

Veteran Care Through Custody

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Some veterans are still fighting... for their lives.

Background

- Service personnel 197,040 (April 2017)
- Service leavers 19,950 (2012) 15,050 (2017)
- Veteran population estimate 2.56 million
- Cost of poor transition £89 million 2015 (NHS England)
- Specific challenges for Early Service Leavers
- Specific barriers which deter help-seeking

Background

- Being in the forces is generally a protective factor against offending behaviour however
- Veterans form the largest occupational group in UK prisons
- Approx 3,500 to 4,000 Veterans in prison but it is thought to be higher
- Numerous reasons why some people do not declare Veteran status in prison
- Heterogeneous group
- Limited research
- Current input is inconsistent across establishments (Phillips 2014)

Former Members of the Armed Forces and the Criminal Justice System

A Review on behalf of the Secretary of State for Justice (Philips 2014)

Recommendations:

- Issue of domestic violence needs to be addressed
- Data as to numbers and relevant information of offenders who have served in the armed forces should be collected and analysed
- Veterans should be identified
- Guidance about working with Veteran offenders should be refreshed

Former Members of the Armed Forces and the Criminal Justice System

- On-going training in Veteran specific issues should be offered to all criminal justice professionals
- Pathways that form part of the evaluation and development of best practice should be clear
- Healthcare services should offer relevant accredited support
- Police force have specific training
- Court diversion and peer mentoring should be implemented

Former Members of the Armed Forces and the Criminal Justice System

- Closer working with veteran charities
- Identify a national strategy to implement best practice

Care after Combat



Some veterans are still fighting... for their lives.

Registered Charity 1159342 - Operational since may 2015

- **Mentorship – Project Phoenix**
 - **Forums – Peer Support**

www.careaftercombat.org

Mentorship

- Mentorship
- Volunteer Veterans
- First meet 18 months to one year pre release
- Remain in regular contact for one year post release

An Evaluation of the Phoenix Project

www.careaftercombat.org/.../2017/.../Report-An-Evaluation-of-the-Phoenix-Project-JAN-2017.pdf

Simon Weston House

- 12 self contained flats
- Managed by a Veteran
- For homeless Veterans
- 28 day review

The Veterans Care through Custody

- A partnership project between Care after Combat and Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust.
- Started in February 2017
- Following reports that prison services compromised by a limited understanding of the background and needs of Veteran offenders.
- Honour the commitments enshrined in the Armed Forces Covenant to provide services to Veterans in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire prisons that are equivalent to that in the community.

- The service this project offers aims to reduce the rate of reoffending for Veteran prisoners by improving the physical and mental health of Veteran prisoners, as well as helping them to improve their social functioning
- The Veteran Care through Custody project has identified four key components which have been developed to achieve these aims.

1. Prison and healthcare staff training and awareness to increase their understanding of the specific health and social care issues of Veterans.
2. Assessment and provision of Veteran treatment needs, including simple and complex trauma, predominantly by providing advice and consultation to healthcare staff or by signposting towards appropriate services.
3. Development of peer support networks in prisons assisted by the number of prison officers who themselves have a Veterans background
4. Link Veterans in prisons to the through-the-gate mentorship provided by Care after Combat.

Enablers to help-seeking

- Having a diagnosis
- Being seen in a Veteran specific service
- Establishing good therapeutic relationships
- Improved health professionals knowledge regarding veterans mental health needs

