



**BACKGROUND**

- Adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) is the main predictor of sustained HIV virologic suppression for people with HIV (PWH)
- People taking ART for HIV prophylaxis (PrEP) require high levels of adherence to prevent HIV infection
- Designated specialty pharmacies offer mail-order service with the intention to increase ART adherence
- Some insurance providers mandate specialty prescriptions to be dispensed from specialty mail-order pharmacies regardless of patient choice and complicating medication adherence for certain individuals affected by social disparities
- We evaluated patient perspectives and preferences of pharmacy services

**METHODS**

- Prospective, cross-sectional survey study at the University of Nebraska Medical Center's HIV clinic, the Specialty Care Center (SCC)
- PWH or on PrEP who met the following criteria: 1) over 19 years old; 2) prescribed ART; 3) retained in HIV clinic care for at least 6 months; and 4) experienced a switch in pharmacy from the local to mail-order pharmacy or vice versa

**SURVEY**

- The survey consisted of 20 questions divided into three sections:
  1. Experiences/perspectives on local<sup>1</sup> and mail-order<sup>2</sup> pharmacy settings
  2. Ranking of pharmacy attributes
  3. Pharmacy preference

**ANALYSIS**

- To compare the satisfaction of local versus mail-order pharmacy and assess predictive factors for negative pharmacy experiences
- Mann-Whitney test to compare the median value of agreement questions.
- Fisher's exact test to evaluate the association demographic characteristics and preference.

<sup>1</sup>Local – in-town pharmacy with a physical location, where patients could pick up medications themselves

<sup>2</sup>Mail-order – out-of-town pharmacy, where the medications had to be mailed to patients' home; could be a standard mail-order or specialty

**Table 1:** Baseline Characteristics Based on patient group

	HIV+(TX) (N=54)	HIV-(PrEP) (N=6)	Overall (N=60)
<b>Age</b>			
Mean (SD)	52.0 (10.9)	39.8 (13.6)	50.8 (11.7)
Median [Min, Max]	52.5 [30.0, 77.0]	36.5 [28.0, 66.0]	52.0 [28.0, 77.0]
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	50 (92.6%)	6 (100%)	56 (93.3%)
Female	4 (7.4%)	0 (0%)	4 (6.7%)
<b>Race</b>			
White	44 (81.5%)	6 (100%)	50 (83.3%)
Black	9 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	9 (15.0%)
Asian	1 (1.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.7%)
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Hispanic	3 (5.6%)	0 (0%)	3 (5.0%)
Not Hispanic	51 (94.4%)	6 (100%)	57 (95.0%)
<b>Coverage Type</b>			
Commercial	45 (83.3%)	5 (83.3%)	50 (83.3%)
Medicaid	3 (5.6%)	0 (0%)	3 (5.0%)
Medicare	5 (9.3%)	1 (16.7%)	6 (10.0%)
VA/Gov	1 (1.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.7%)
<b>Last viral Load</b>			
Mean (SD)	9.44 (20.4)		9.44 (20.4)
Median [Min, Max]	0 [0, 86.0]		0 [0, 86.0]
Missing	0 (0%)		6 (10.0%)

