

Evaluation of Virtual Care Services Offered to Children in Ontario

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Introduction

Virtual care utilization has increased substantially without a clear indication of its appropriateness or effectiveness.

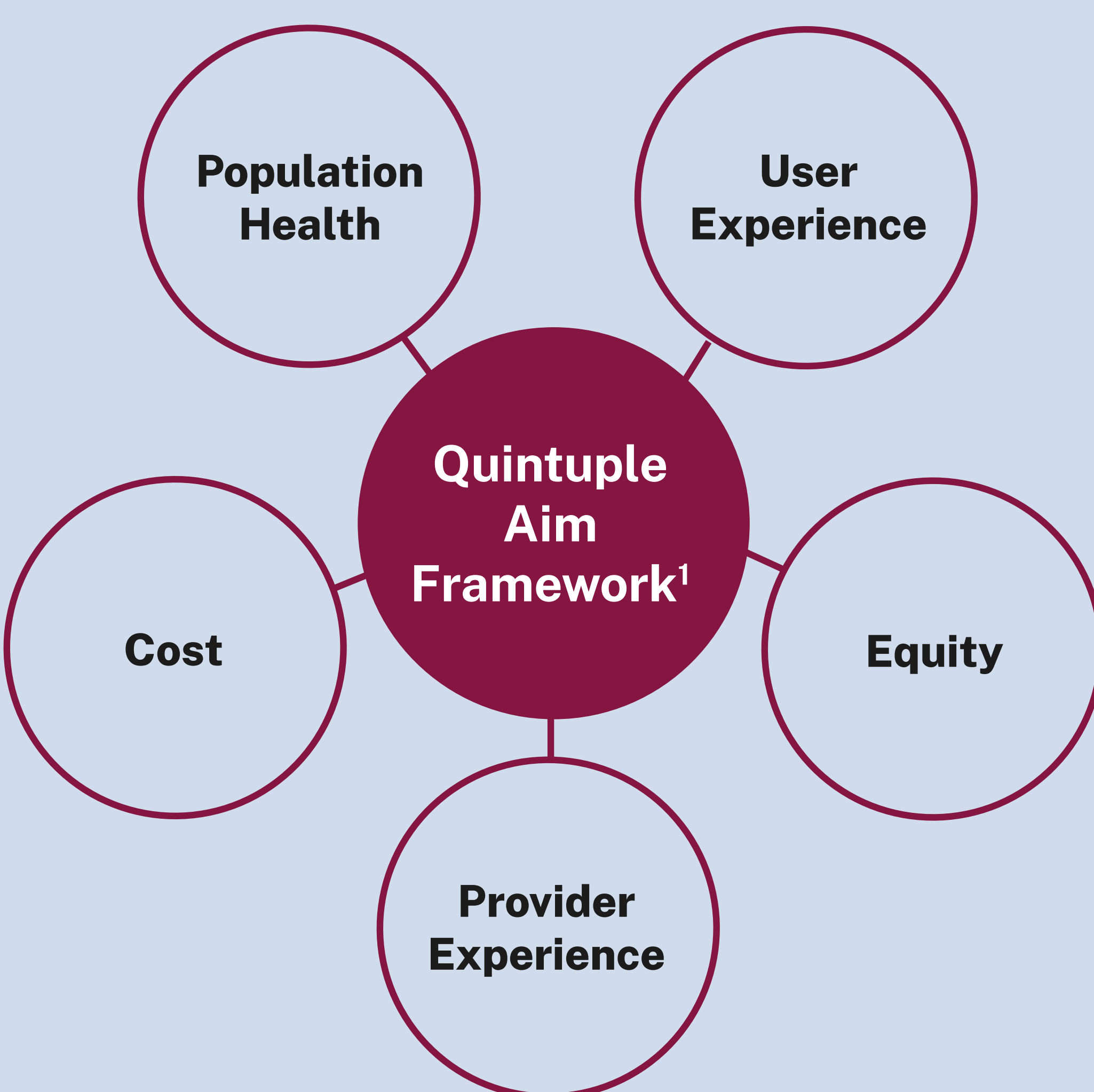
We have little if no evidence on the benefits and risks of this approach, for patients, service providers, and society in general.

Our evaluation focused on the *processes* and *outcomes* of a variety of virtual care services provided to children across the province.