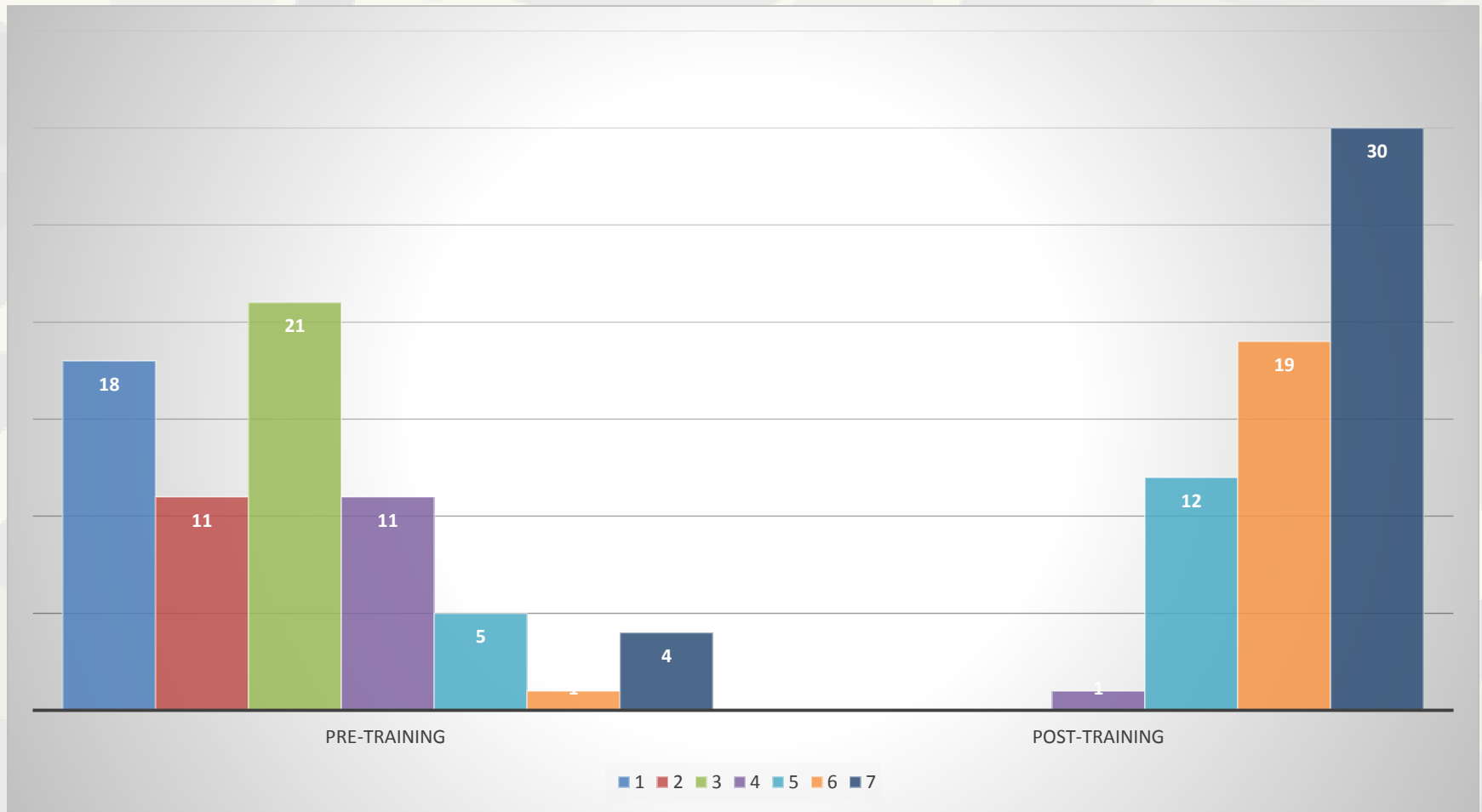
Mellotte et al 2017

Veteran Care through Custody Outcomes

Healthcare staff
training/awareness

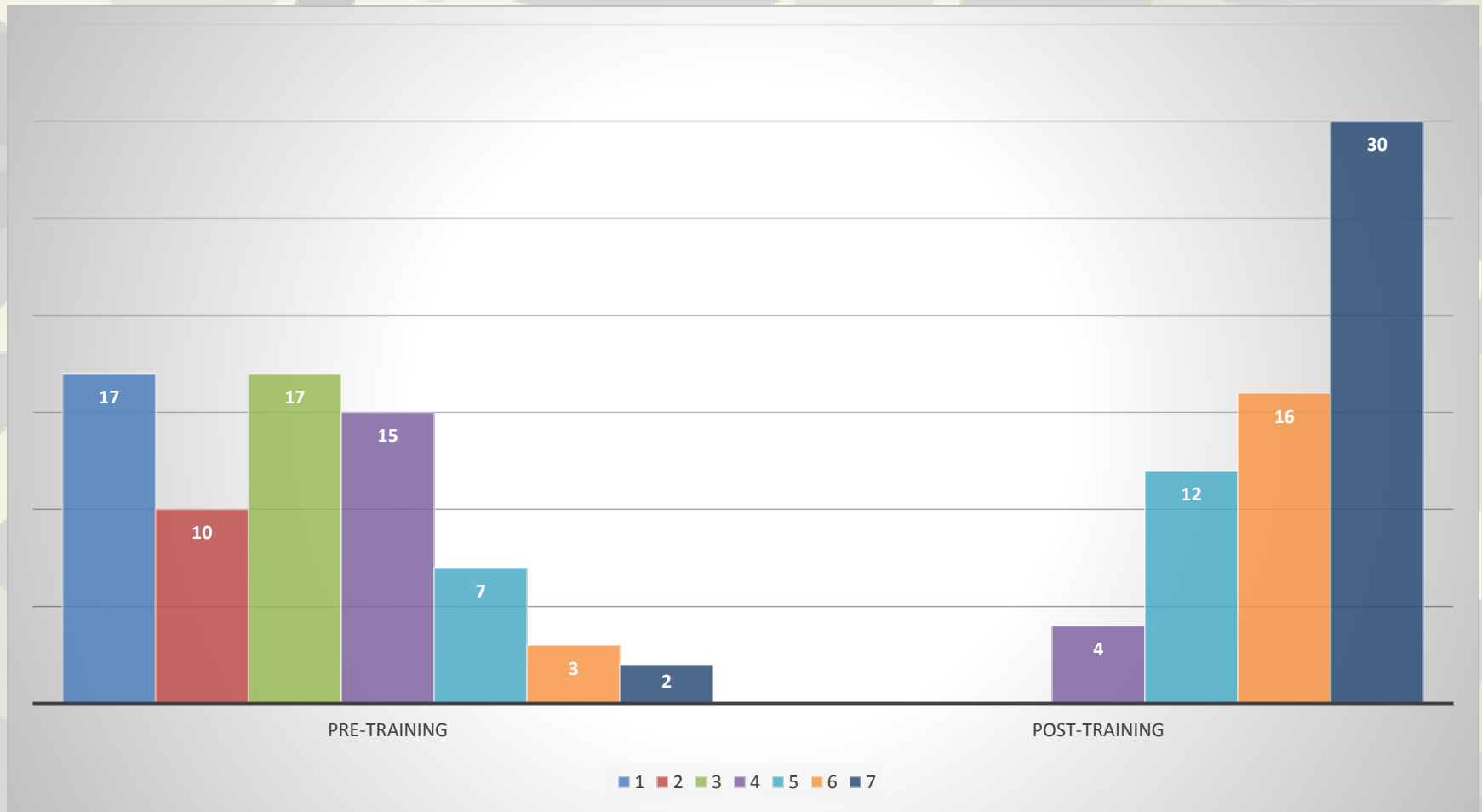
On a scale of 1-7, how would you rate your knowledge of Veteran specific issues when working with Veterans in custody?

