

Assessing Physicians' Perception of Patients and Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder

Regina M. Wang MD, Mariel Janowsky MD MPH, Leopoldine Matialeu MD
UC San Diego, Family Medicine and Family Medicine/Combined Residency Programs



AIMS / PURPOSE

Given the rapid increase in prevalence of opioid use disorders (OUD) in recent years, UC San Diego Family Medicine has made it a priority to increase addiction medicine training of faculty and residents.

BACKGROUND

Despite greater public awareness of substance use disorders and their neurobiological underpinning, public stigma remains high. Stigma of healthcare professionals towards patients with substance use disorders is common and can contribute to suboptimal healthcare.

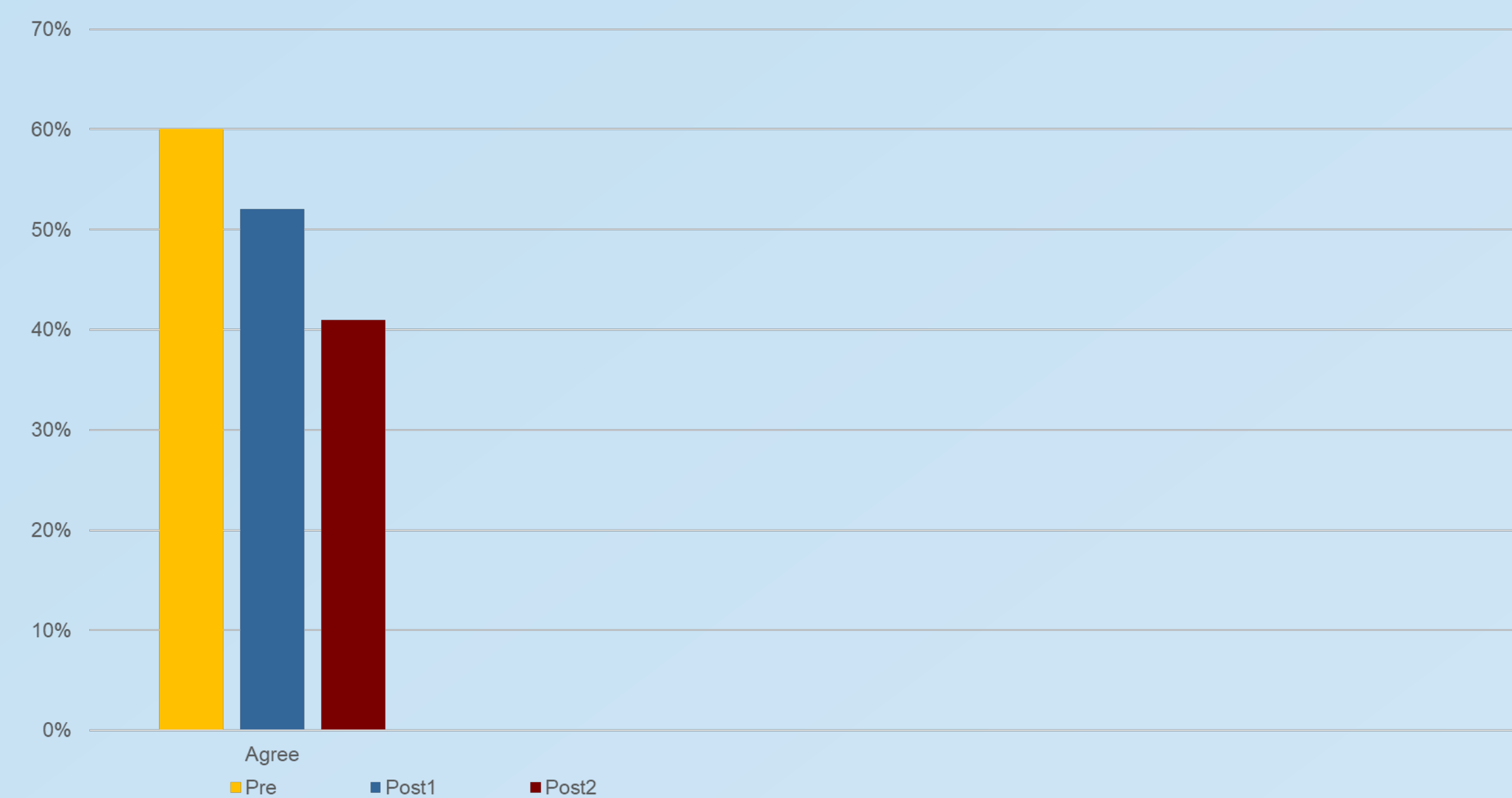
In addition to stigma, barriers to office-based OUD treatment encompass lack of physician education, limited insurance reimbursement, and perceptions of “difficult” patients. While limitations specific to Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) with buprenorphine include regulatory restrictions, liability fears, and restrictions imposed by the criminal justice system. These factors pose as obstacles to patients' access to OUD treatment. As a result, there is a great need to train additional physicians and create office-based workflows to improve access to OUD treatment.

