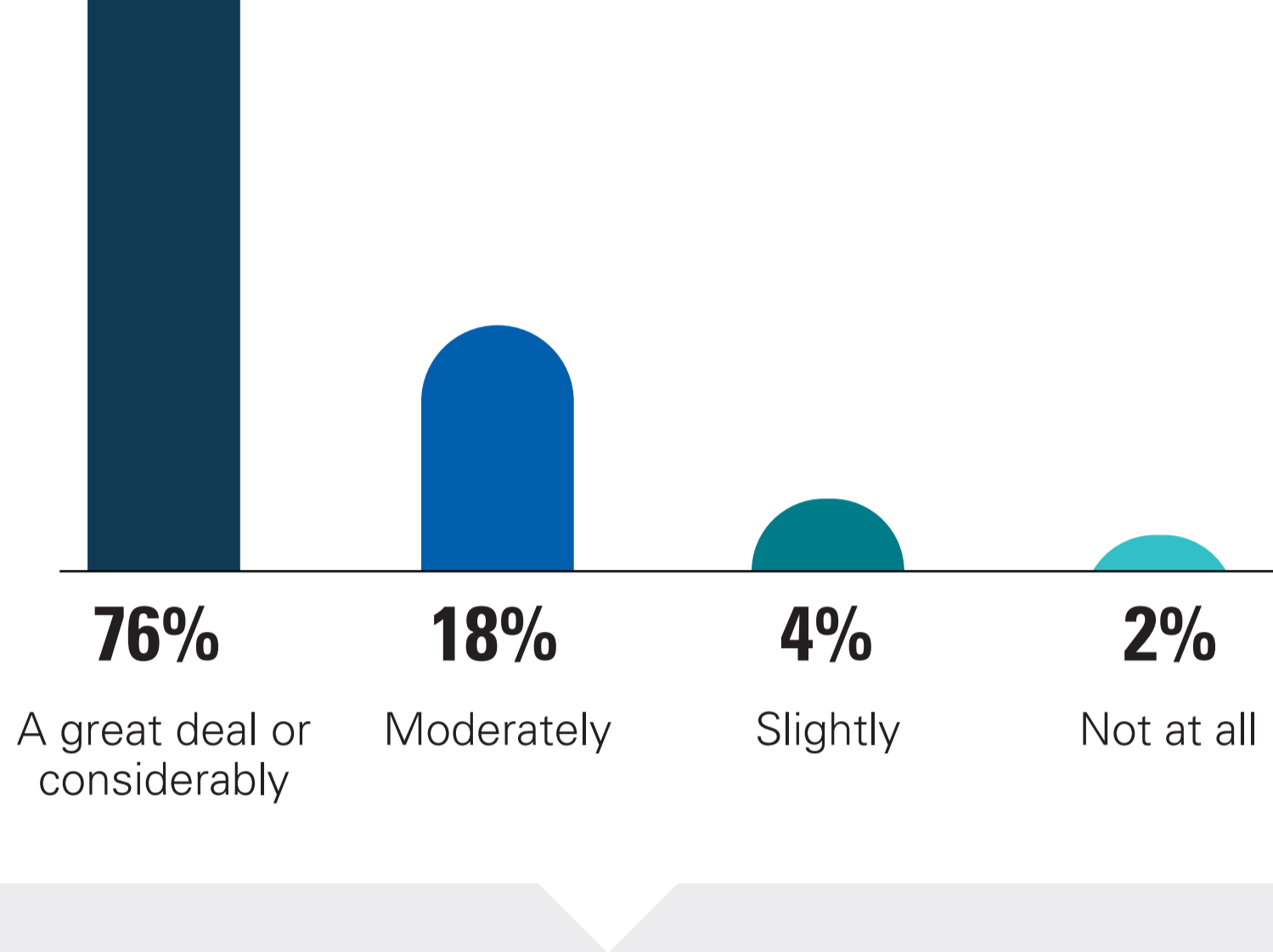
Ranking of obstacles



56% of respondents chose "Lack of an enterprise-wide strategy/solution" as their top concern (19%) or second-highest concern (37%) or obstacle to advancing hospital communications. This obstacle ranked far higher than any other as a second-ranked obstacle.

