

The Effectiveness of a Peer Specialist Training Program



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BACKGROUND

- Clinical trials are key to making progress against cancer, yet fewer than 1 in 20 adult cancer patients enroll in clinical trials, and of that number only 3-5% identify as Black or African American (AA).
- Peer support is an evidence-based practice used in various disease states and is proven to increase patient knowledge, social supports, and care navigation; yet few programs exist within the cancer clinical trial space, and fewer are specific to the needs of Black/AA cancer patients.
- In Spring 2022, 8 individuals participated in a 12-hour, 6-part virtual training series for Peer Specialists as part of CSC's Peer Clinical Trials Support Program.

AIMS

- This study aims to analyze the impact of a peer support training program at improving the knowledge and helping ability of Peer Specialists in the Peer Clinical Trials Support Program.

METHODS

- A total of 8 trainees completed a pre/post survey which consisted of a total of 18, 5-point Likert scale, questions measuring their knowledge of clinical trials (9) and peer support (2) and confidence in their helping ability (7).
- The post-survey included 9 additional satisfaction questions on a 5-point Likert scale and 5 open-ended responses.
- Paired t-tests were analyzed for improvement in knowledge and helping ability. Qualitative data was analyzed to identify common themes.

PARTICIPANTS

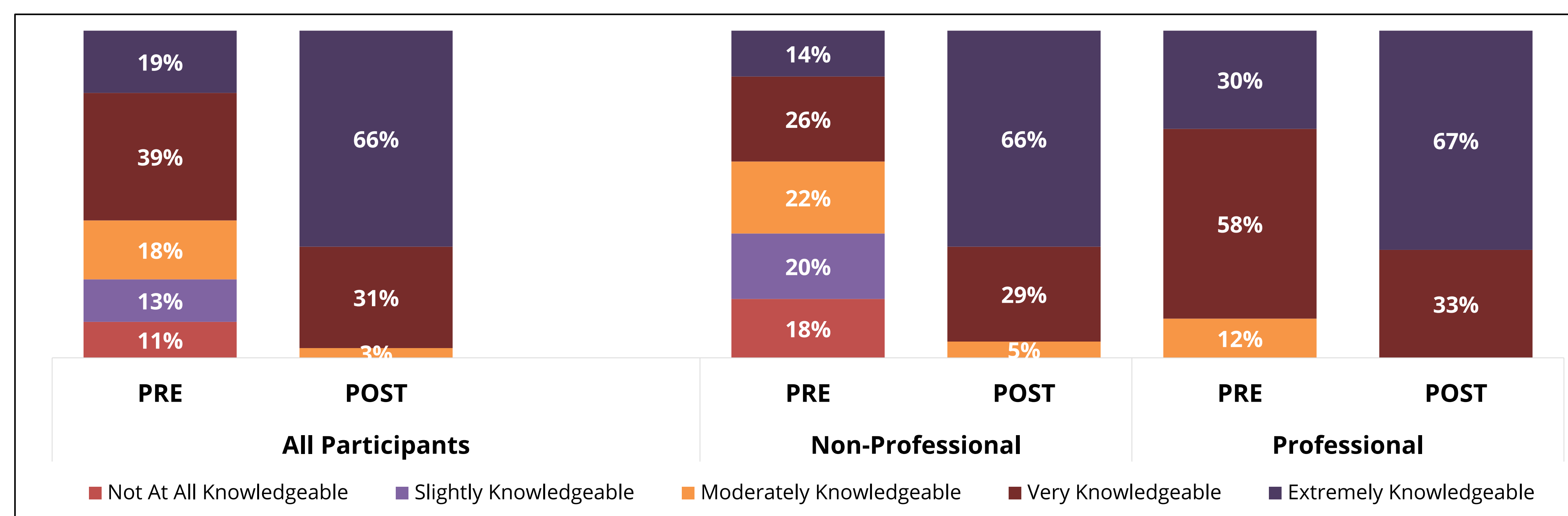
N= 8	n (%)
Gender	
Female	8 (100)
Race	
Black	8 (100)
Ethnicity	
Non-Hispanic	8 (100)
Age Range	
45-64 years	4 (50)
65-84 years	4 (50)
Primary Cancer Diagnosis	
Breast	6 (75)
Lung	1 (12.5)
Multiple Myeloma	1 (12.5)
Years Since Clinical Trial Participation	
3 years or less	4 (50)
4-6 years	2 (25)