METHODS

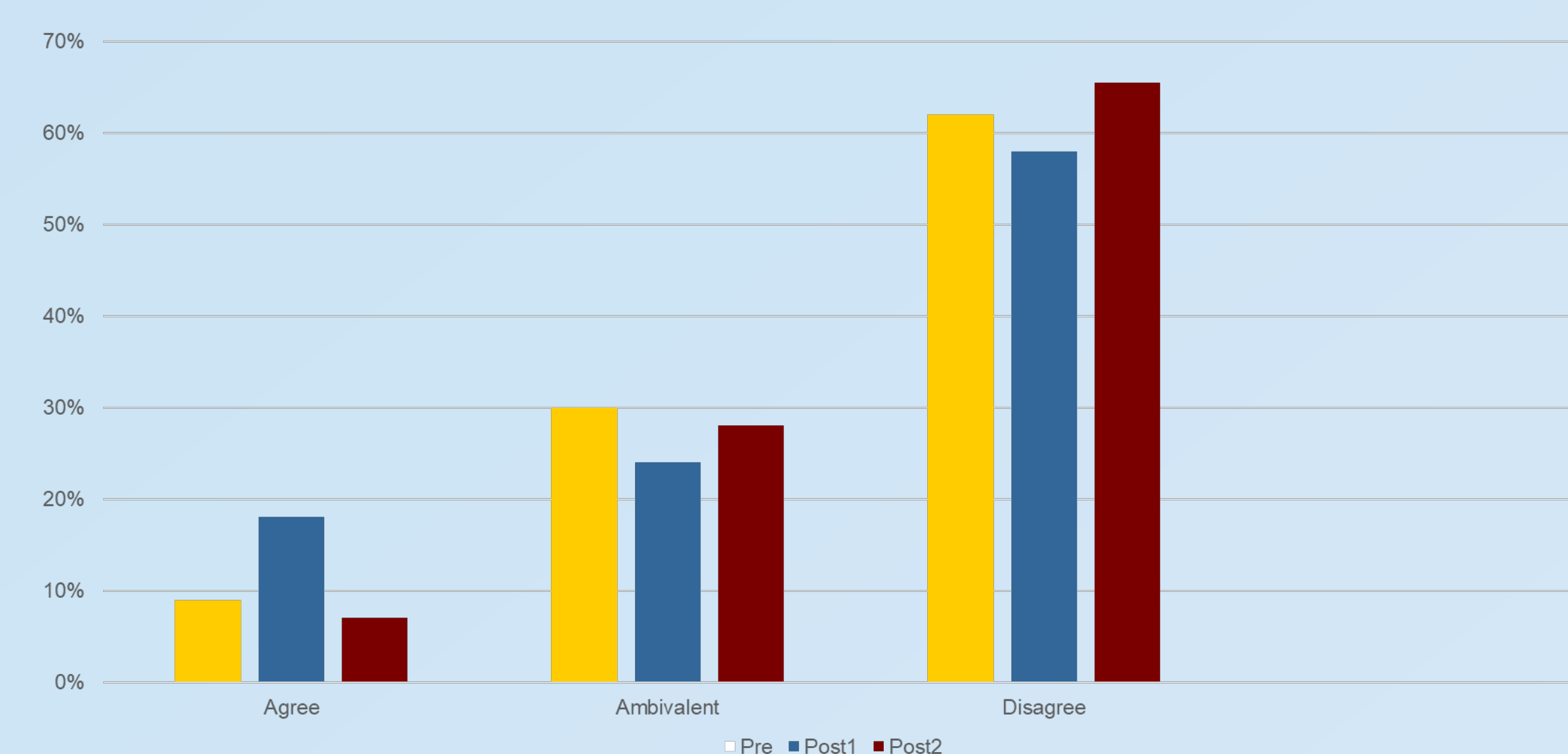
- Survey faculty & residents from FM, EM, IM, Ob/gyn Psychiatry and combined FM/Psychiatry programs during 4-hour in-person Buprenorphine X-Waiver Training in May 2019
- Assess physician perceptions of patients with OUDs and treatment of OUDs
- Pre/Post survey responses--- 47/59 (pre); 33/47 (post1); 29/47 (post2)
- **Pre-survey** conducted prior to training
- **Post1** conducted immediately after training
- **Post2** conducted 9 months after training

