

DOCTORS' V PATIENTS' VIEWS ON REMOTE WORKING: A SURVEY OF STAFF AND INPATIENTS AT SOUTH LONDON AND MAUDSLEY FORENSIC MEDIUM-SECURE AND LOW-SECURE UNITS

Maria Moisan¹, Jeremy Cave¹, Glori-Louise de Bernier²

1. South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, 2. East London NHS Foundation Trust;

Contact information: maria.moisan@slam.nhs.uk

INTRODUCTION

Over one year into the pandemic, clinical meetings continued to be conducted virtually within our inpatient forensic service, raising questions about the continued role of remote working.

AIM

Our aim was to compare doctors' and patients' perceptions of virtual versus in-person clinical contacts to inform decisions on the future of remote working.

We hypothesised differences between and also within both groups, based on factors such as in-person contact before the pandemic and medical seniority.

METHOD

Structured surveys were conducted between June – August 2021 face-to-face with patients and completed online by doctors.

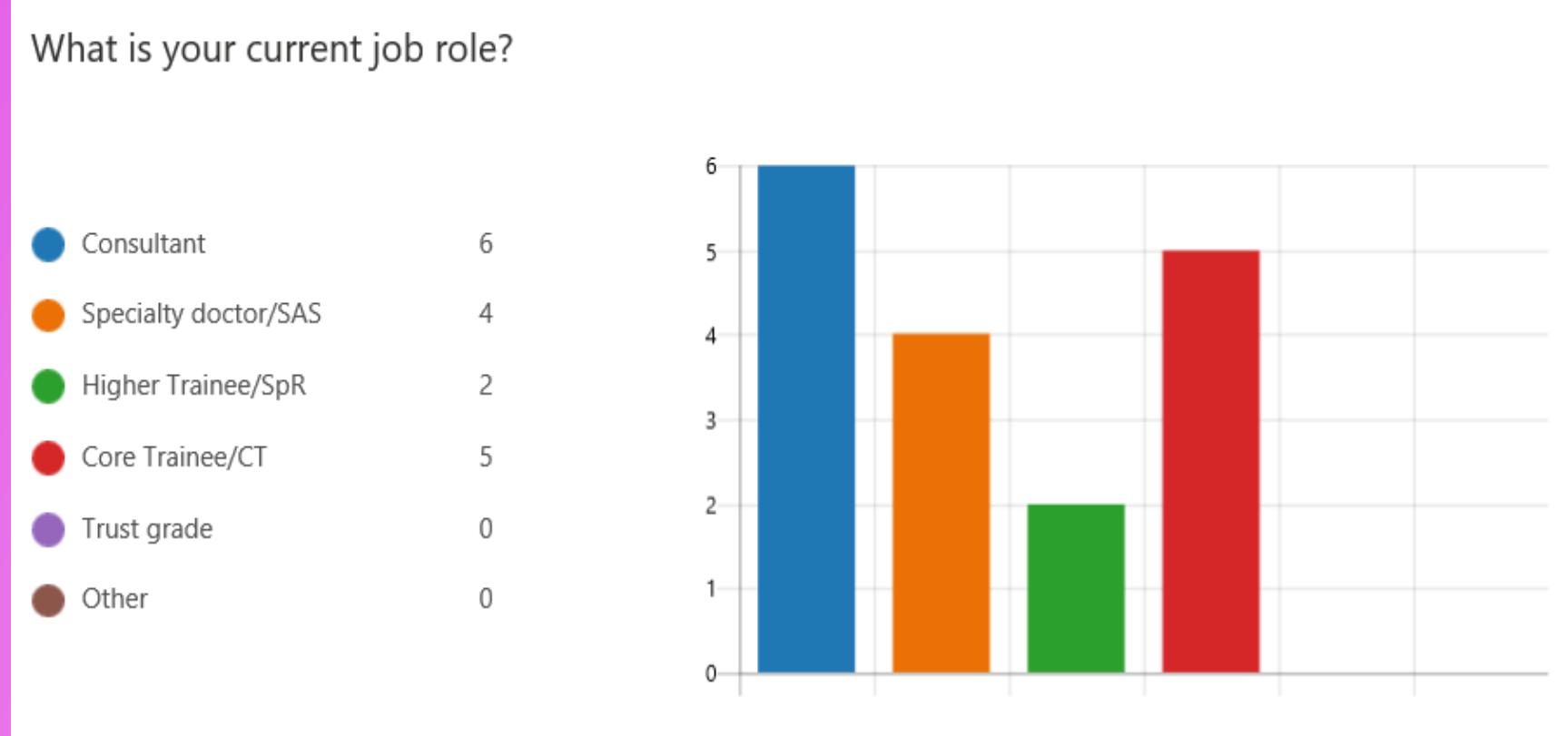
Both were asked for their general views on virtual versus in-person clinical contacts and their future preferences.

Respondents judged virtual against in-person contact across six care quality domains (safety, timeliness, effectiveness, efficiency, equity and person-centredness) [1].

Basic demographic data was collected, including presence on the ward before remote working was introduced.