1 – No knowledge and 7 – Very Knowledgeable



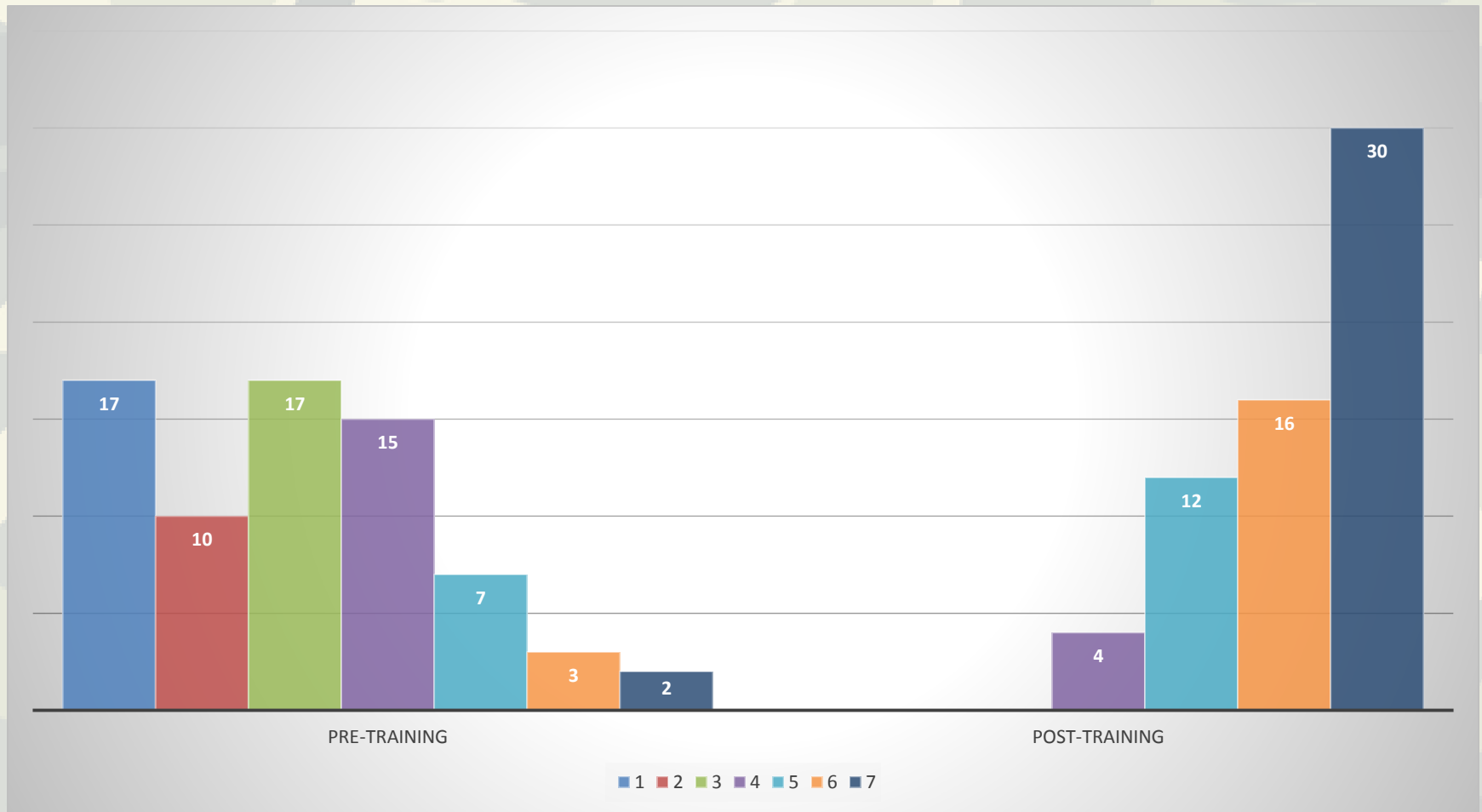
On a scale of 1-7, to what extent do you believe you understand Veteran specific issues?