TRAINING CURRICULUM

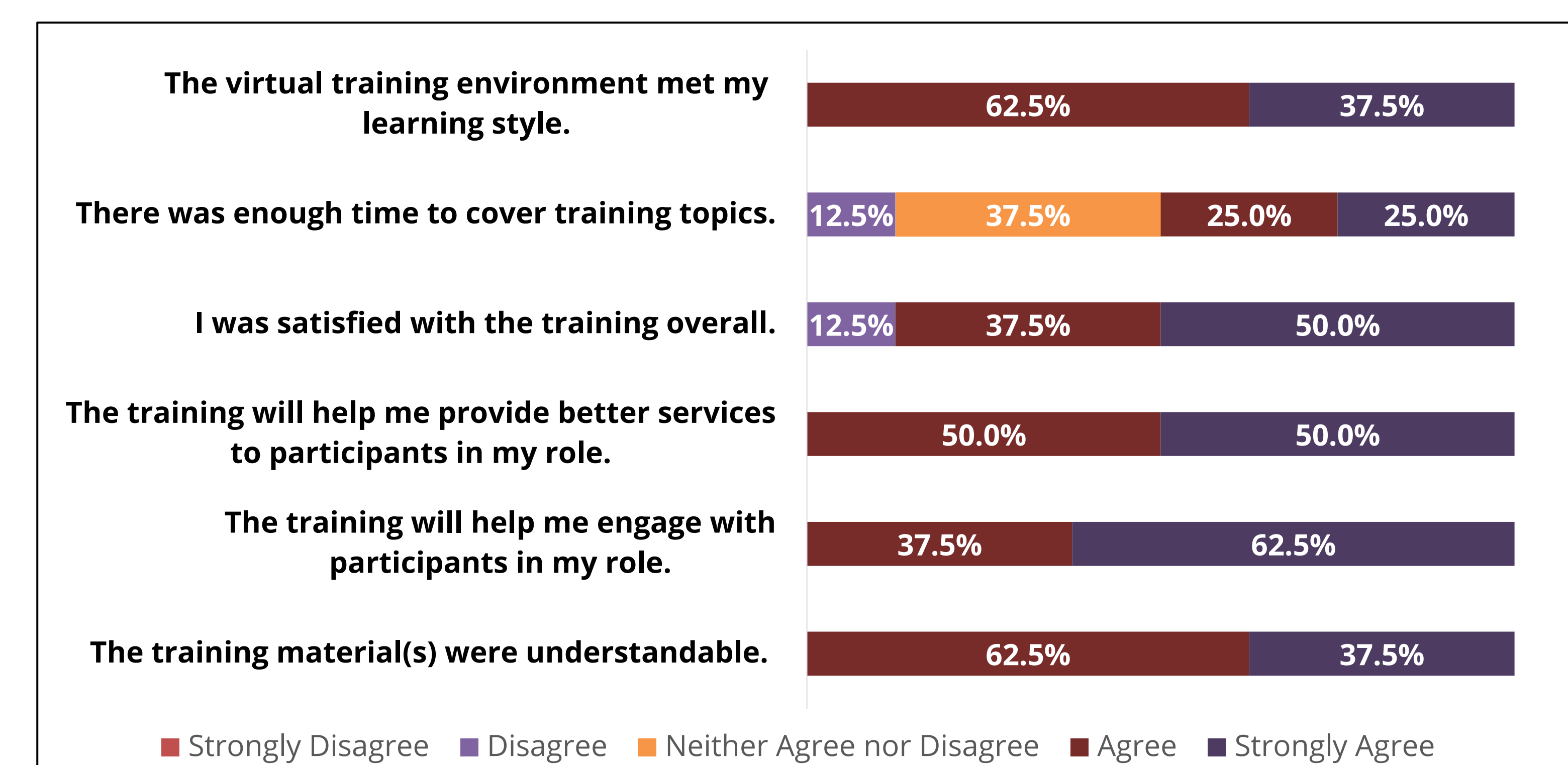
Session 1: What is Peer Support?	Session 4: Effective Communication Part 1
Session 2: Understanding Cancer Clinical Trials	Session 5: Effective Communication Part 2
Session 3: Barriers and Myths to Clinical Trial Participation	Session 6: Program Operations