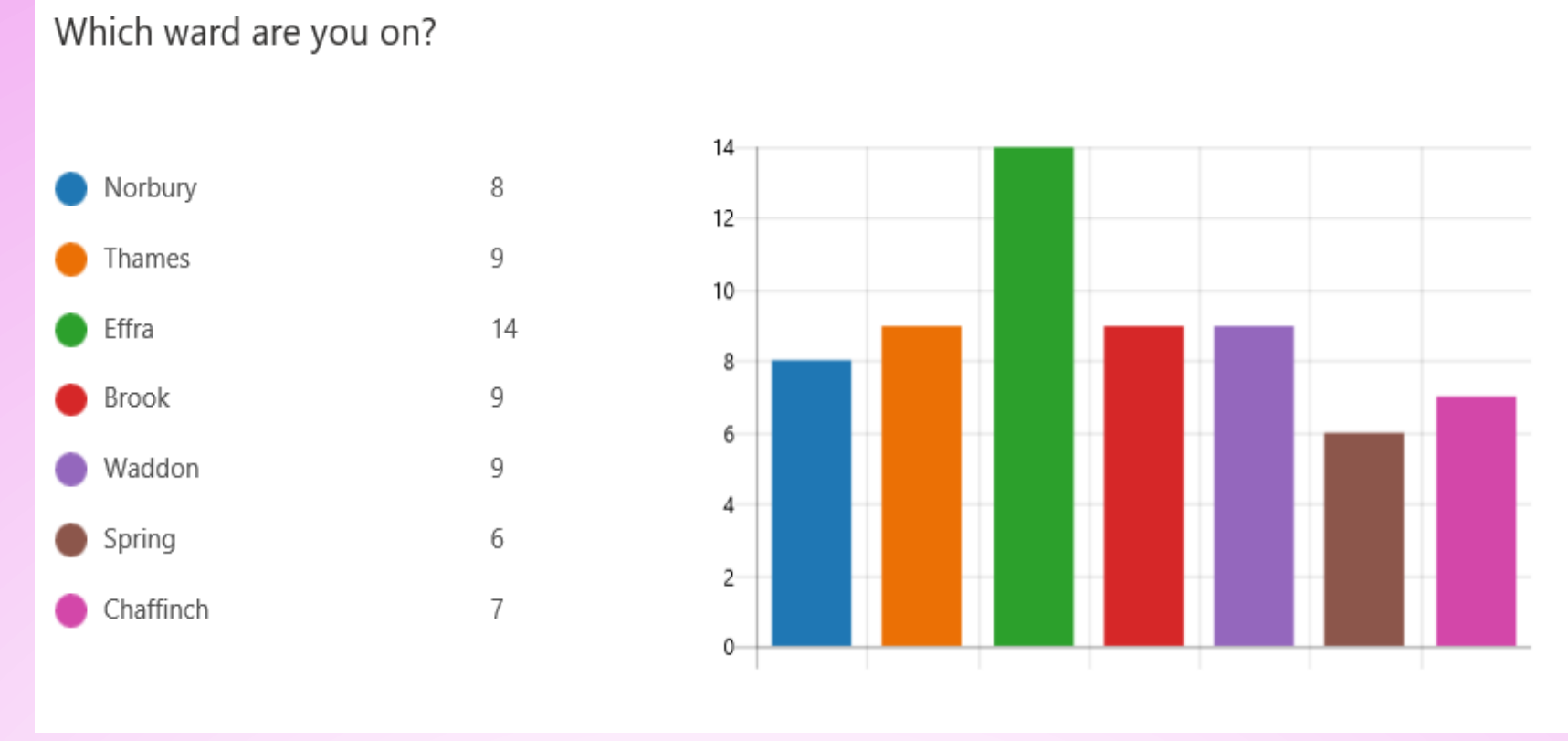
RESULTS

Responses



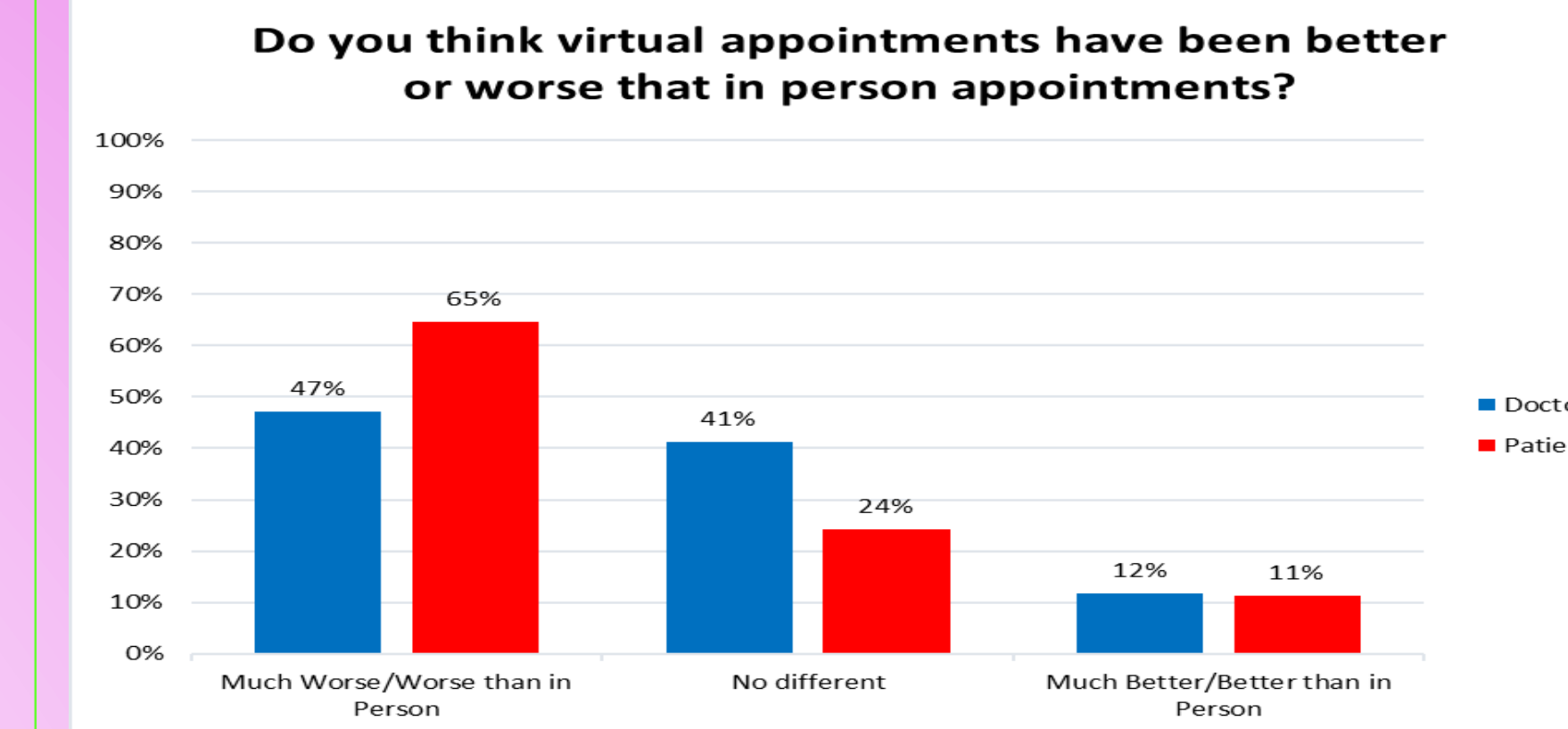
17 out of 24 medics (in light of inclusion criteria) responded (71%): 6/9 Consultants, 4/5 SAS, 2/3 SpR and 5/7 CTs.

