

Uptake of Closing the Gap - Medicines Access Program (CTG-MAP) in a Tertiary Australian Hospital

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Background

“Closing the Gap” (CTG) strategy aims for equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, in health and life expectancy.

CTG-MAP aims to improve access to medicines by making medicines affordable.

The optimal uptake of the program is unknown. At the Women’s and Children’s Health Network (WCHN), only 2-3% of prescriptions in 2020-21 were dispensed under the CTG label.

Objectives,

To determine the current knowledge of health professional’s working within WCHN, of the CTG-MAP. The following criterion were considered;

- Awareness of the existence of the CTG MAP
- Knowledge on who is eligible
- Whether it was in the Health professional’s scope of practice to annotate prescriptions as “CTG-MAP”
- What benefits the CTG-MAP access provides for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Method

A survey was developed, in collaboration with the Aboriginal Health Division, for healthcare workers at WCHN regarding their current knowledge, understanding and utilisation of the CTG-MAP as outlined in the objectives. It was distributed via ward educators, organisational committees, hospital newsletters and in person to nurses, doctors and pharmacists. It was requested that they complete the survey without consulting resources. Responses were anonymous with participants indicating their professional group only. Statements about eligibility were clustered according to what the respondent thought.

Figure 1: Survey Questions

Q1: Do you know that there is a medicine access program that helps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with the cost of medicines when being discharged from, or attending an outpatient clinic, at South Australian (SA) public hospitals?

Q2: Do you know who is eligible for the CTG-MAP?

Q3: Is it in your scope of practice to annotate a script for CTG-MAP for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

Q4: What does this eligibility give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people access to?

RESULTS

Total Responses= 71

- Nurses: 33 (46.5%)
- Doctors: 23 (32.4%)
- Pharmacists: 15 (21.1%)