RESULTS

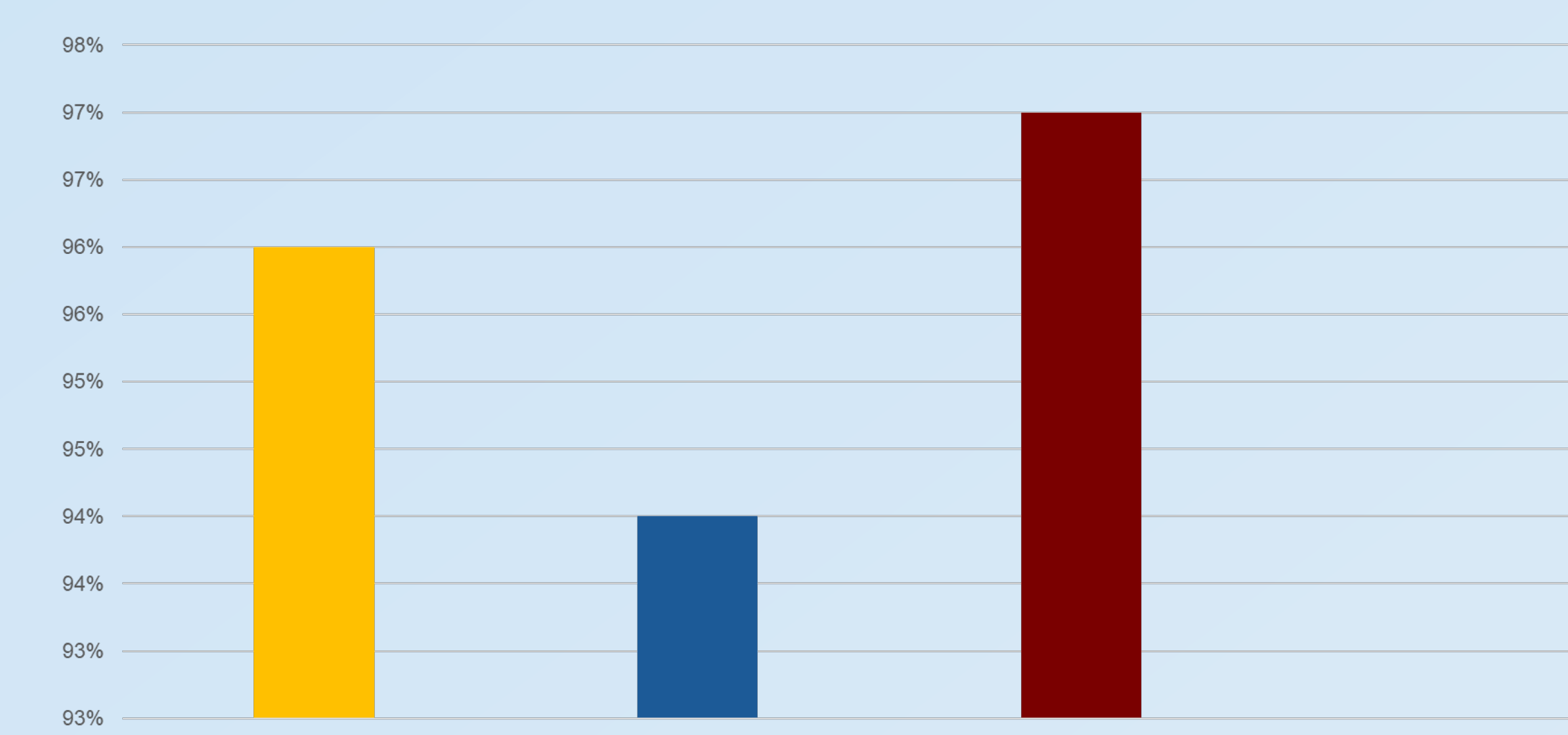
Percent who agree with statement:
“I think patients with OUD are more emotionally draining to provide care for than patients with other chronic illnesses”



Percent responses to statement:
“I think opioid use disorder is different than other chronic diseases because people who abuse drugs are making a choice”



Percent who agree that “OUD is a treatable disease”



OBSERVATIONS

X-Waiver Training Completion & Buprenorphine Prescribing

- 26 out of 33 providers planned to get their X-Waiver (post1)
- 20 out of 29 people received their X-Waiver (post2)
- 9 prescribed buprenorphine (post2)
- Most participants did not think that treating patients with buprenorphine is replacing one addiction with another: **98% (pre), 100% (post1), 96% (post2)**
- Most participants agree that sustained recovery is possible in participants with opioid use disorder with the assistance of medications such as buprenorphine: **87% (pre), 91% (post1), 90% (post2)**
- Most participants support the use of buprenorphine as a treatment modality for OUD after this training: **100% (post1), 100% (post2)**

CONCLUSION

- MAT training positively influences physician's perceptions of patients with OUDs and treatment of OUDs
- With training, physicians perceive treating patients with OUDs as less draining & perceive the disorder less as a patient choice
- 9 months after training, more physicians believe that OUD is treatable
- Most physicians surveyed support buprenorphine as a treatment modality for OUDs

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Continue to increase the number of faculty & residents who complete their X-Waiver training
- Foster physician comfort in MAT for OUDs through regular training and mentorship
- Develop office-based protocols for MAT

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