Responses



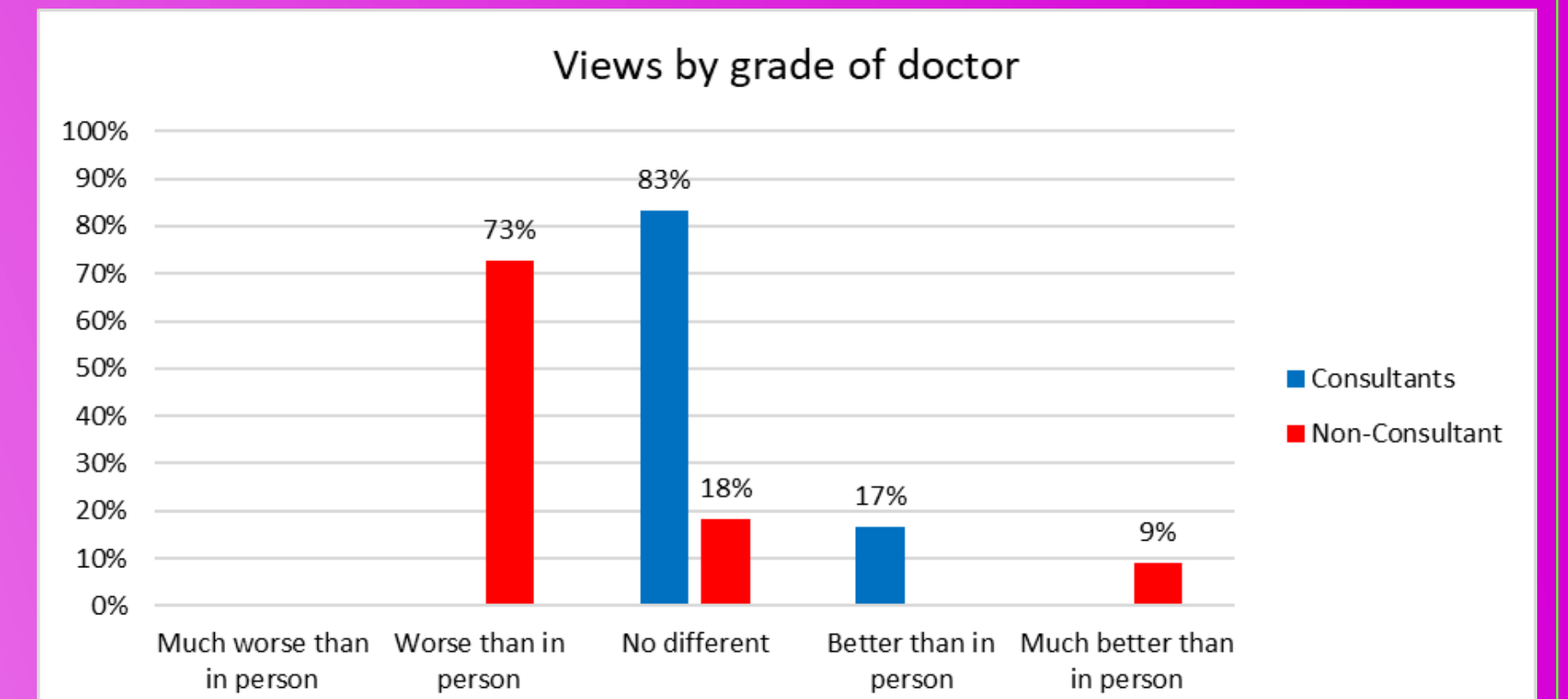
62 out of 90 patients (in light of inclusion criteria) responded (69%): Norbury 8/11, Thames 9/12, Effra 14/16, Brook 9/12, Waddon 9/13, Spring 6/12 and Chaffinch 7/14.