Methods

Utilized online (self-reported) questionnaires created for 3 unique study populations:

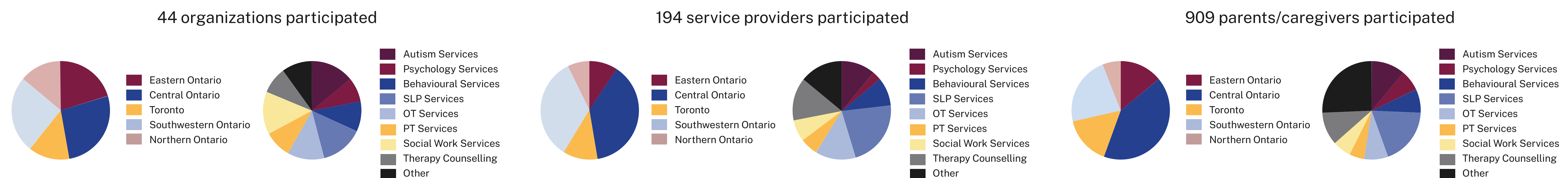
- 1) Organizations
- 2) Service Providers
- 3) Parents/Caregivers



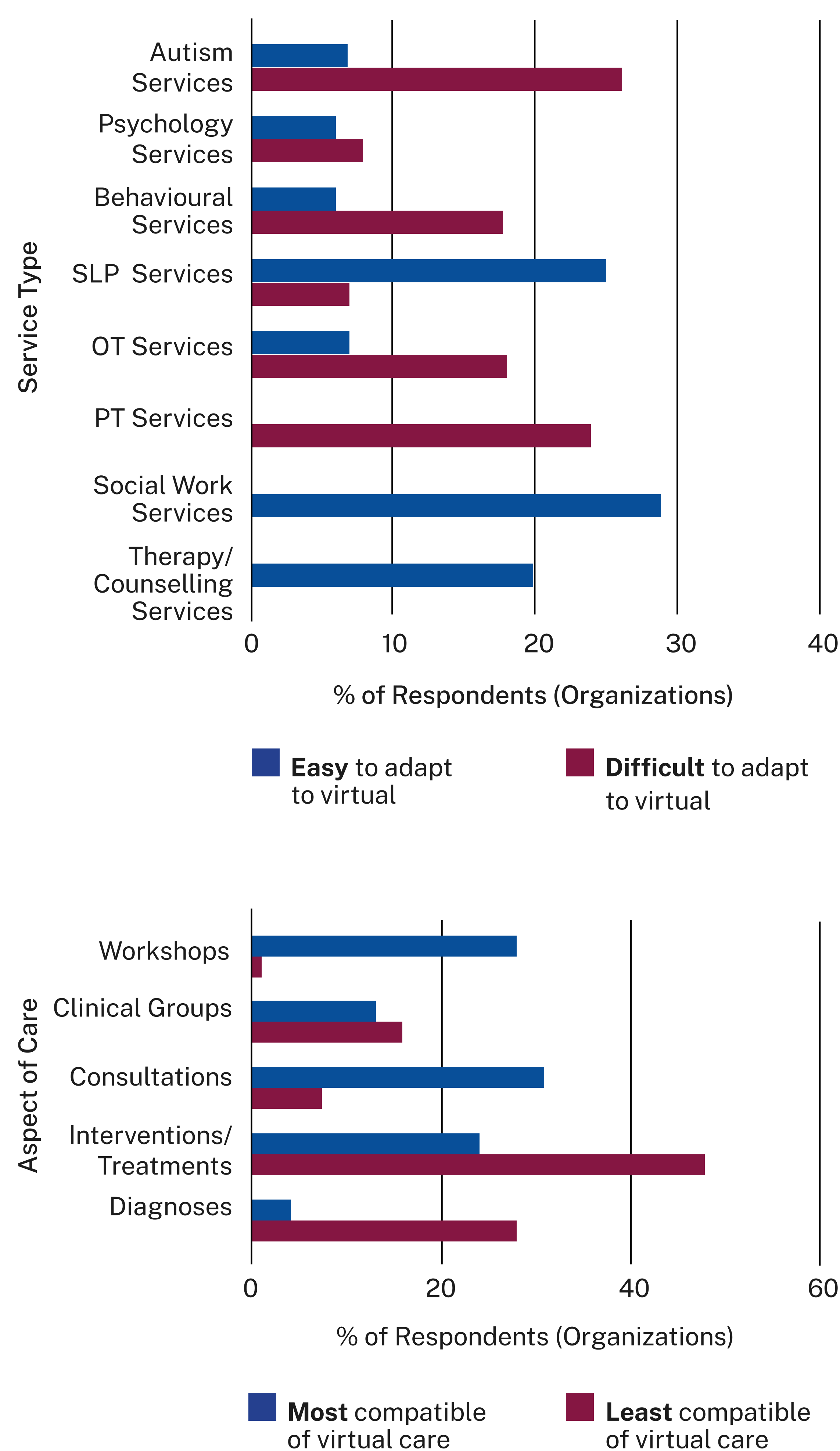
¹Nundy S, Cooper LA, Mate KS. 2022. The Quintuple Aim for Health Care Improvement: A new imperative to advance health equity. JAMA