RESULTS

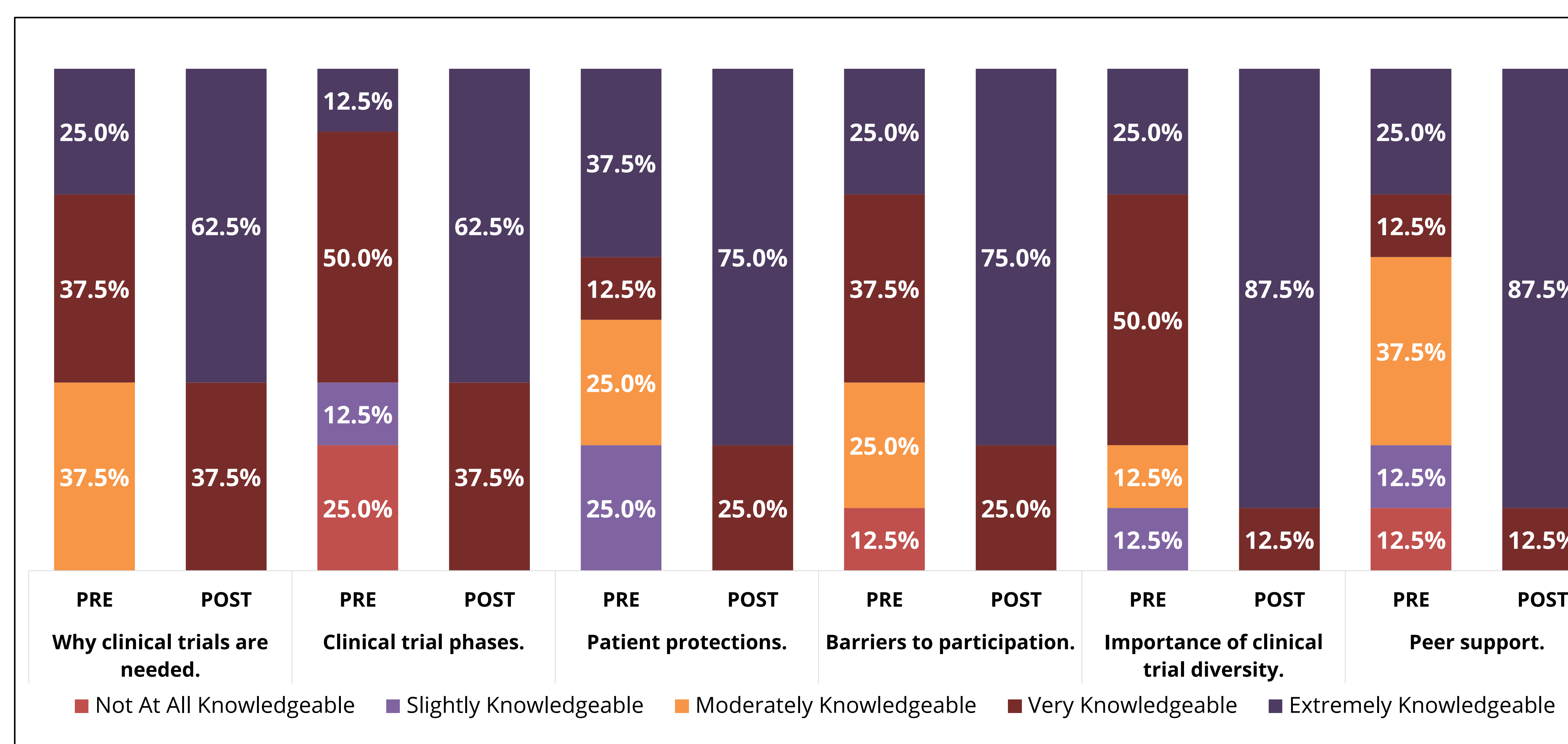
Overall Clinical Trial and Peer Support Knowledge