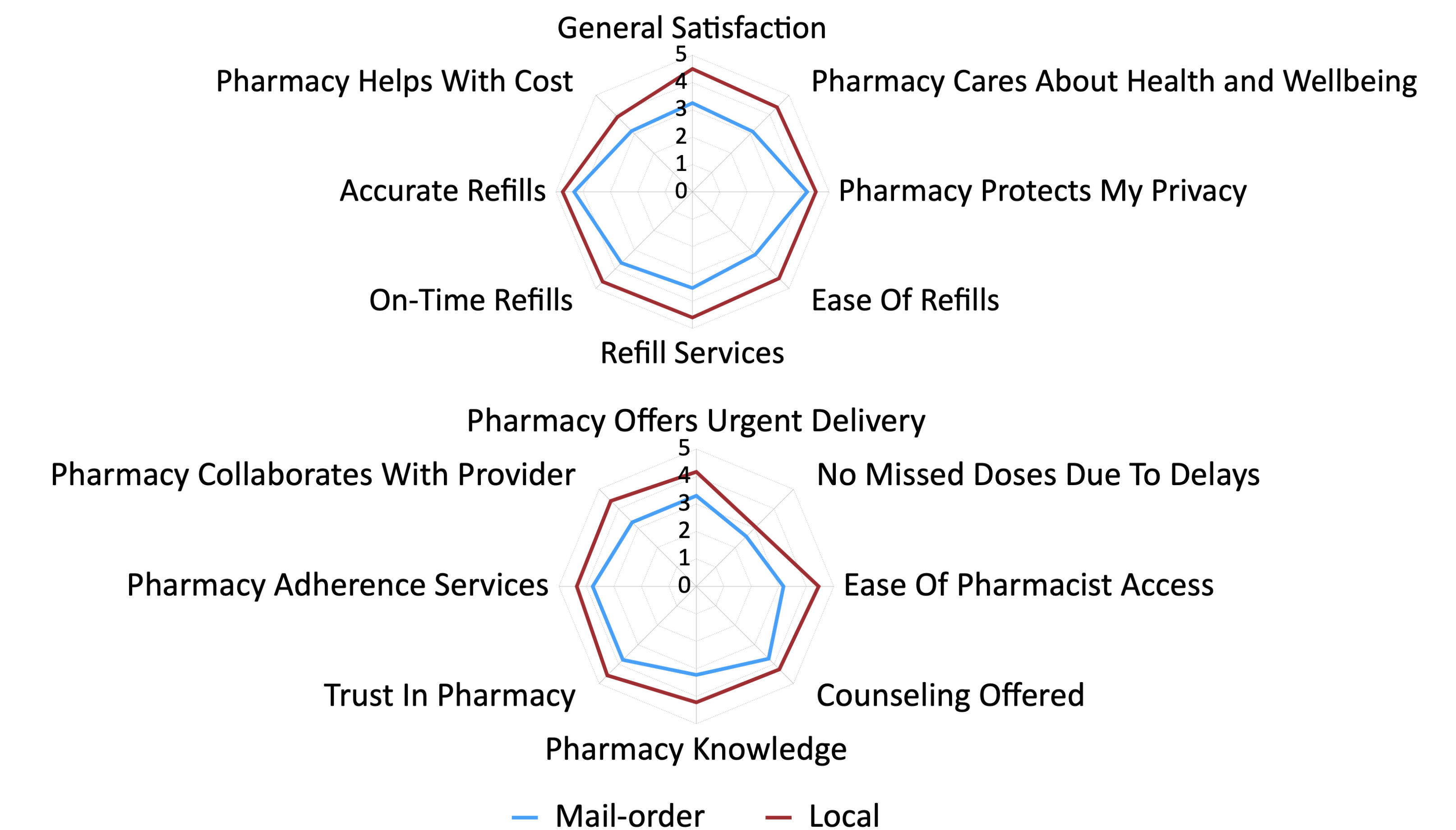
All values reported as n(%) unless otherwise indicated

**RESULTS**

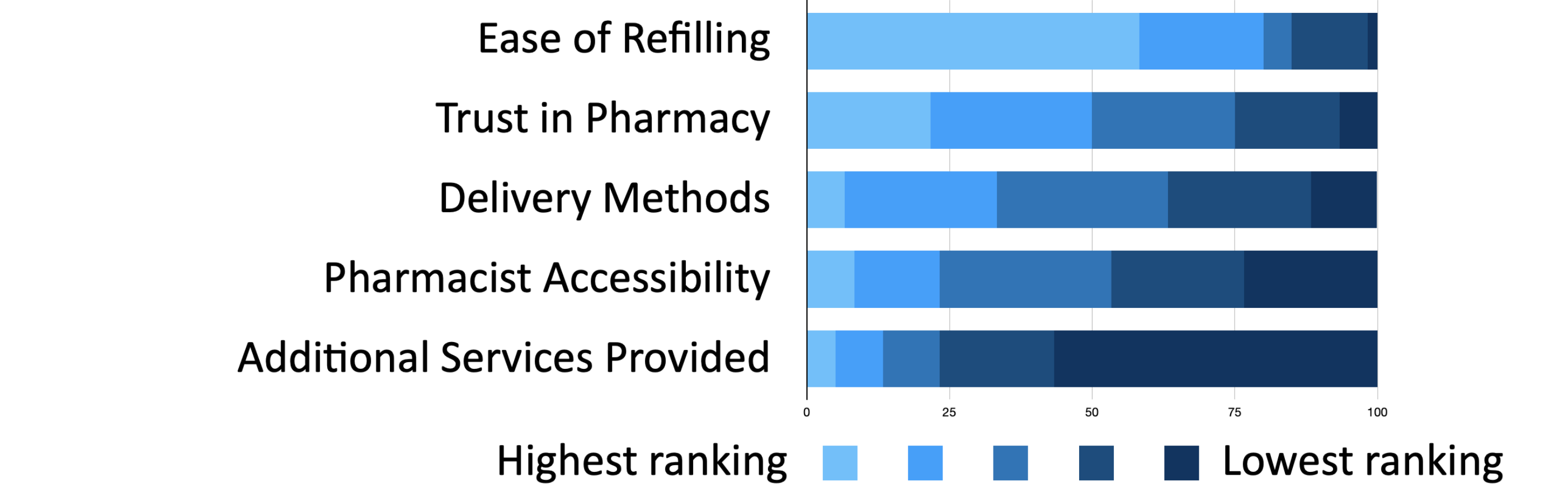
- For ART refills, Midwest PWH and patients using PrEP generally preferred local pharmacies versus mail-order pharmacies for all pharmacy attributes.
- Refilling ease is the most important attribute notable by our cohort