1 – No understanding and 7 – thoroughly understand



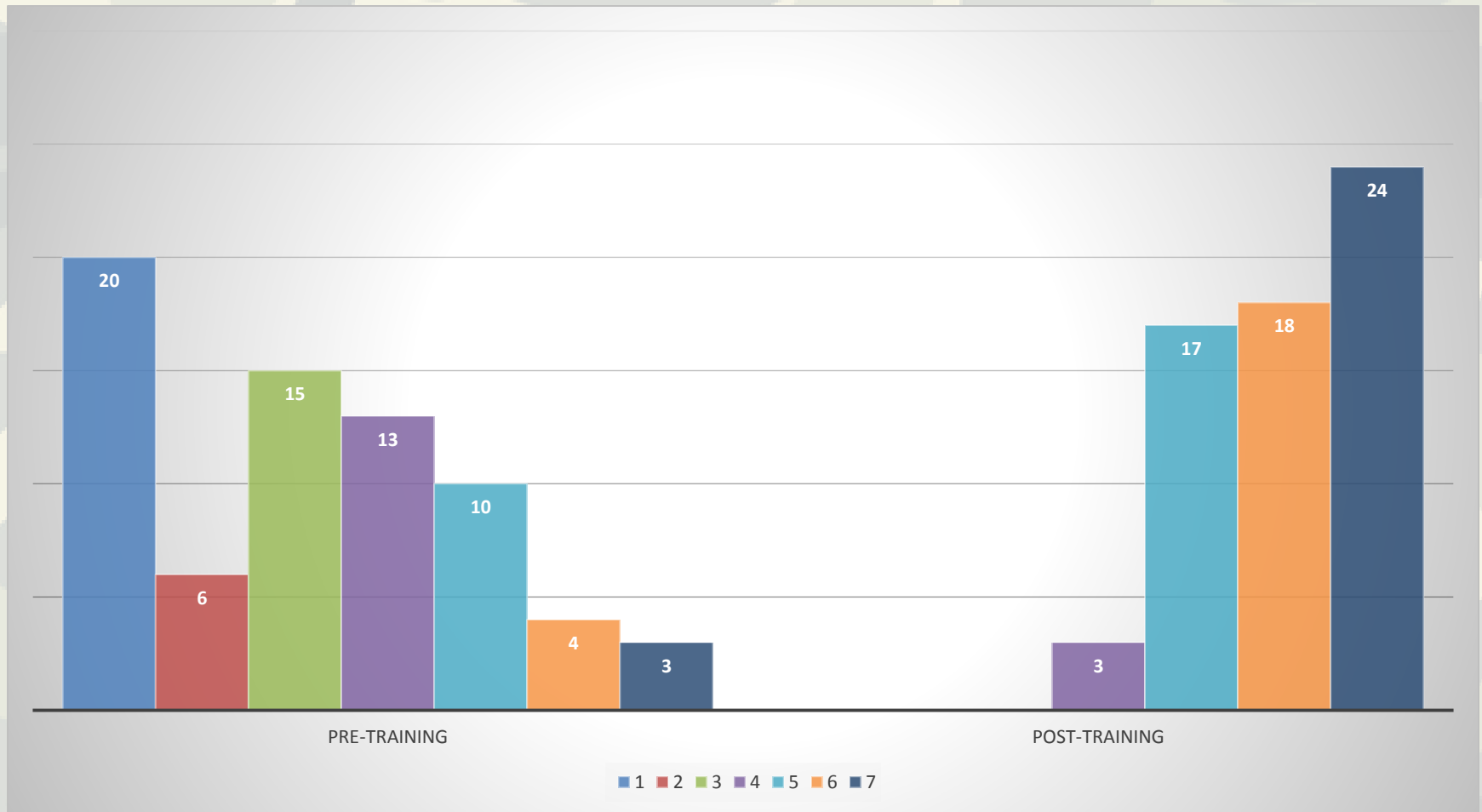
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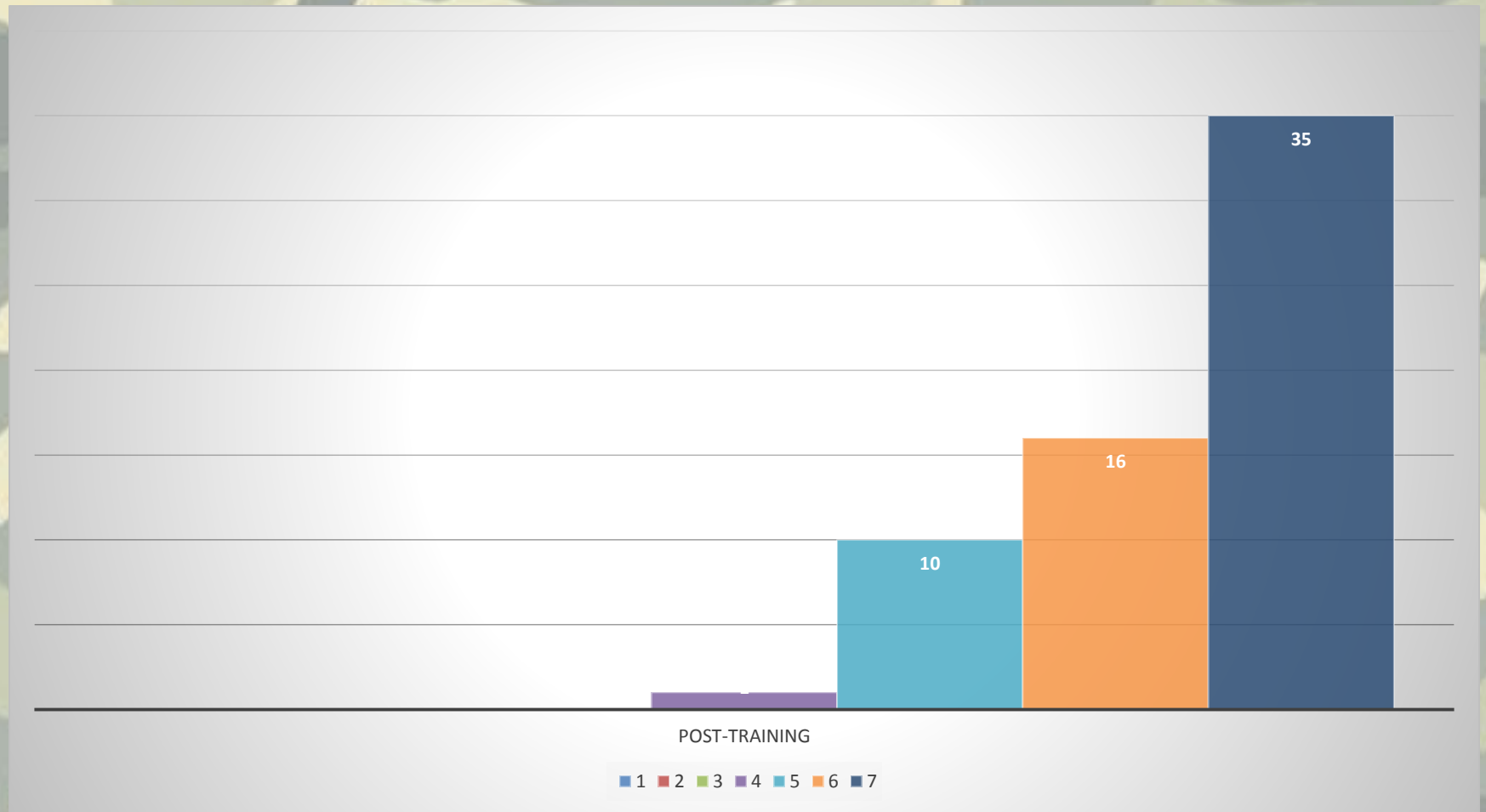