General views – doctors and patients



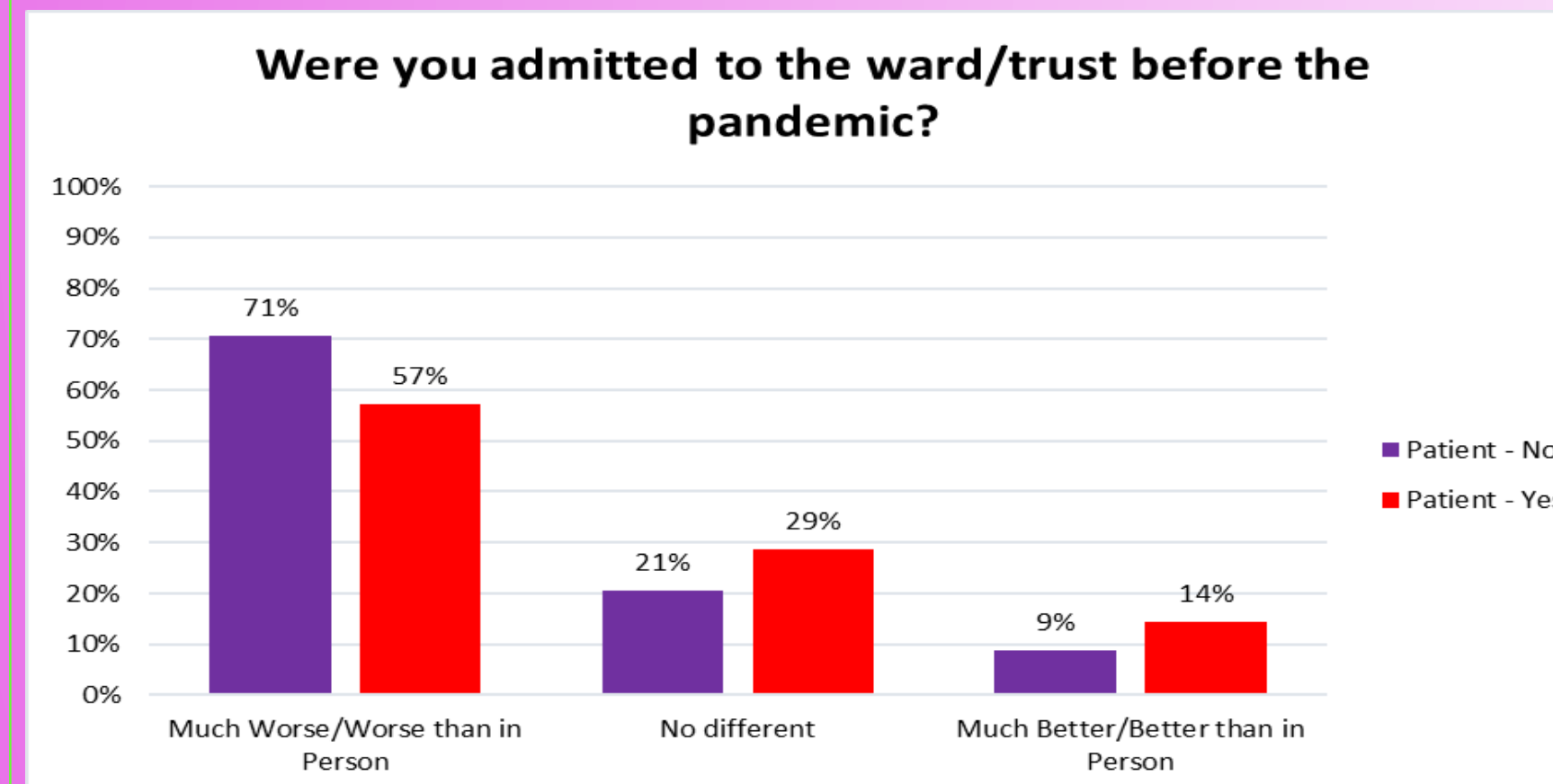
Most patients feel that virtual appointments are worse or much worse (65%). Doctors are split between worse (47%) and no different (41%).

What about doctors and their grades?