Results

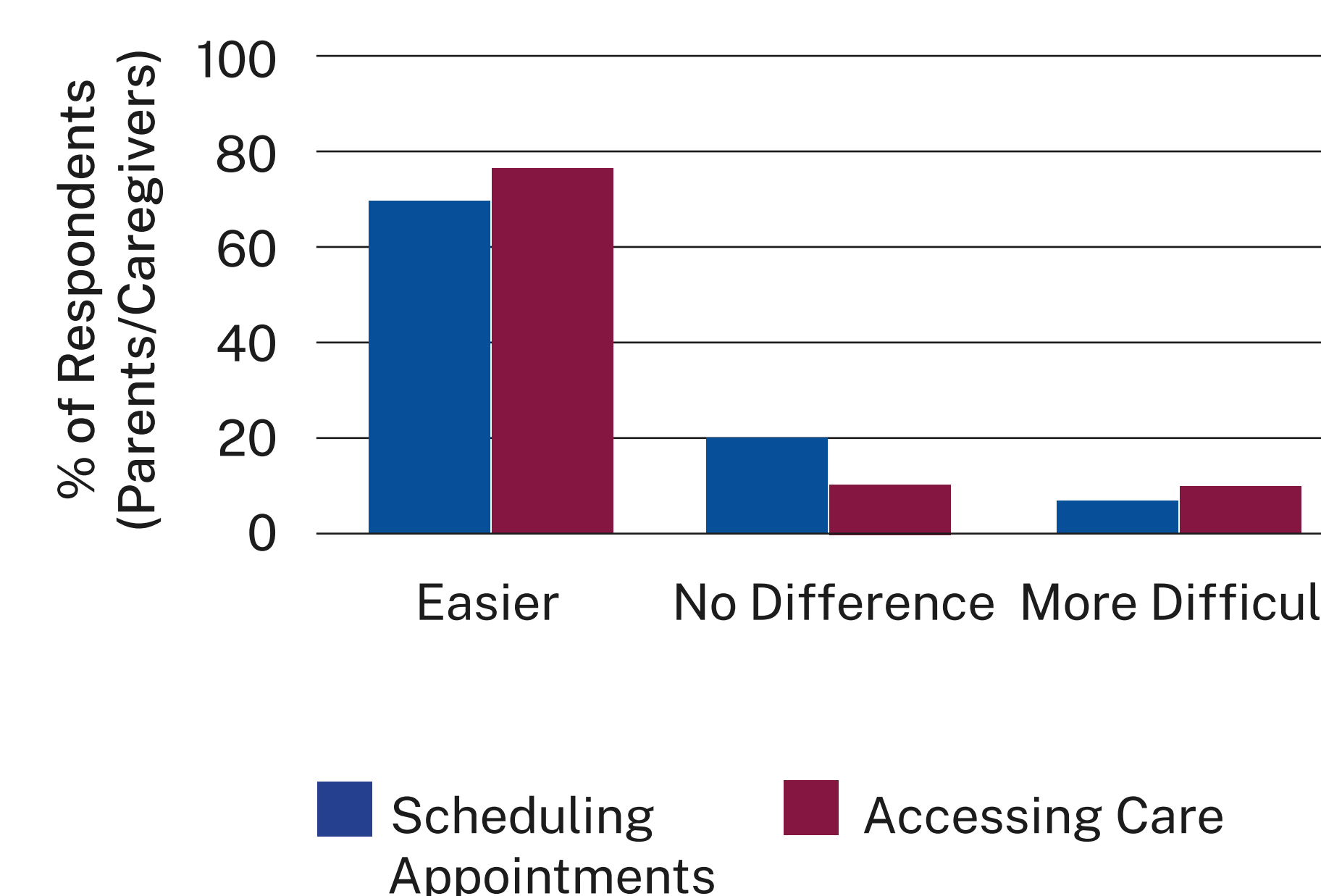
Study participants were representative of regions across Ontario, and developmental service types.