On a scale of 1-7, how confident do you feel when working with Veterans in custody and Veteran specific issues?

1 – No confidence and 7 – Extremely confident



On a scale of 1-7, how useful have you found the Veteran awareness training?
1 – Not at all useful and 7 – extremely useful

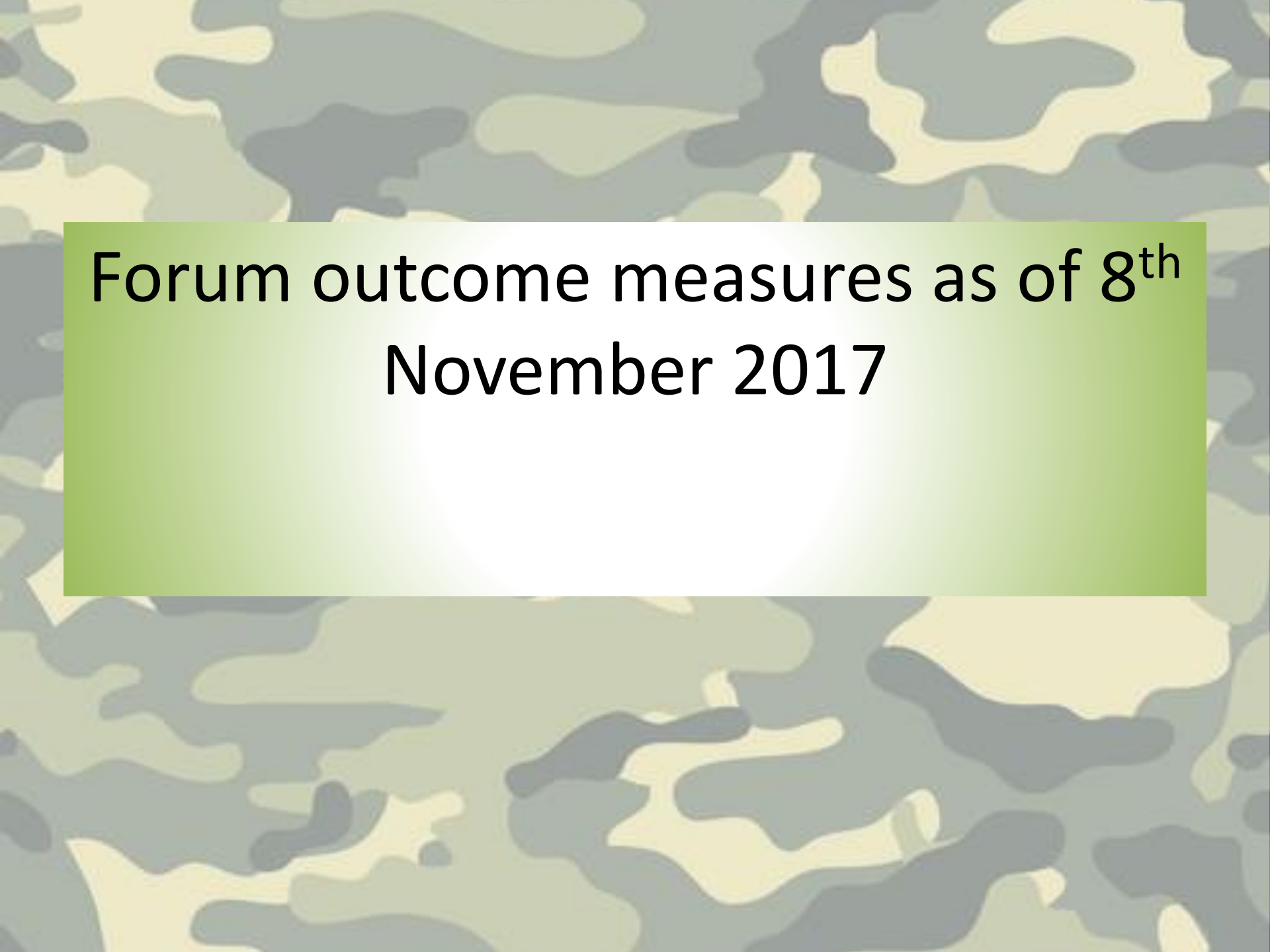


Reflection

- *'I am able to include Veteran specific issues more confidently into my formulations and more aware of the support that is available in prisons for Veterans'.*

This is where we are at

- 83 Veterans have declared Veteran status
- All are offered an individual meeting for initial healthcare trouble shooting, assessment for expedited healthcare and assessment for eligibility for a Care after Combat Mentor.
- ‘The Veteran Signature’
- Forums that offer Veteran specific support and enable peer support are established
- Mentors have been allocated to eligible Veterans



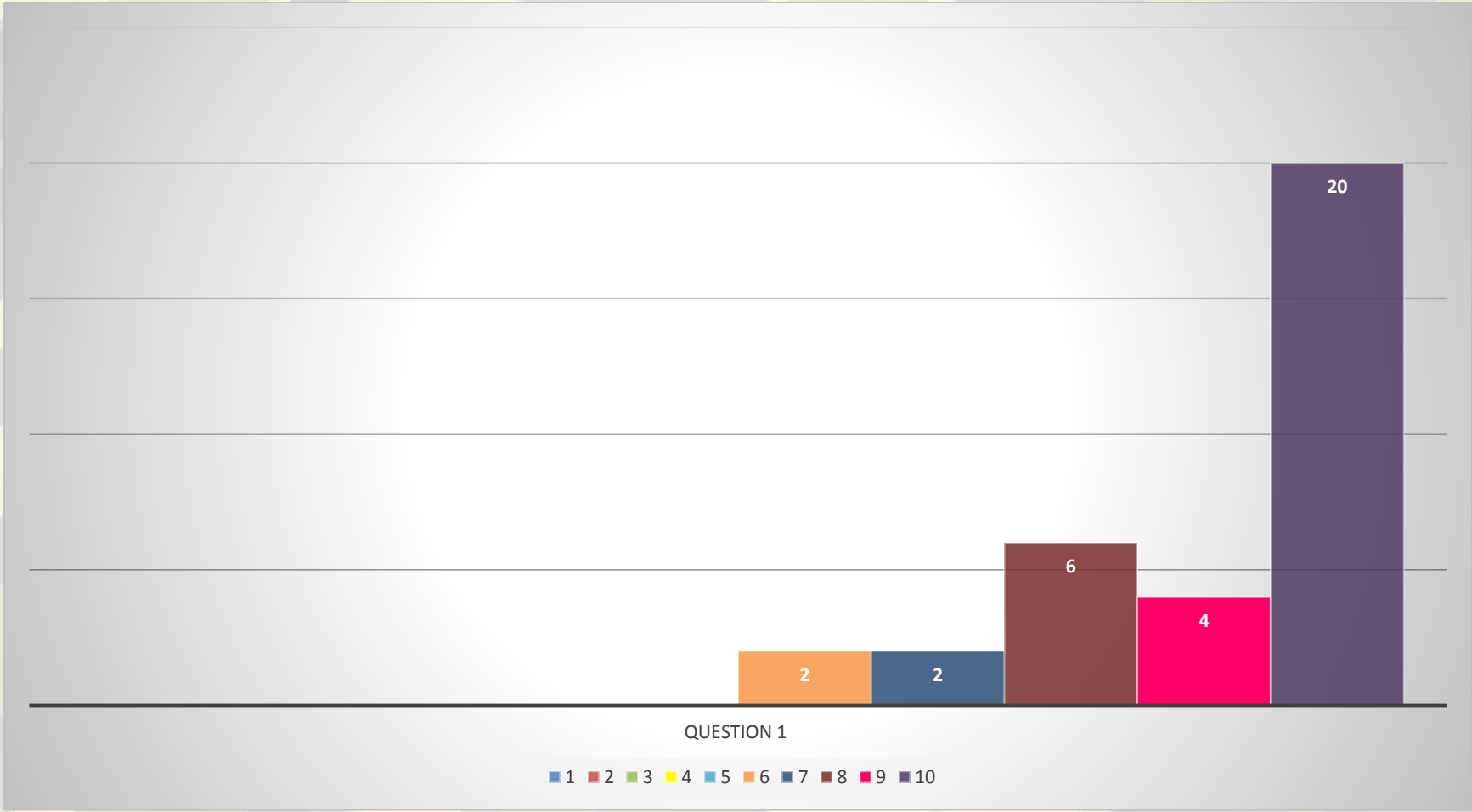
**Forum outcome measures as of 8th
November 2017**

Forums

- Group work addresses offending behaviour gets the men to start thinking for themselves about how they behave and the effect their behaviour has on themselves and others
- Uses of group pressure to encourage conformity and positive attitude change
- Improving life and social skills improving self belief in employability