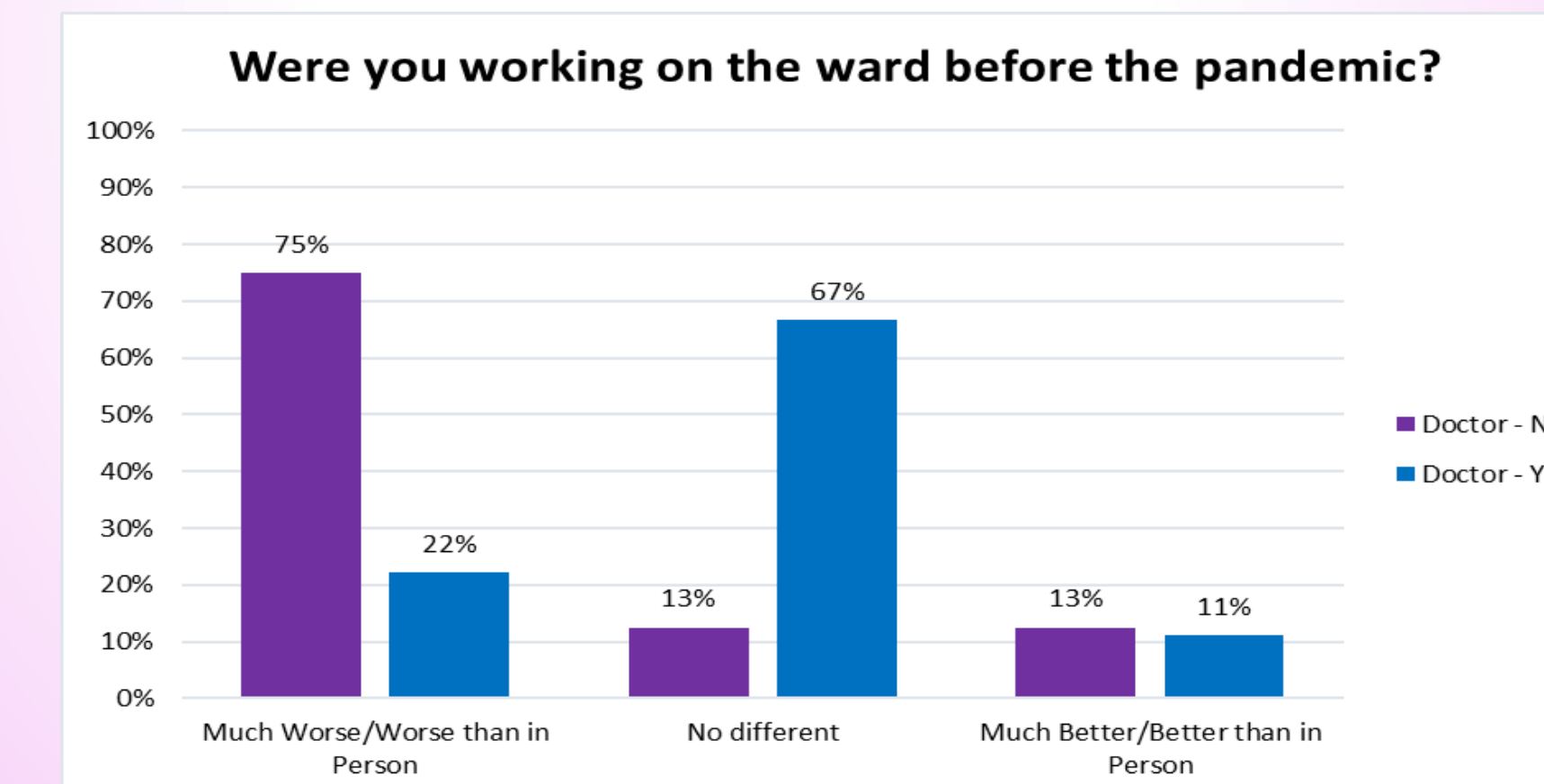


Non-consultant grades find virtual appointments worse (72%). Most consultant found virtual appointments no different (83%). None felt they were worse.

