

IMPACT OF ISOLATION

FROM COVID SWABBING UPON ADMISSION OF ACUTE FEMALE IN-PATIENTS

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AIMS & HYPOTHESIS

To streamline swabbing procedures for acute in-patients to reduce isolation duration and **minimize the impact of isolation** on patients.

BACKGROUND

Patients within an acute female in-patient ward were observed struggling with adherence to isolation guidelines following their COVID swab upon admission. This was corroborated by the days of isolation being directly proportional to the level of negative mental health impact on service users.

METHODS

To assess the severity of impact on patient's mental health staff assessed all patients admitted to the ward. Patients were excluded if they were isolating for 14 days due to a recent contact with COVID positive patient or if they did not consent to COVID-swabbing.

Patients were categorized based on the following groups:



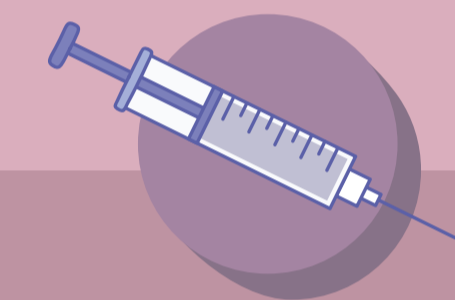
MILD IMPACT

Minimal changes in presentation/mental state upon admission, coping well with isolation measures, compliant to restrictions and medications, no changes in management plans.



MODERATE IMPACT

Moderate changes in mental state/presentation, intermittent compliance to restriction/isolation measures and requiring some changes in management plans such as increased prescription of anxiolytics, sedatives, laxatives.



SEVERE IMPACT

Considerable change in presentation/mental state, non-compliance to restriction/ isolation measures, increase in level of observations, requiring rapid tranquilization or restraint.

RESULTS

In total **48 patients** admitted between December 2020 and February 2021 were assessed.

1

The average number of days of isolation was 1.6 days for people with negative swabs. The longest isolation time for a pending admission swab result was