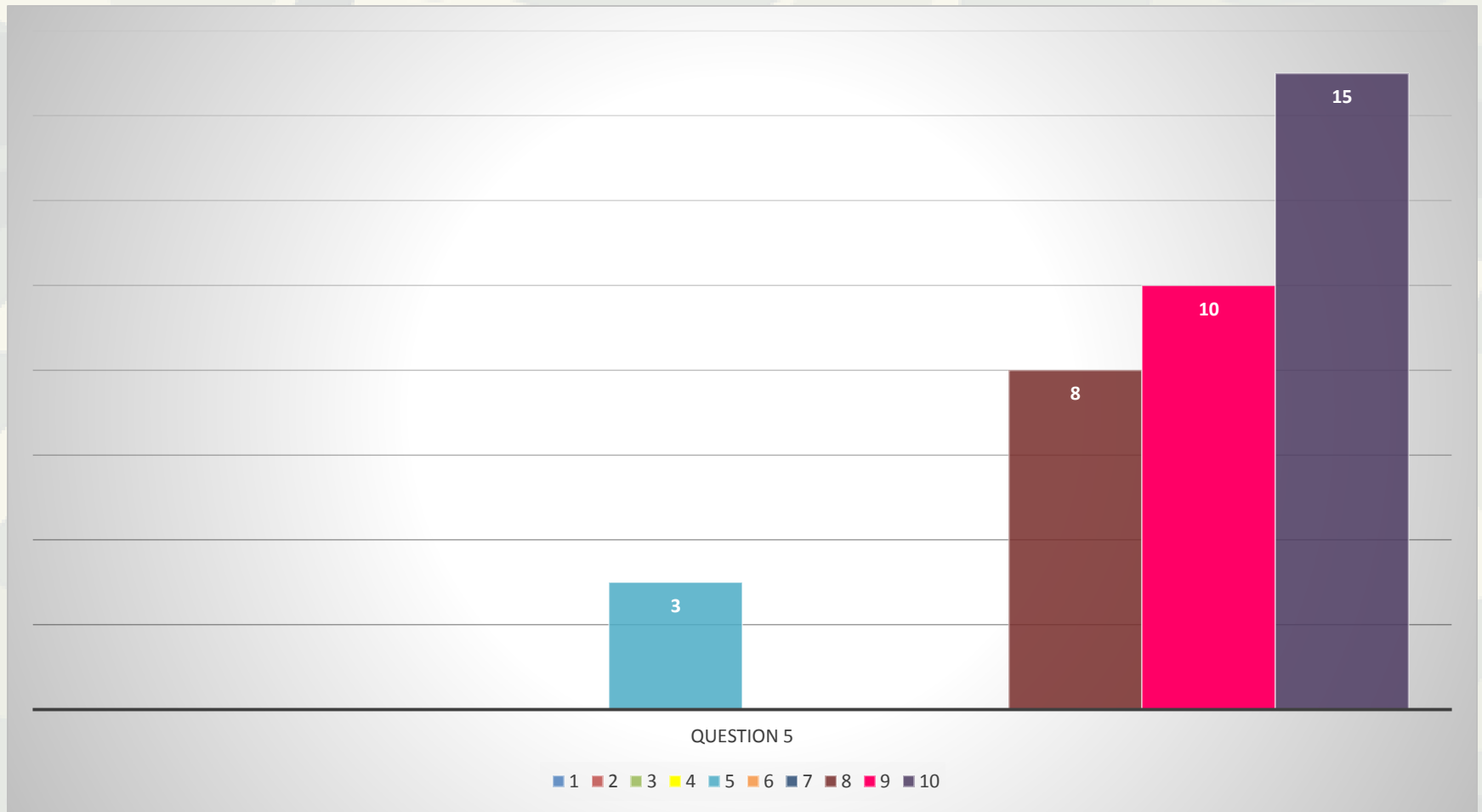
How motivated were you to attend the today's forum? (34 answered this question)

1 – Not at all motivated and 10 – Very motivated



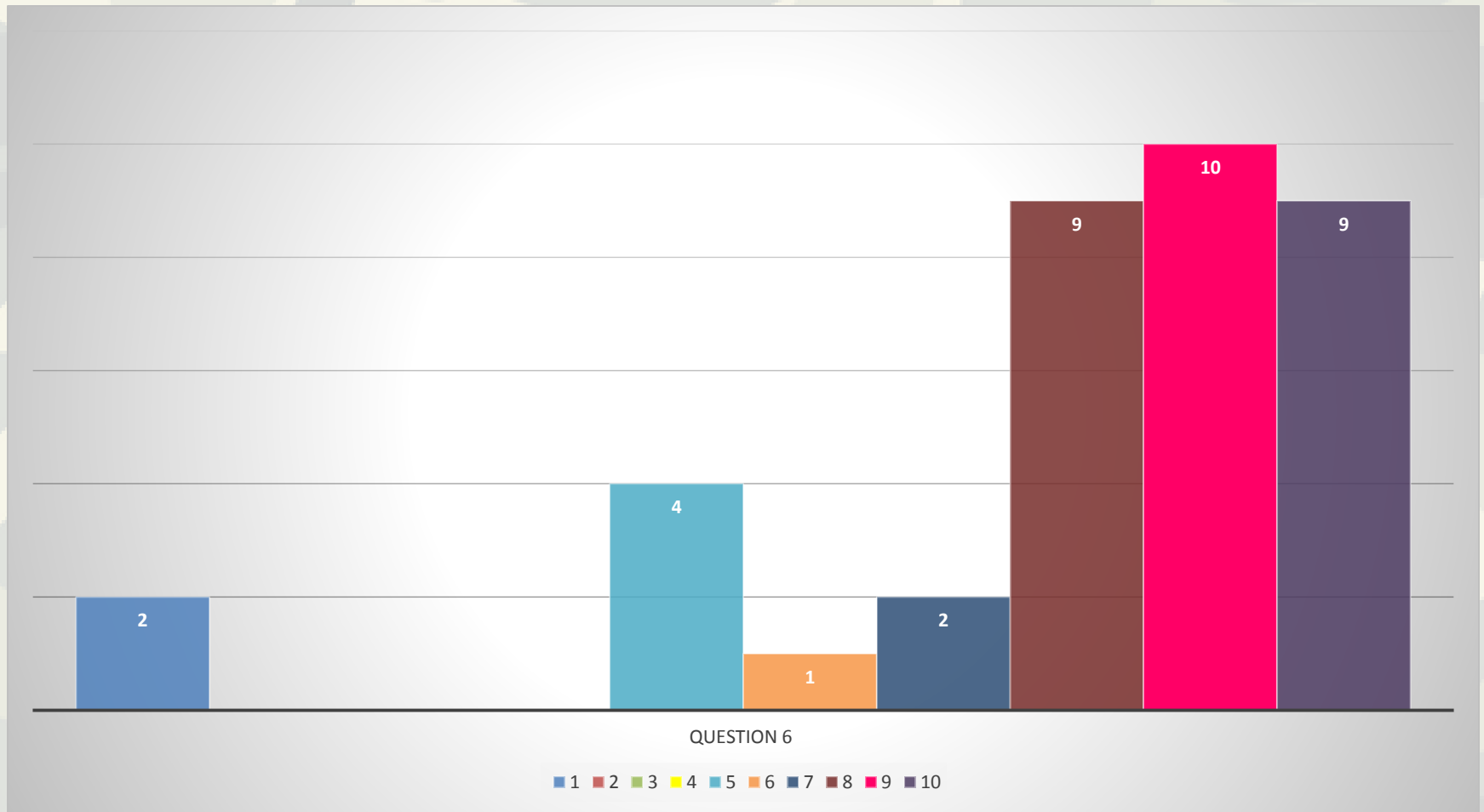
Please rate the degree in which you felt heard, understood and respected in today's forum? (36 Veterans answered this question)