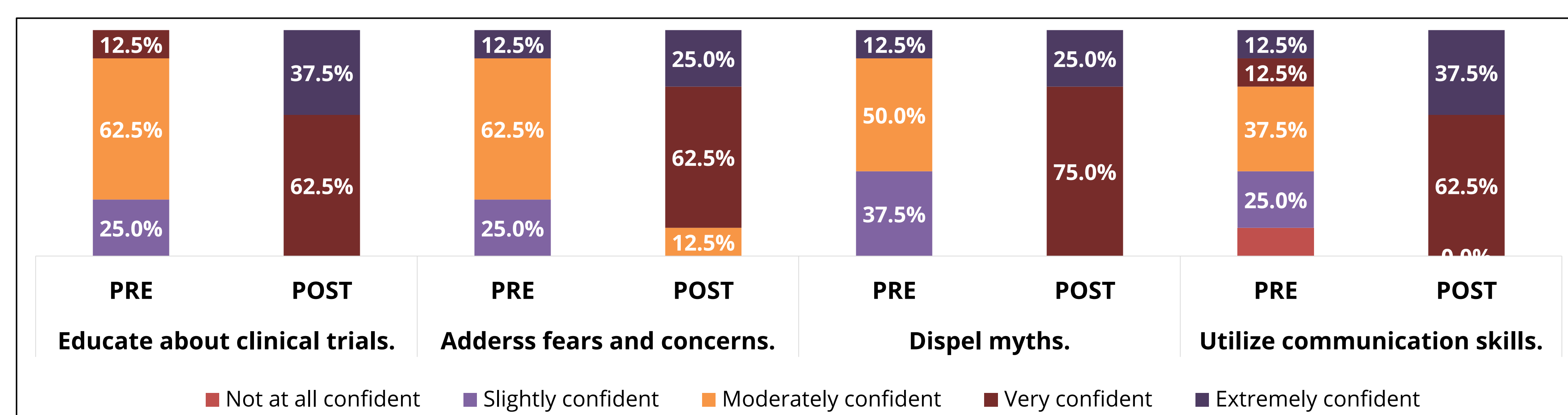
Training Satisfaction



Clinical Trial and Peer Support Knowledge Change By Question



Confidence in Helping Ability Change By Question



RESULTS, CONT.

- There is a notable shift to greater overall perceived knowledge among all participants, with more than half (66%) being extremely knowledgeable following the training. Participants averaged a 35% increase in knowledge levels overall.
- Participants' confidence in their helping ability increased overall, with 60% indicating they were very confident and 36% extremely confident following the training. Participants averaged a 41% increase in confidence levels overall.
- Both non-professionals and professionals reported knowledge and confidence growth, with non-professionals averaging 53% growth in knowledge and 171% growth in confidence, compared to 14% and 21% for professionals, respectively.
- Knowledge levels increased across all statements, with the most gains seen in patient protections, clinical trial diversity, and peer support.
- Most participants agreed (37.5%) or strongly agreed (50%) they were satisfied with the training and 100% of participants agreed/strongly agreed the training will help them provide better support to patients.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

- Cancer patients have various needs related to clinical trials; therefore, it is essential a peer training program train participants across multiple disciplines.
- Both non-professionals and professionals reported increased gains, suggesting the effectiveness of a peer training program for individuals of varying competencies and experiences.
- In development of a peer training program, time allotment should be considered to ensure all topics are covered appropriately.
- Given the success of the peer training program for the Black and African American community, additional research should be considered for other populations who are underrepresented in cancer clinical trials.

Acknowledgments

Support for the Peer Clinical Trials Support Program was provided by AstraZeneca, Bristol Myers Squibb, Eisai, Genentech, Lilly, Merck, and Novartis.

References

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