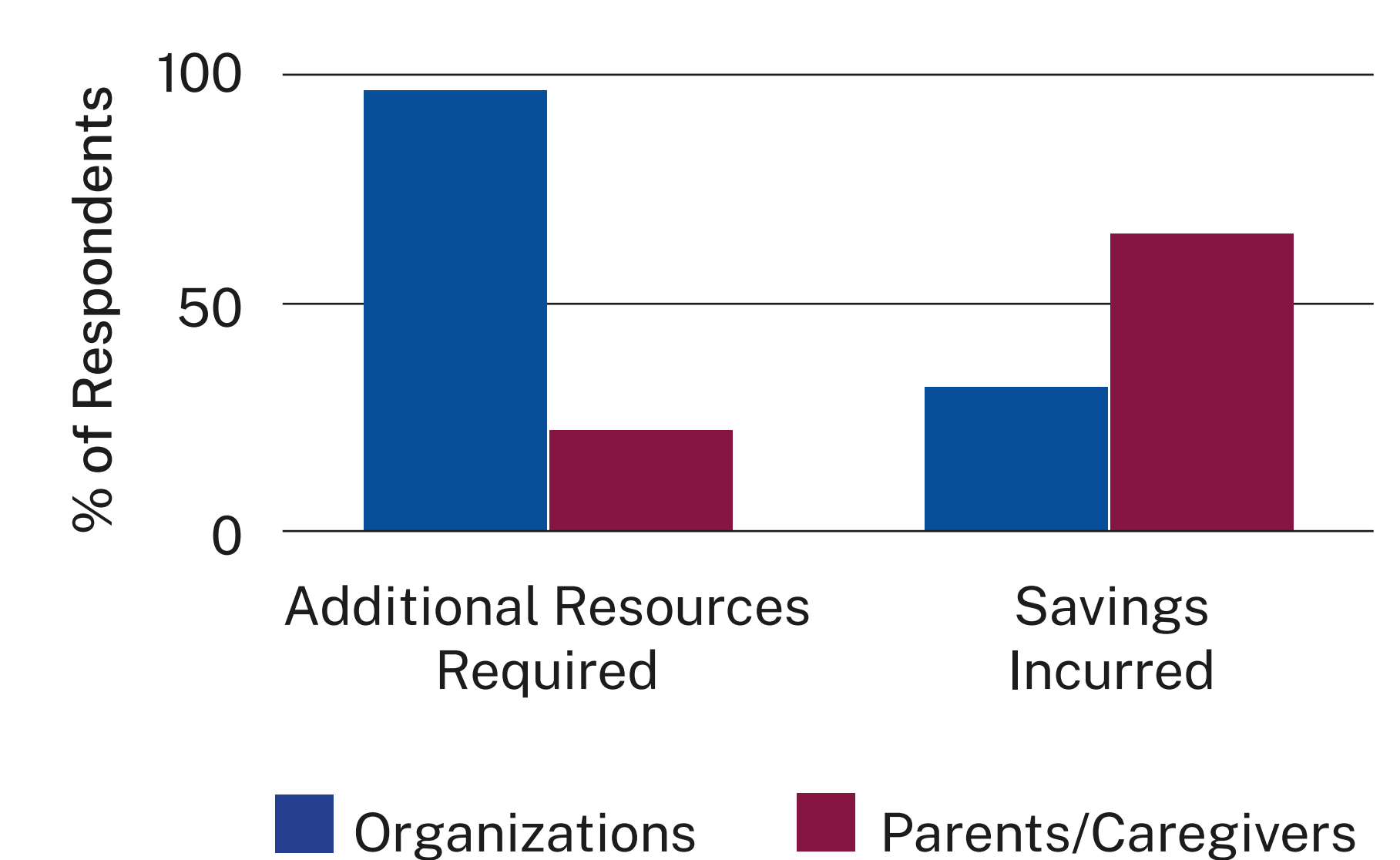
The compatibility of virtual care for children is impacted by the service type and aspect of care.