1 – Not at all, 5 – a little and 10 – a great deal



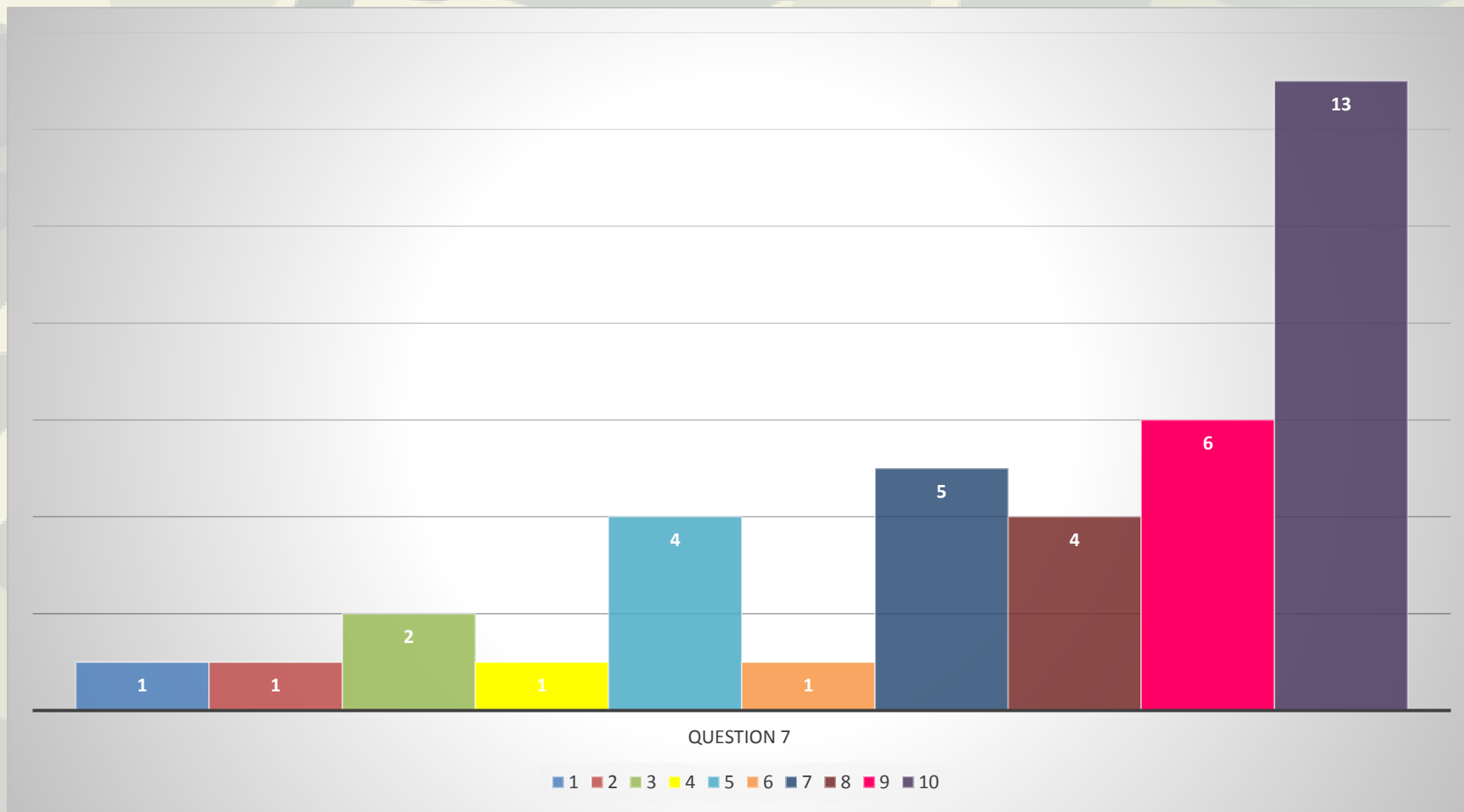
How much of today's forum impacted your decision making regarding your future? (37 Veterans answered this question)

1 – Not at all, 5 – a little and 10 – a great deal



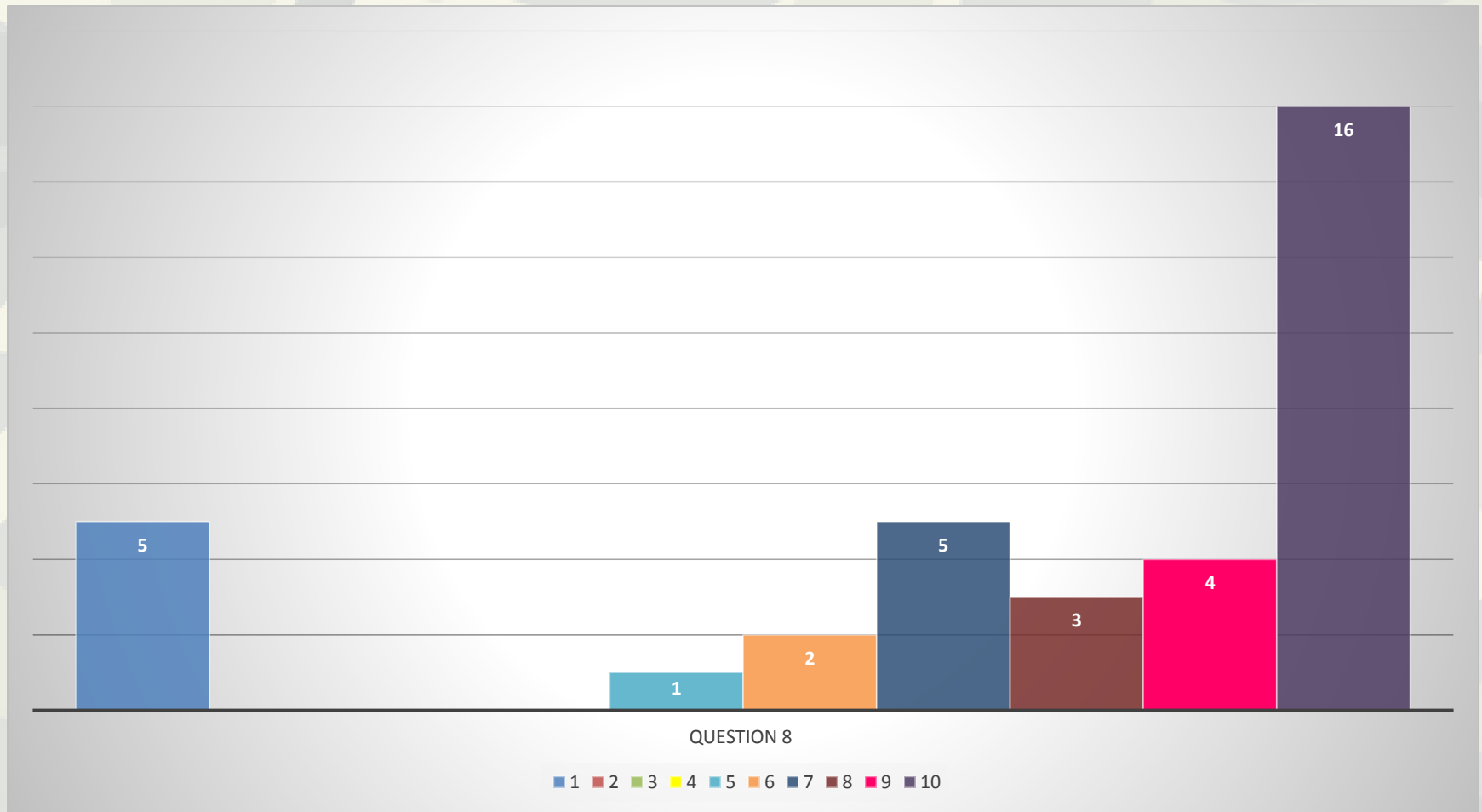
Please rate your confidence levels with regards to your future after attending today's forum? (All answered this question)