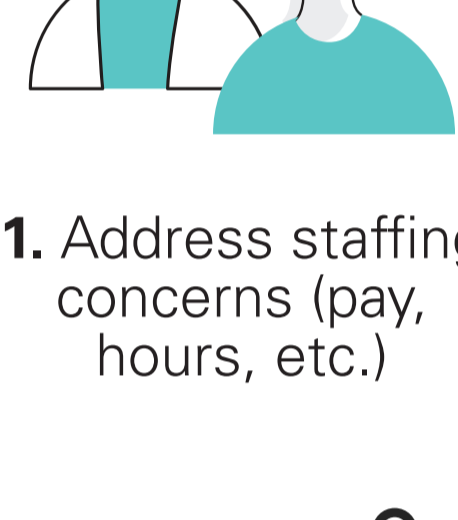
2. Clinician burnout remains a public health crisis that worsened during the pandemic, but there are strategies that can help mitigate the risk.

To what degree do you believe levels of burnout have increased since the COVID-19 pandemic?

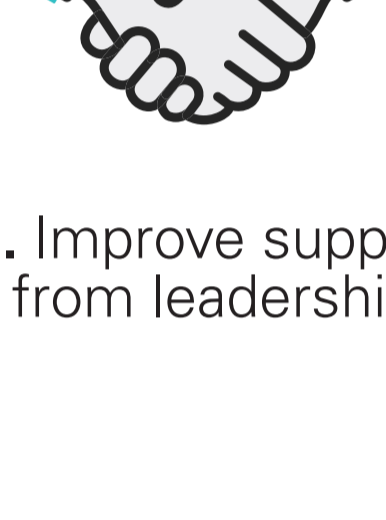


Nearly 80% of healthcare professionals who participated in the survey personally reported experiencing feelings of work-related stress, lost satisfaction, or a loss of efficacy in their work.

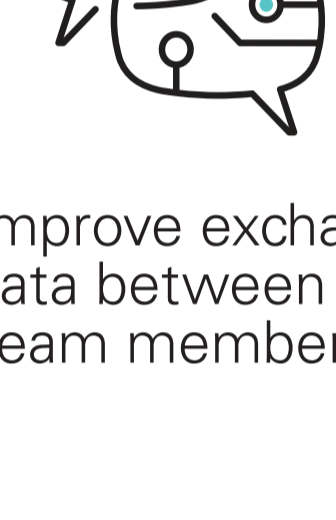
Survey respondents ranked the top five strategies to help reduce the risk of burnout:



1. Address staffing concerns (pay, hours, etc.)



2. Improve support from leadership



3. Improve exchange of data between care team members



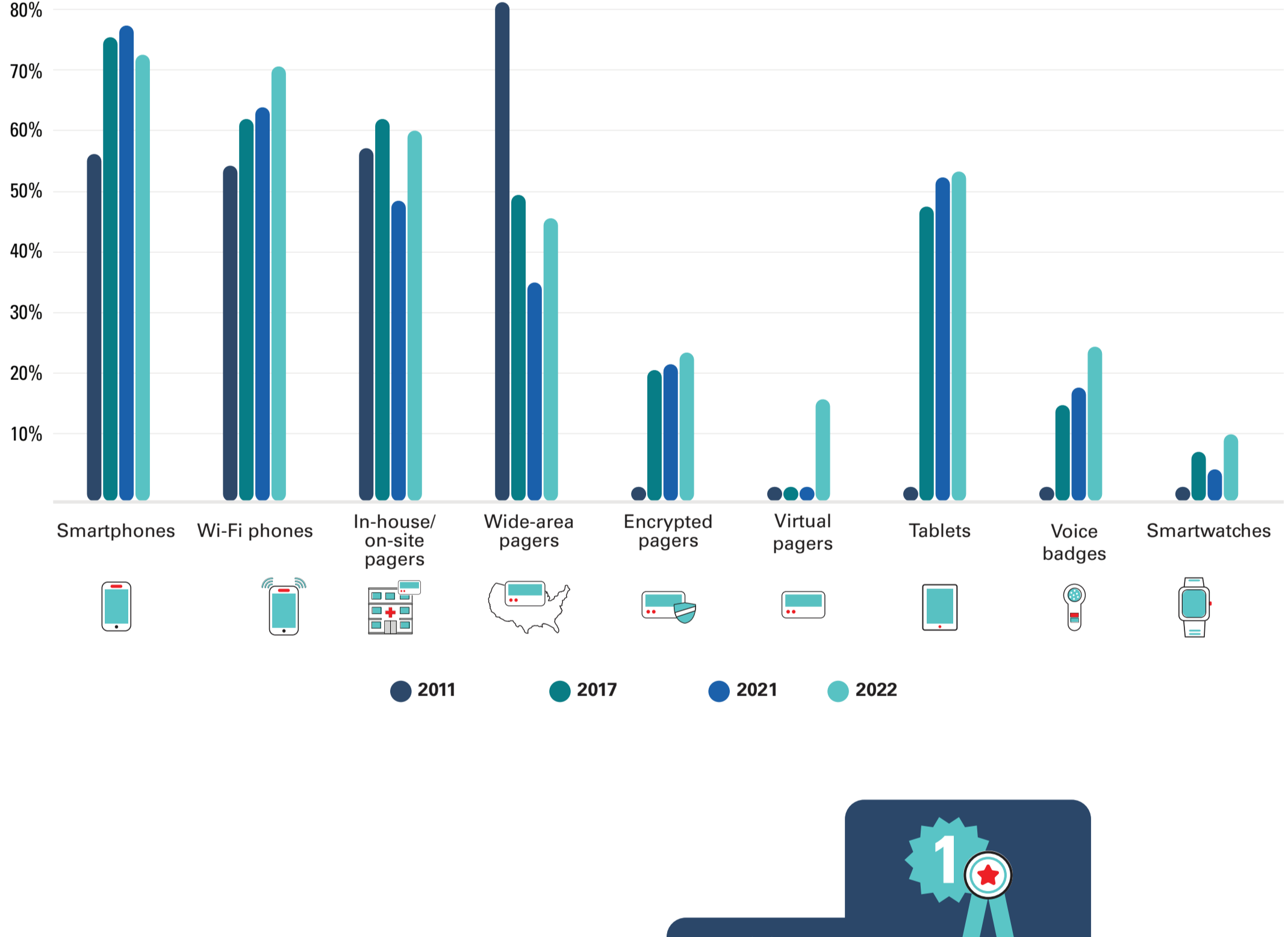
4. Mental health treatment/support



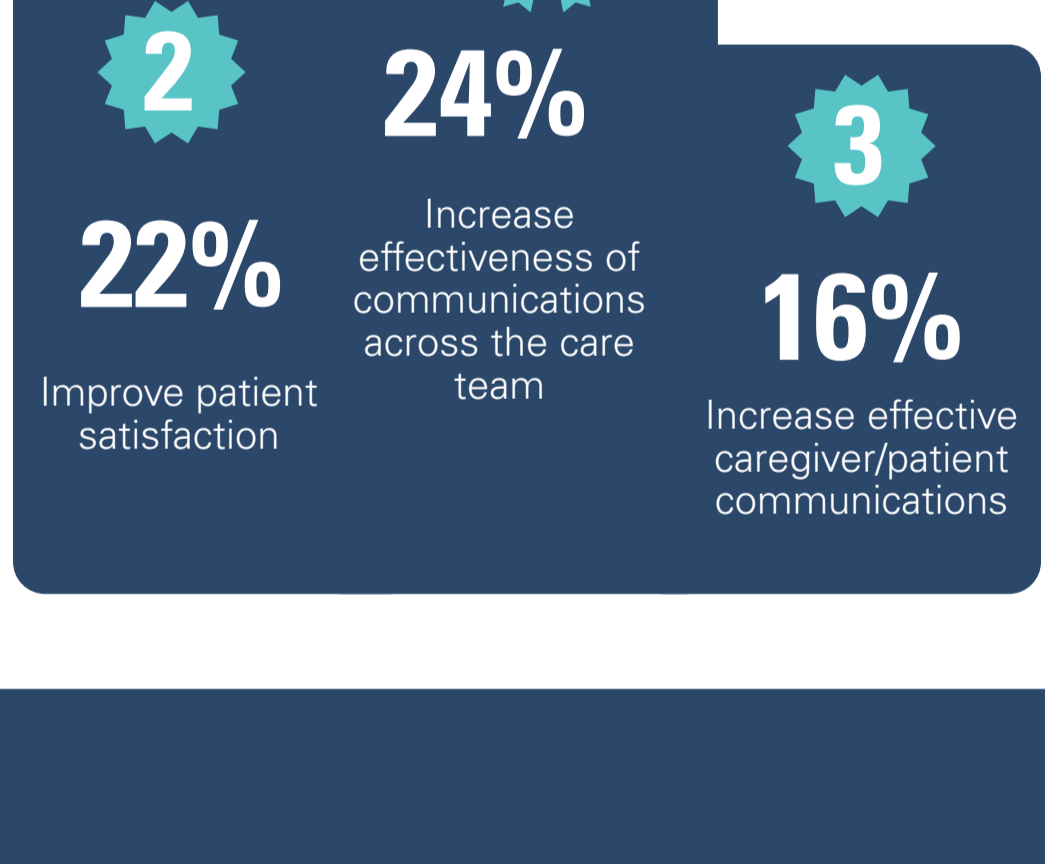
5. Improve EHR usability

3. Hospitals and health systems continue to rely on a diverse mix of communication devices to enable care team collaboration.