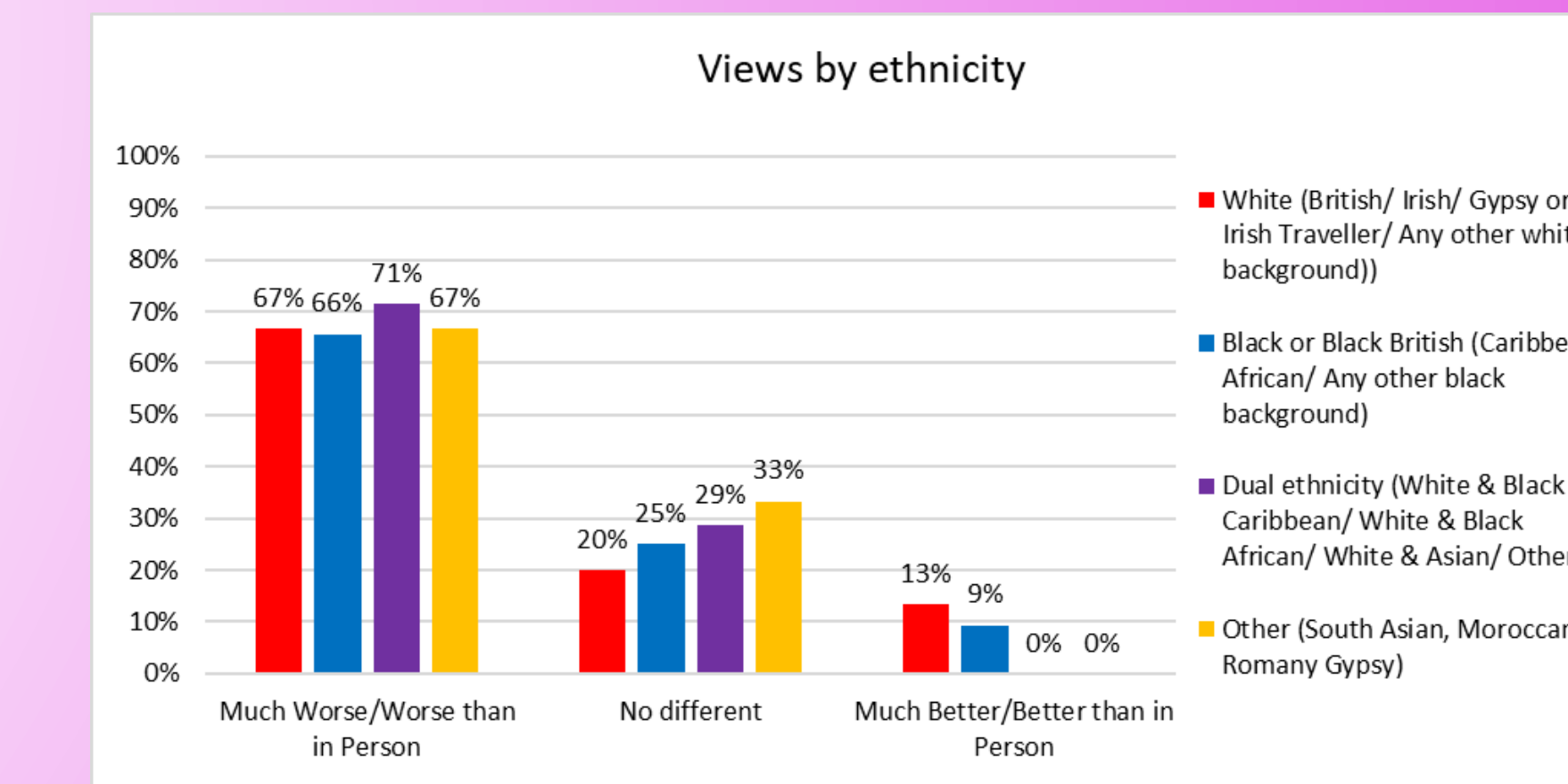
What about comparing those joining the ward before and during the pandemic ?



Doctors and patients joining the service during the pandemic hold stronger views against virtual meetings than those present before.