1 – Not at all confident, 5 – a little confident and 10 – very confident



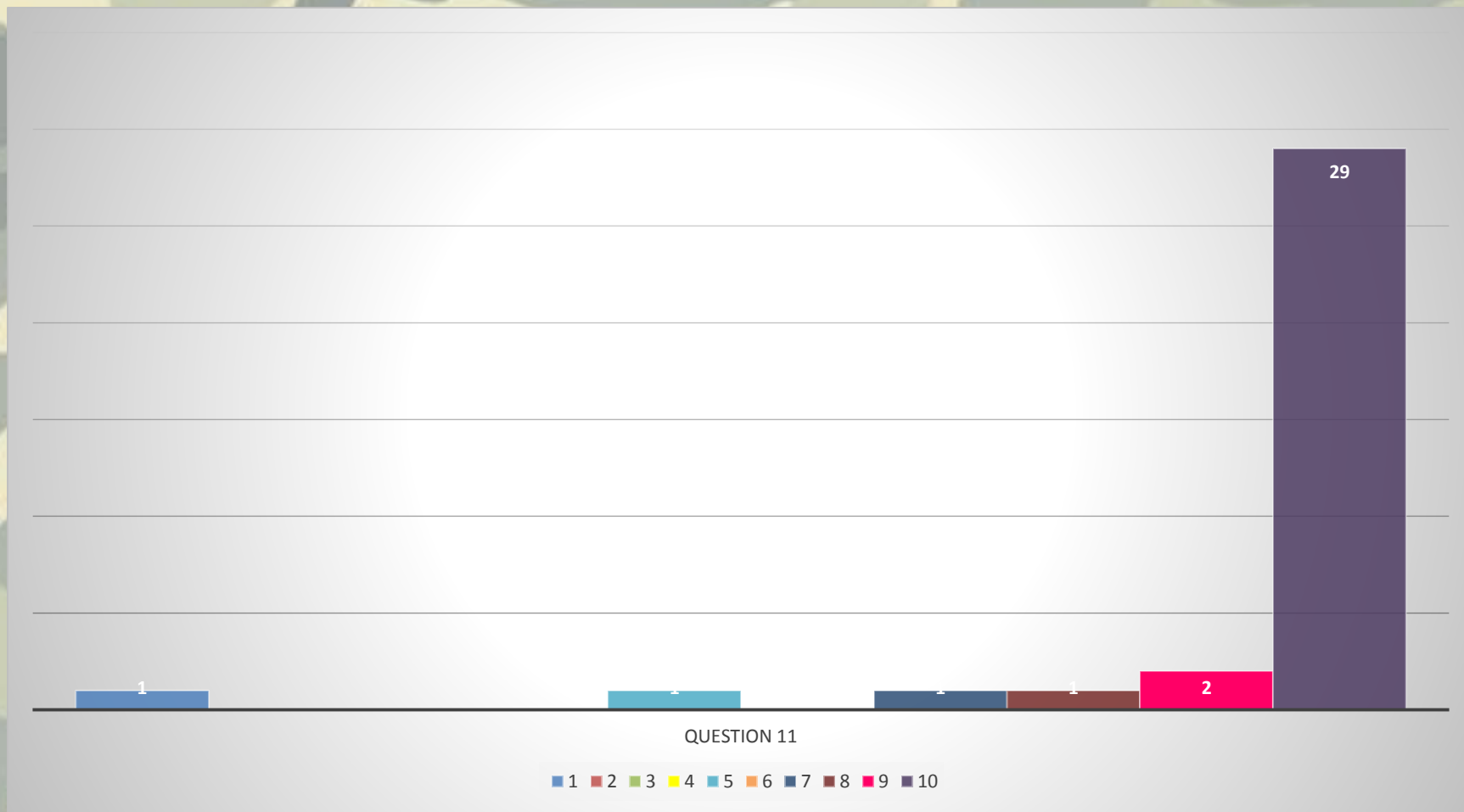
To what extent do you feel that being involved in forums had reduced your risk of re-offending? (36 Veterans answered this question)

1 – Not at all, 5 – a little and 10 – a great deal



Finally, how motivated are you to attend the next forum? (35 Veterans answered this question)

1 – Not at all motivated and 10 – Very motivated



Reflection

“I have been given help and an appointment with healthcare because I was encouraged to ask the right questions”

Moving on

- Continue to collect relevant data that will inform best practice
- Deliver veteran training awareness sessions for all prison staff directly working with Veteran offenders.

Challenges

- Stretched workforce
- No smoking policy
- Perception of discrimination
- Setting up a service that has an uncertain future

My reason to be involved

References

- **Phillips (2014) Former Members of the Armed Forces and the Criminal Justice System: A Review on behalf of the Secretary of State for Justice**
- **Mellotte et al (2017) Pathways into mental health care for UK veterans: a qualitative study**