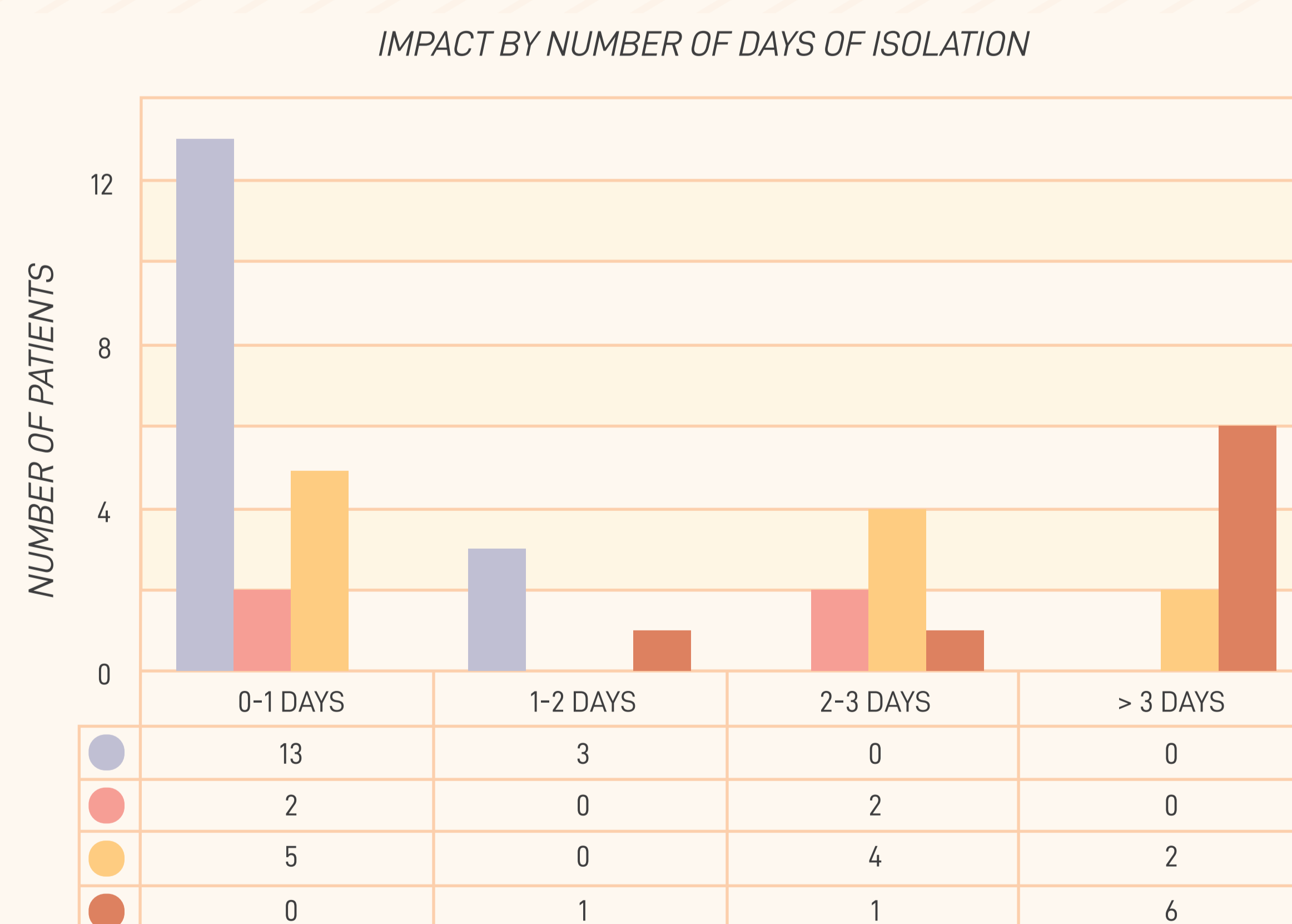
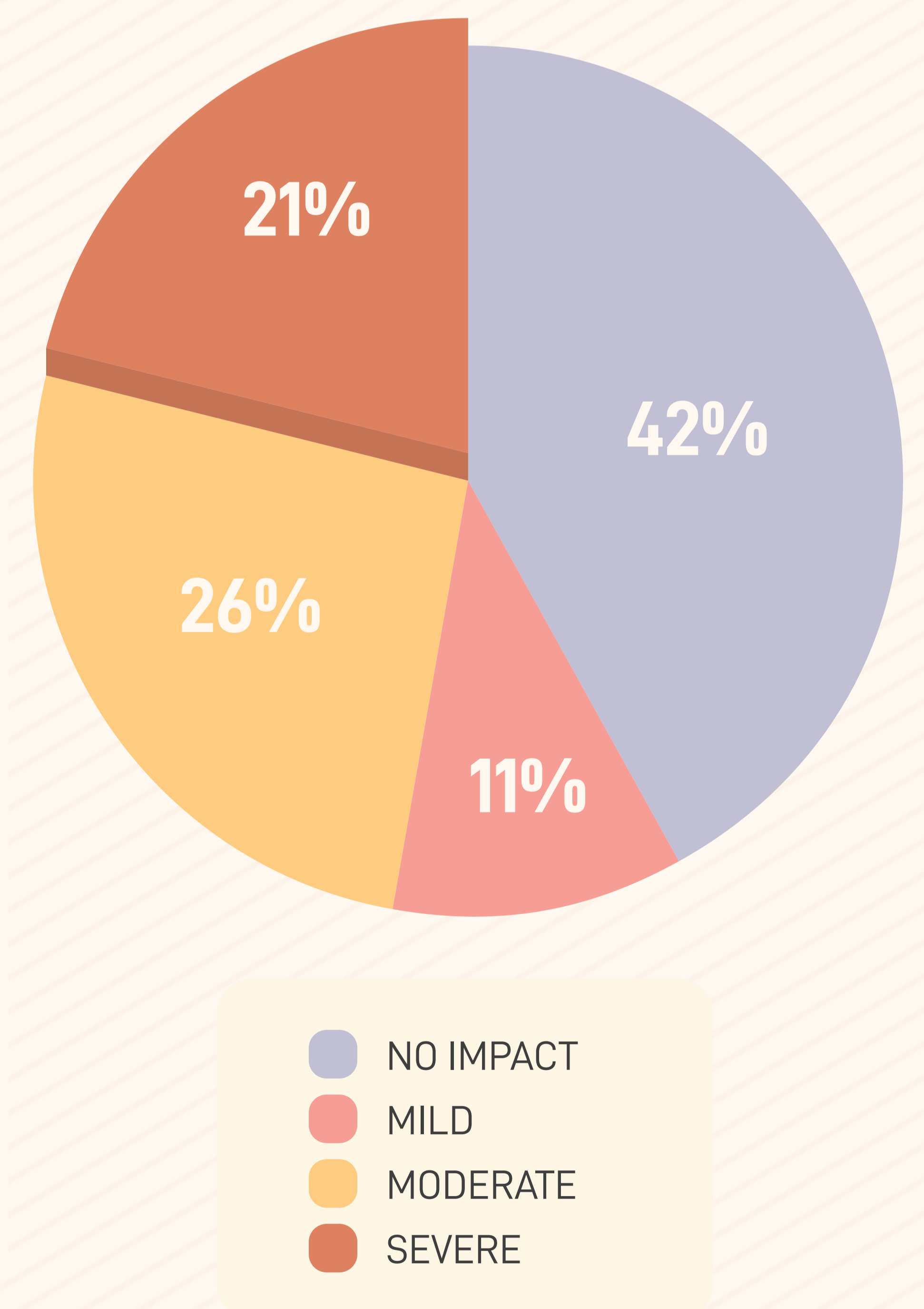
SIX DAYS

2

58% of patients were impacted negatively due to isolation based on the data collected.

3

All patients isolating for 3 or more days were **impacted negatively** with **75%** falling into the severe category. **65% of patients** who only had to isolate for up to 1 day had no impact on their mental health.



CONCLUSION

The **increased duration of isolation** is associated with a **greater severity of impact**. Patients isolating for 3 or more days had a greater negative impact on their mental health.

NEXT STEPS

Given the results, all patients swabbed should isolate for **less than 2 days**.

Rapid Point of Care Covid-19 Diagnostic Testing machines should be introduced on psychiatric wards to offer instant results and minimise isolation times.