Smartphones continue to be the No. 1 supported device for clinical communications with Wi-Fi phones gaining in popularity, perhaps indicating a move towards hospital-issued devices replacing BYOD (bring your own device). Pagers remain an important tool, with encrypted pagers increasing and virtual pagers making an appearance.

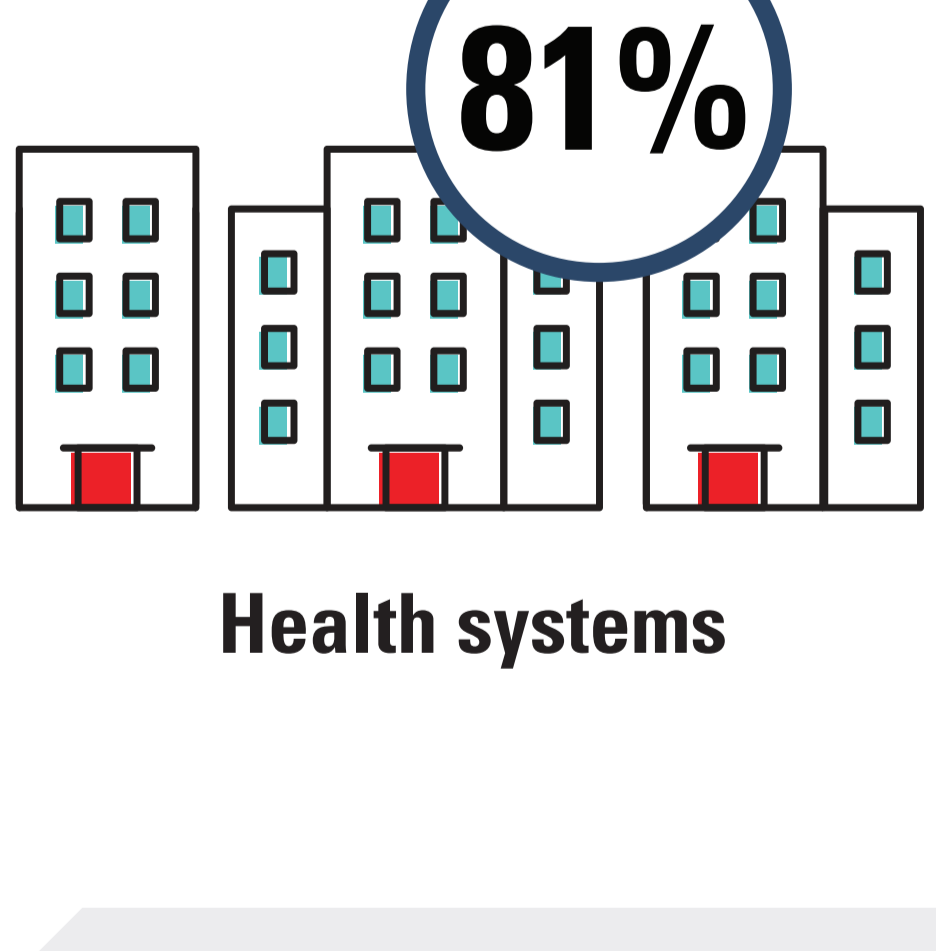


Survey respondents identified the top three most important motivations for new technology:

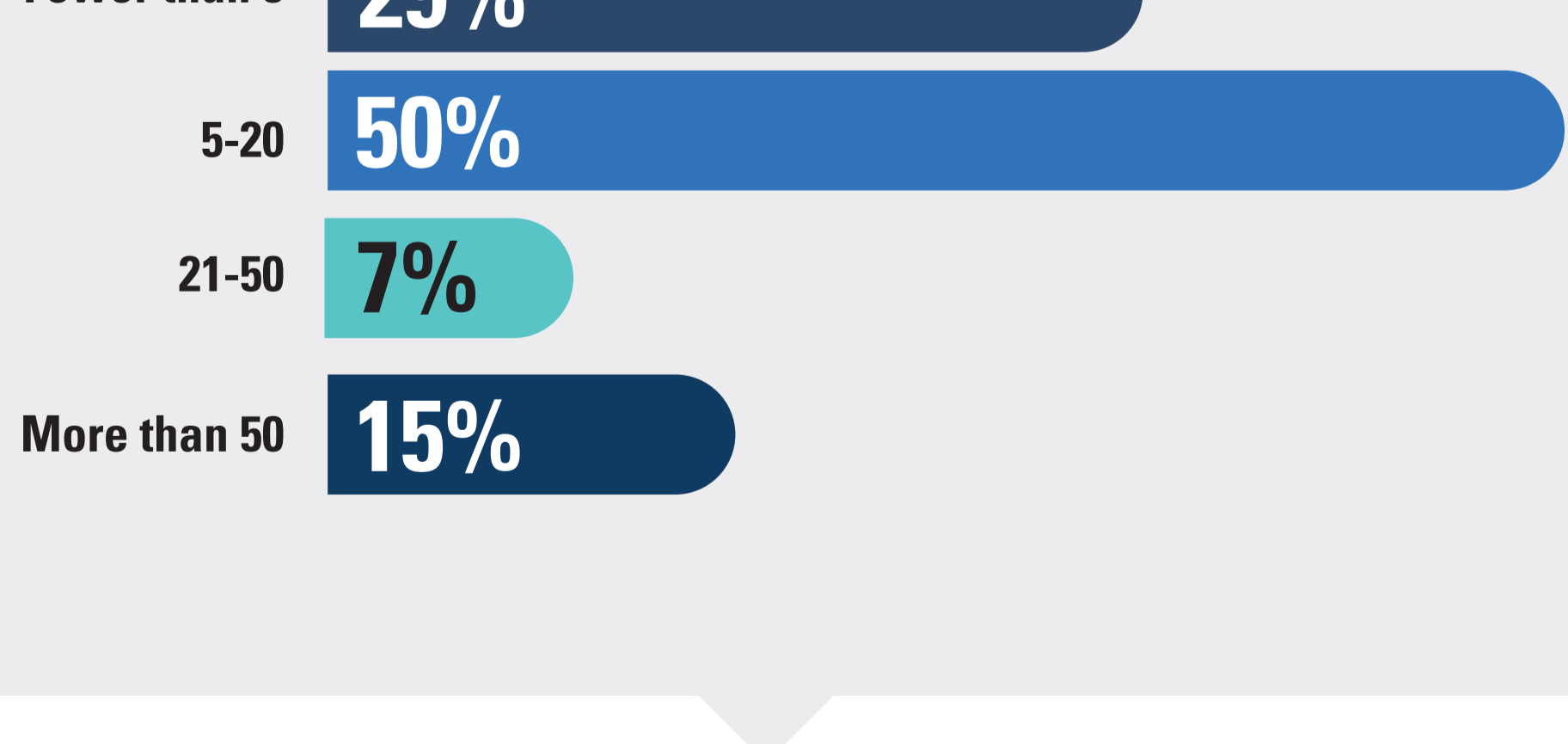


4. About the survey

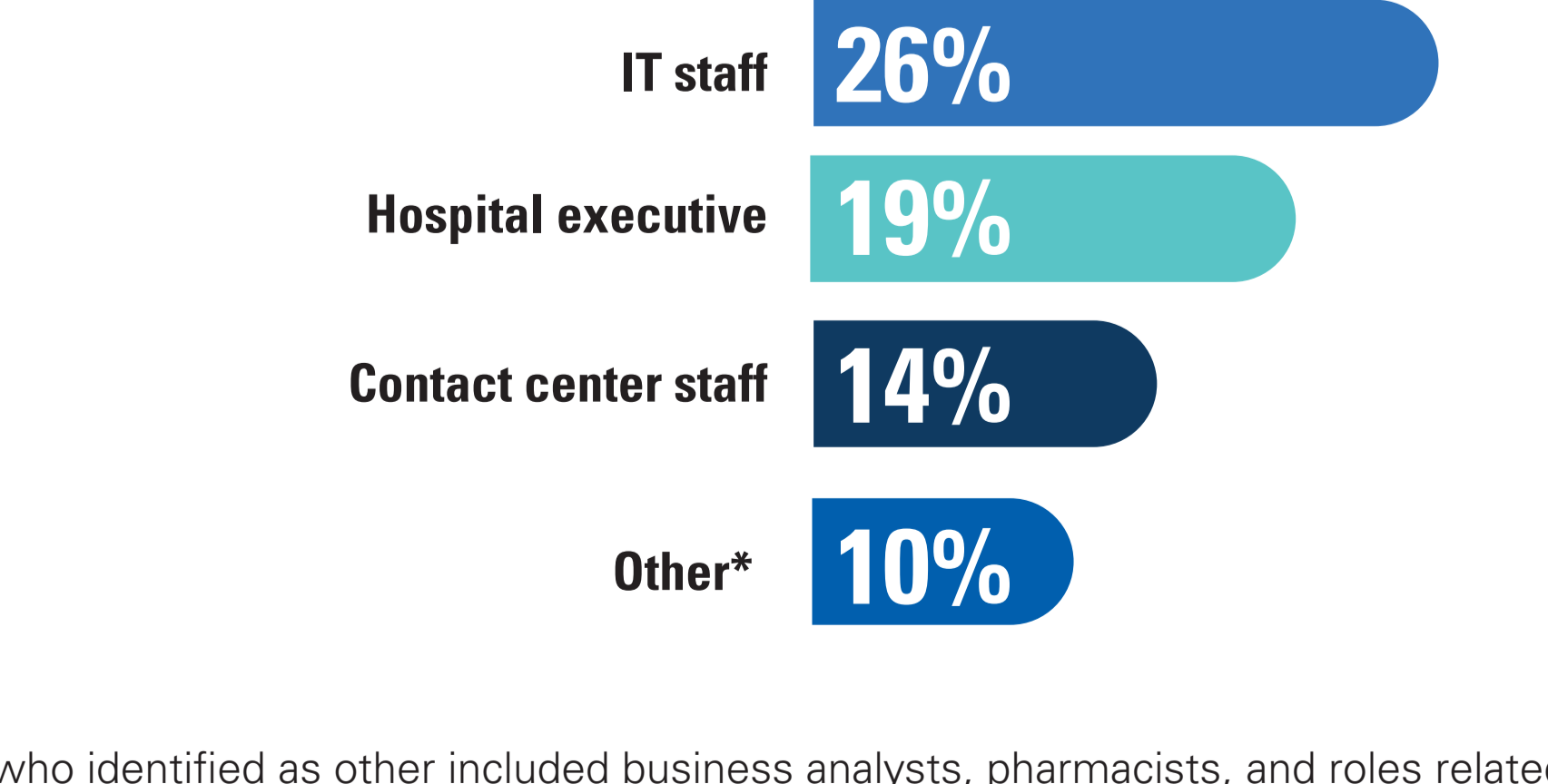
Organization type



Number of hospitals in health system



Job title



*Those who identified as other included business analysts, pharmacists, and roles related to patient services.

If you have a question about something you read or would like to learn more about how Spok can help advance your clinical communications, please email inforequest@spok.com

Download the entire State of Healthcare Communications Report at spok.com/state-of-healthcare