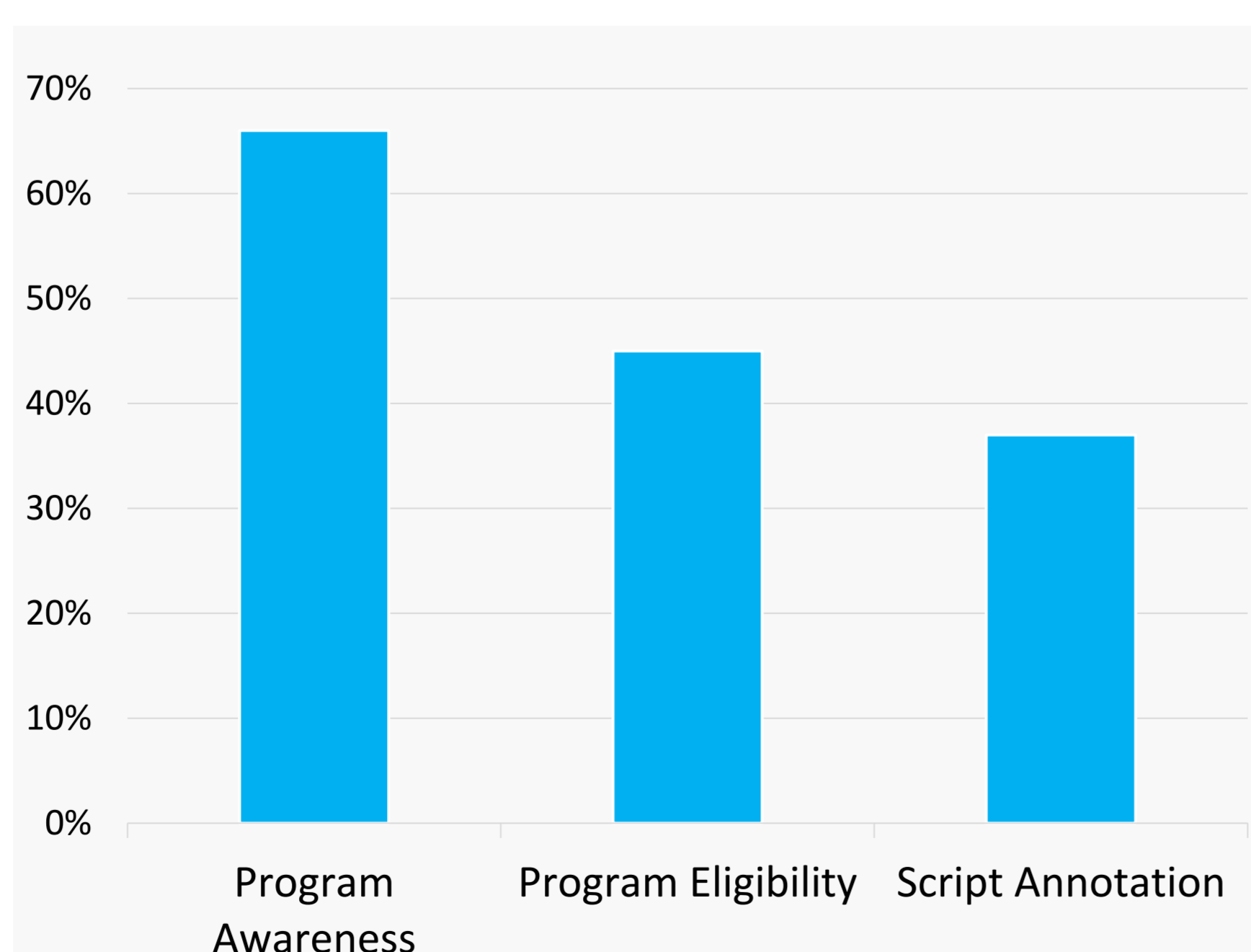


Figure 2A: Overall results of questions 1 to 3

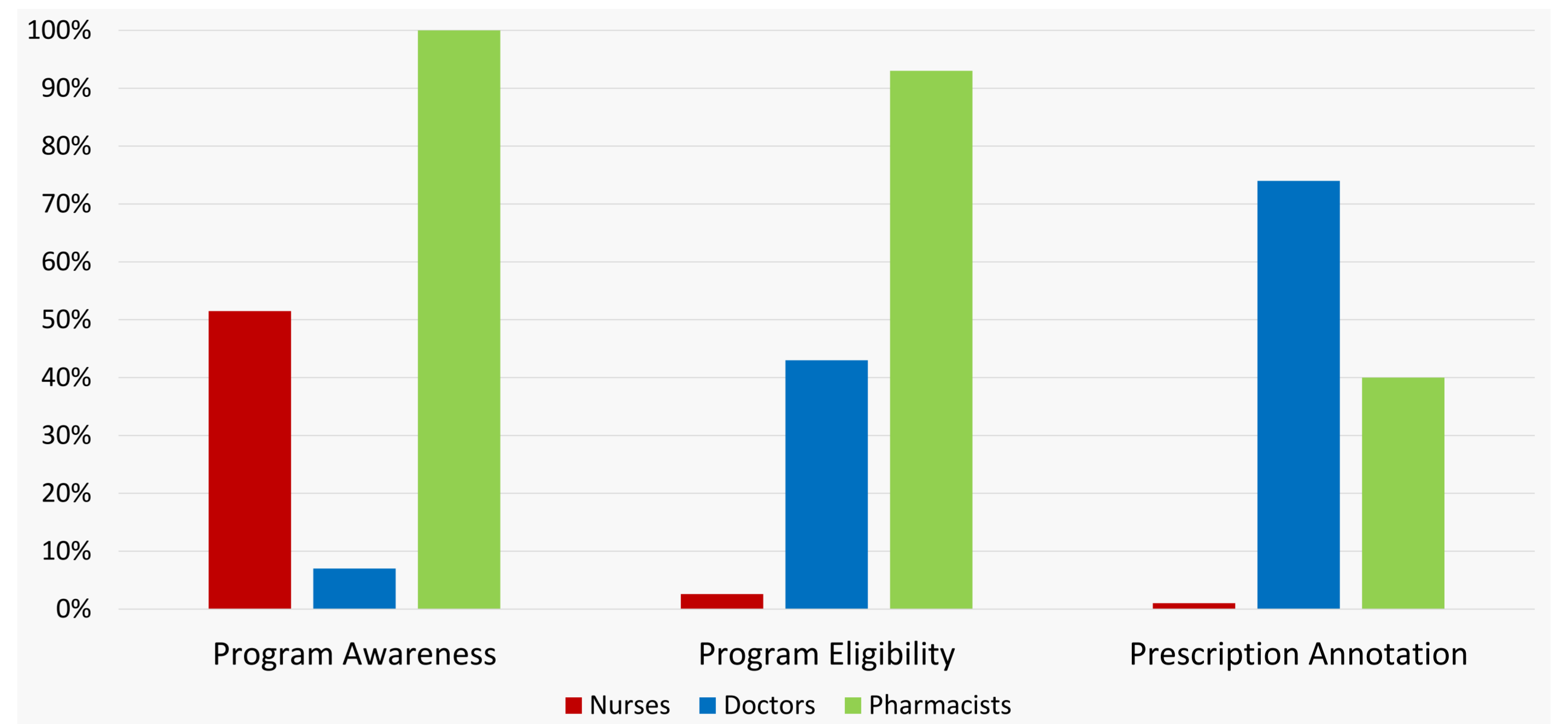


Figure 2B: Results of questions 1 to 3 broken down by professional groups

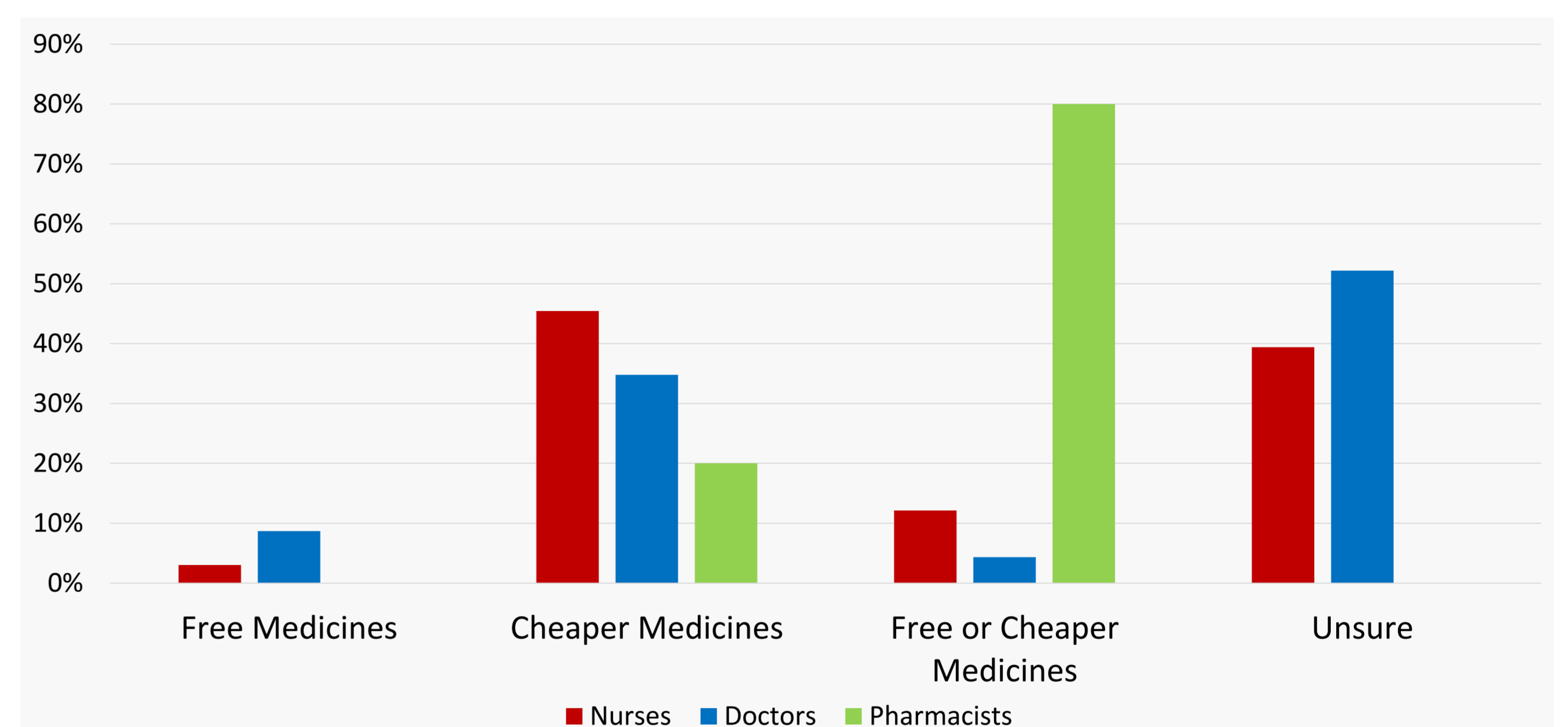


Figure 3: Perceived eligibility benefits (Q4) broken down by profession

- ❖ 66% of all staff were aware of CTG-MAP and had some idea of its benefits. 45% knew who was eligible.
- ❖ 7% of doctors were aware of CTG-MAP and 43% knew who was eligible, noting the answer was “given away” in Q1. Most were unaware of the benefits and 74% believed they could annotate the prescriptions with “CTG”.
- ❖ Over half of the nurses were aware of the benefits but not the eligibility for CTG-MAP. 61% knew it helped with the medicines costs but not that they could annotate prescriptions.
- ❖ Pharmacists knew about the program including benefits and eligibility. 40% felt they could annotate prescriptions and others would contact the prescriber to confirm and annotate with consent

Discussion

Annotation of scripts for CTG benefits from the SA Health Pharmacies can be completed by all healthcare professionals. Different professional groups have varying degree of confidence in annotating the scripts for the same.

Education and awareness needs to be undertaken to increase staff knowledge and confidence in prescription annotation, for the eligible patients to get optimal benefit. Education needs to be specific to different professional groups and developed in consultation with the Aboriginal Health Division.

Acknowledgements

All staff who participated in they survey