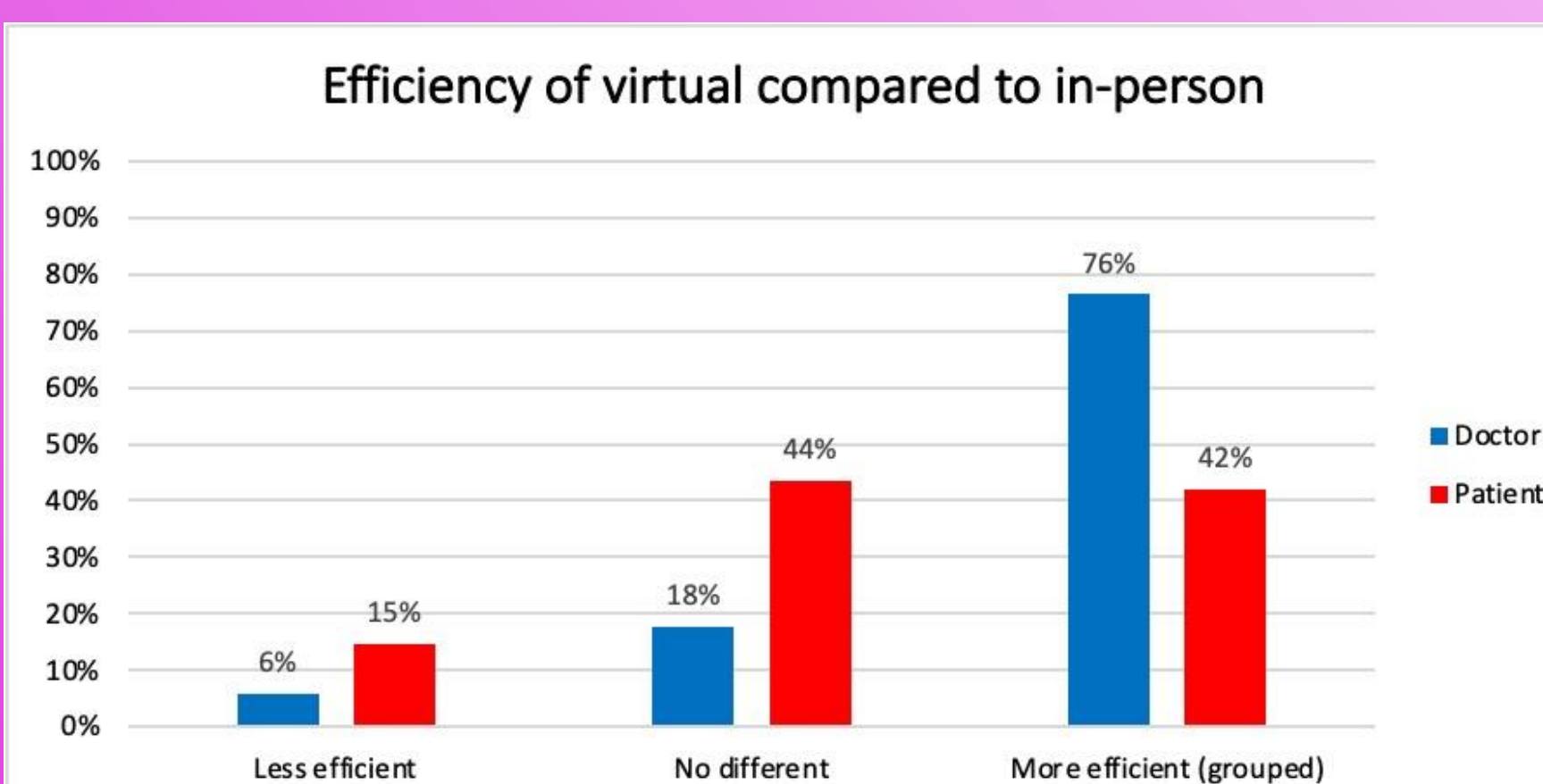


What about ethnicity?



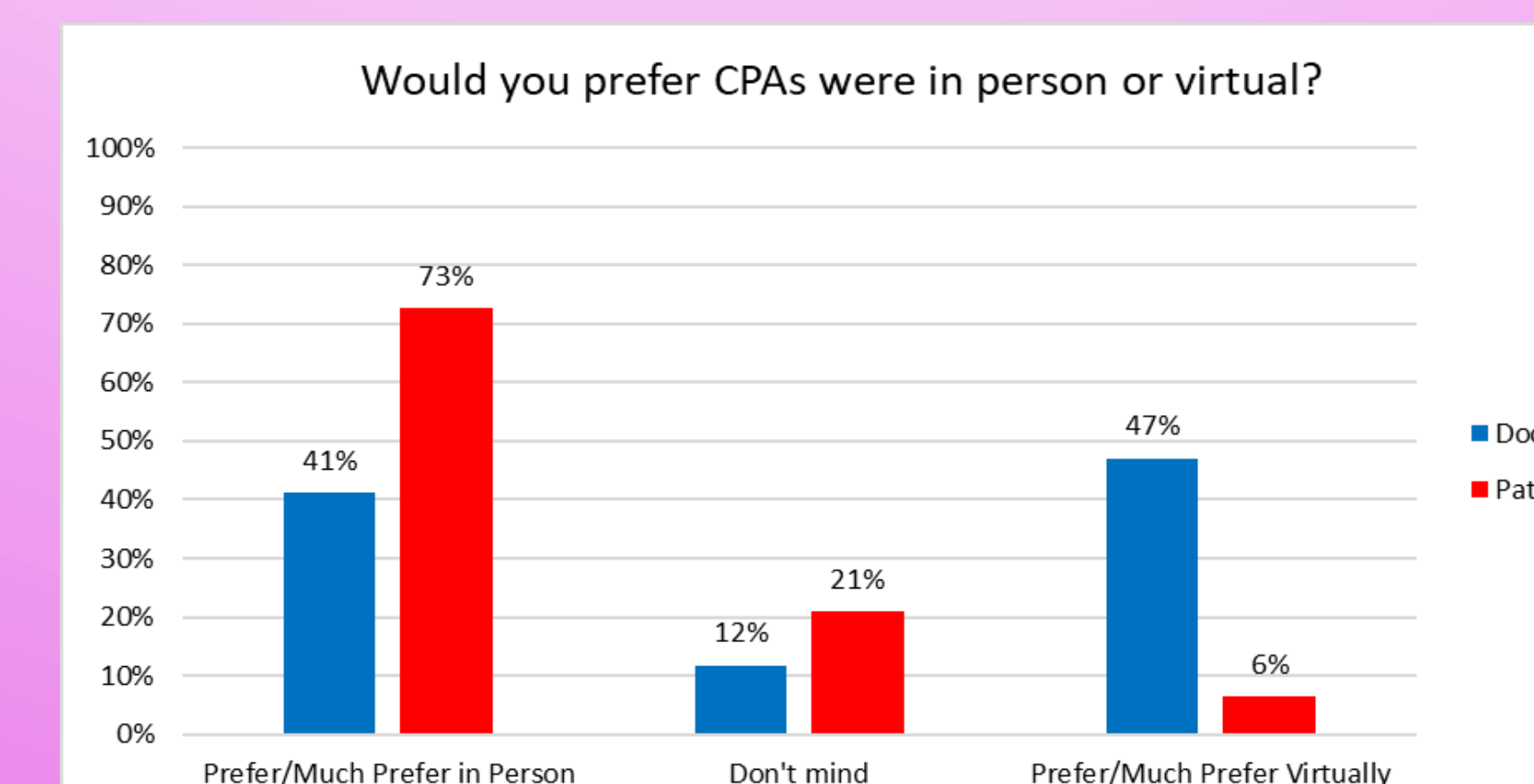
There are no clear differences of opinion between ethnic groups.