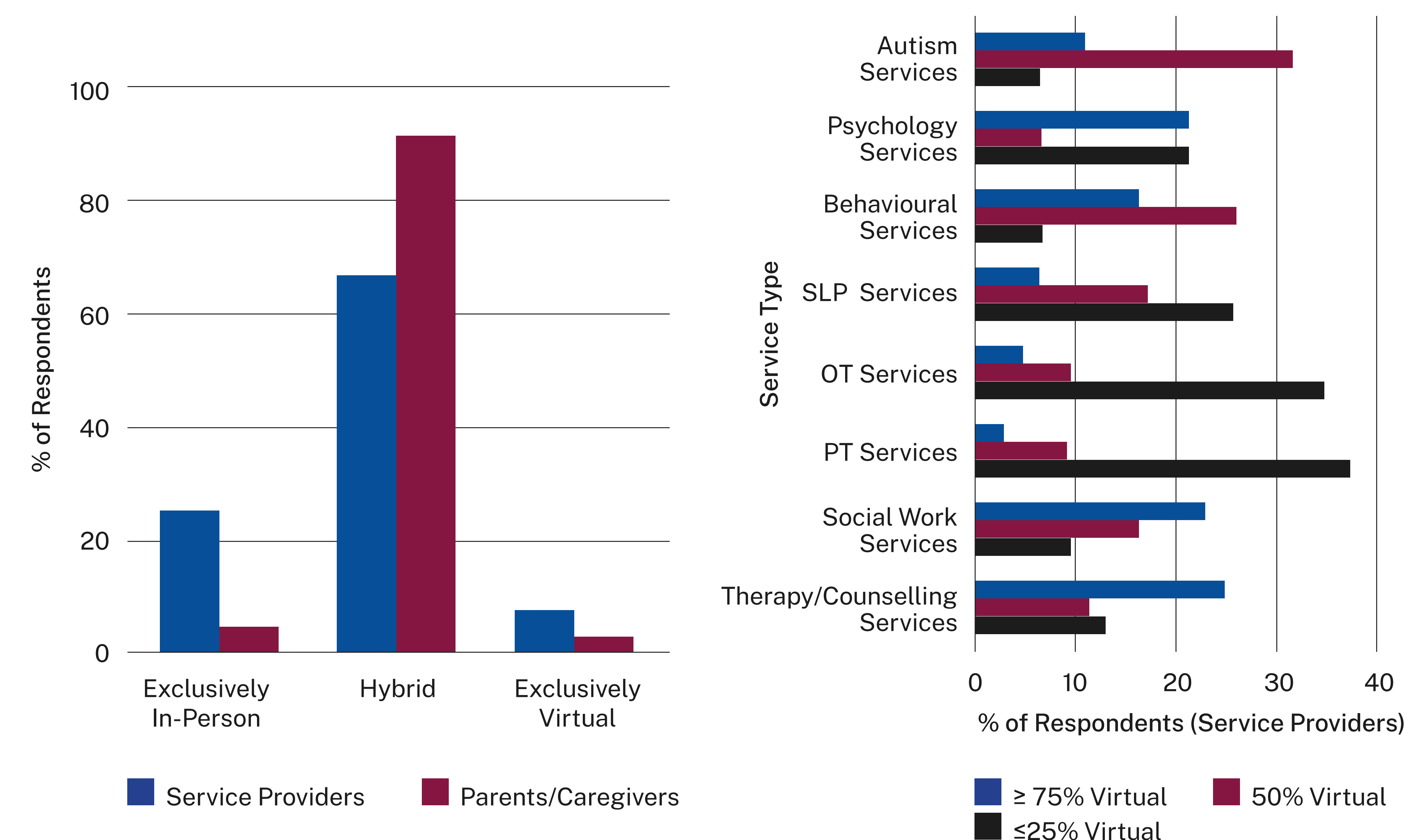
Virtual care is easier to access and schedule for users.



There are increased costs providing virtual care, and decreased costs receiving virtual care.



Families and providers would prefer a hybrid approach to future care.



Implications/Recommendations

1. Uniform adoption of virtual care, without consideration for the service type/treatment condition would not be conducive to optimal care.
2. A hybrid approach to care is preferable by both those providing care and those receiving care, and all benefit from a targeted approach of virtual care offerings to ensure it remains a cost effective and equitable care option across the province.