**RESULTS**

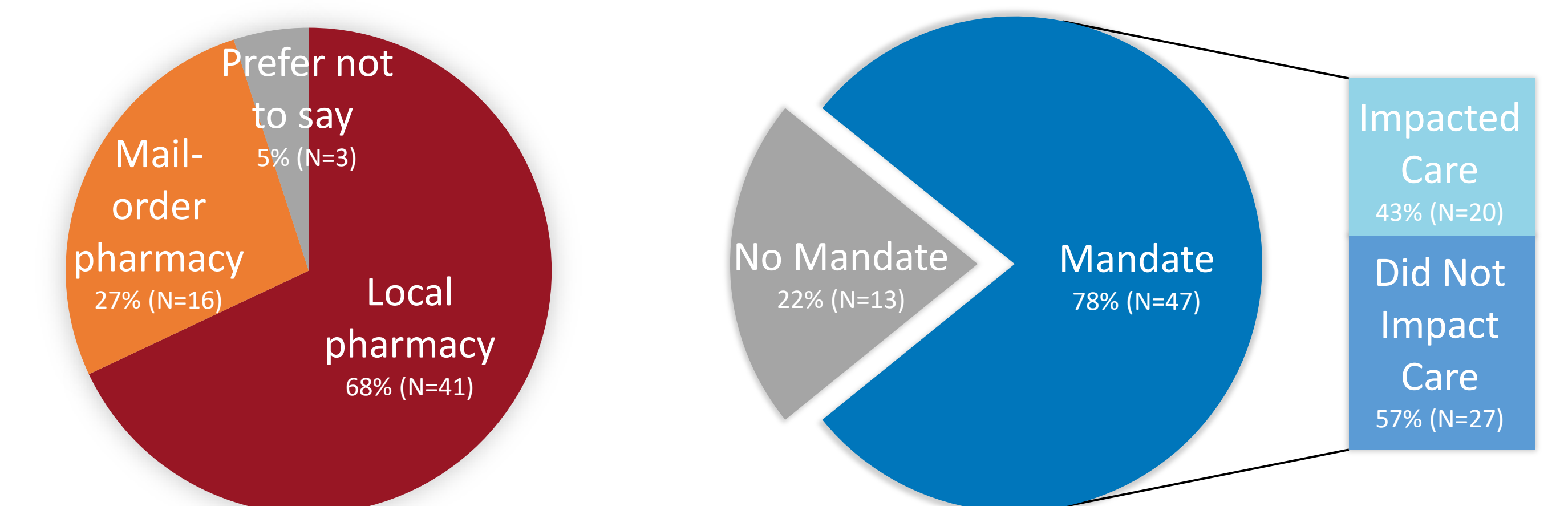
1. Perspectives on both pharmacy settings
  - Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).



2. Pharmacy attribute rankings



3. Pharmacy preference and Insurance mandate



**CONCLUSIONS**

Insurance payers should consider patient perspectives when placing restrictive mail-order pharmacy mandates for ART prescriptions.

In our small Midwestern cohort, PWH and patients taking PrEP preferred local pharmacies to refill ART versus mail-order pharmacies.