Perceptions of Impact on Care Quality Domains



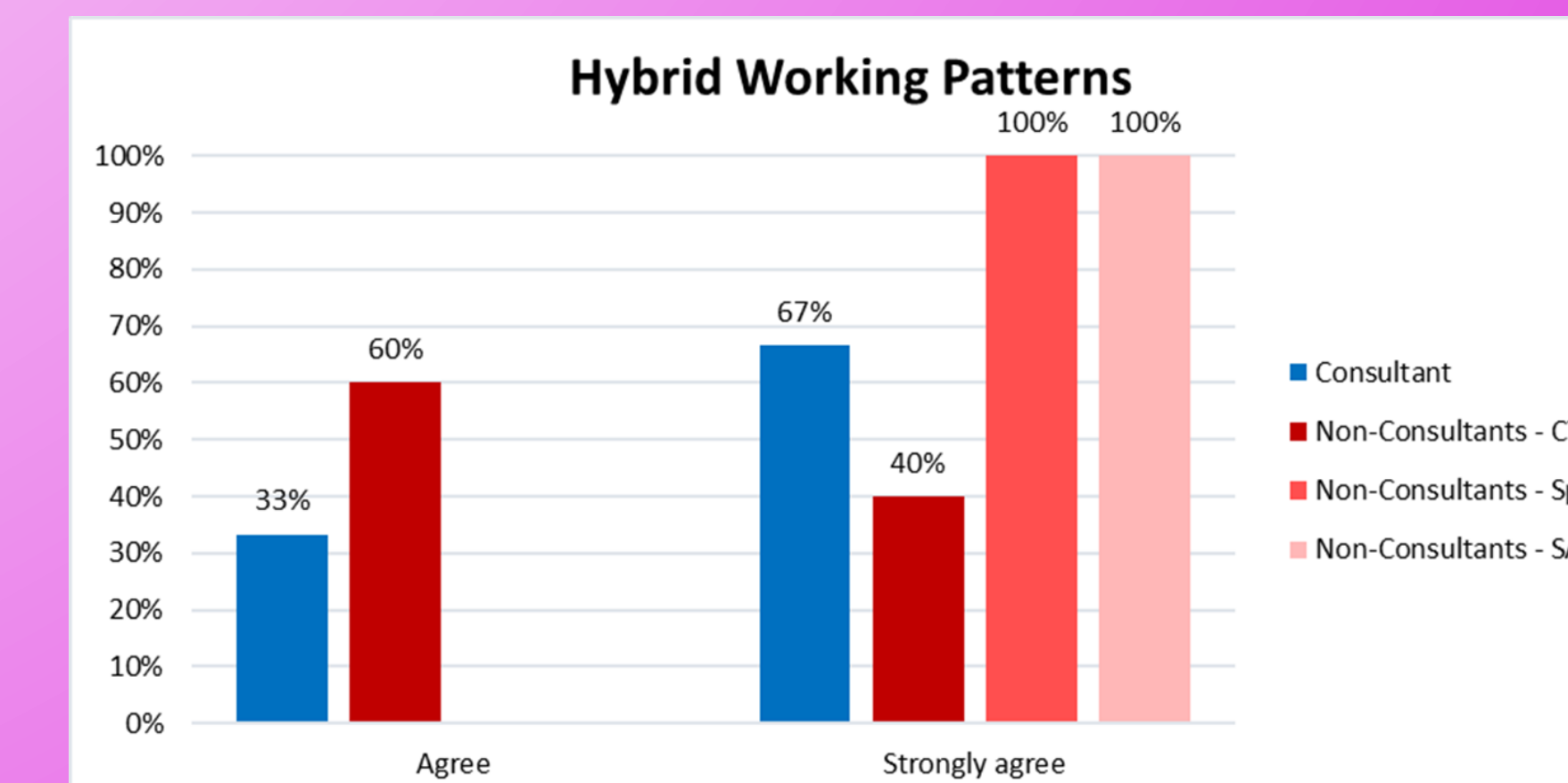
Generally, respondents describe no difference in care quality measures, although doctors consider virtual appointments more efficient and timely.

Preferences for Virtual Appointments - Doctors and Patients



Both doctors and patients prefer face-to-face ward rounds and medical assessments, but doctors are less likely to prefer an in-person Care Programme Approach (CPA) review (41% vs 73%).

Doctors' Preferences and doctors' views on hybrid working patterns



Every doctor supports hybrid working.

CONCLUSIONS

Patients generally prefer in-person appointments.

Doctors are more divided on this but unanimously support hybrid working patterns.

This survey has revealed interesting differences of opinion between different grades of doctors and their patients.

These should be explored further when considering a permanent role for remote working.

REFERENCES

[1] Institute of Medicine (IOM). Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century. Washington, D.C: National Academy Press; 2001.