

Introduction

The World Council of Optometry (WCO) in 2021 began to focus on the growing prevalence of myopia and the need to shift from considering pediatric myopia as simply a refractive error, to a condition which may be slowed and ultimately help reduce the visually compromising conditions that occur in association with myopia.¹ In an effort to maximize our efforts, WCO and CooperVision (CV) have collaborated to address the growing pandemic.

Methods

Efforts to move optometry towards adopting myopia management as a standard of care include signing and ongoing dissemination of a WCO resolution which advocates for staying abreast of evidence-based methods for the diagnosis and management of myopia and the WCO myopia microsite (<https://myopia.worldcouncilofoptometry.info/>) in which current research is translated into usable practice tools.²

In February 2022, a four-hour virtual seminar 'Myopia Management: Putting it into practice' was conducted. Designed to span multiple time-zones, speakers with expertise in the field of myopia presented on a variety of topics with a focus on usable clinical research, techniques and educational information that aligned to the mitigation, measurement and management pillars of the WCO resolution. (Figure 1)

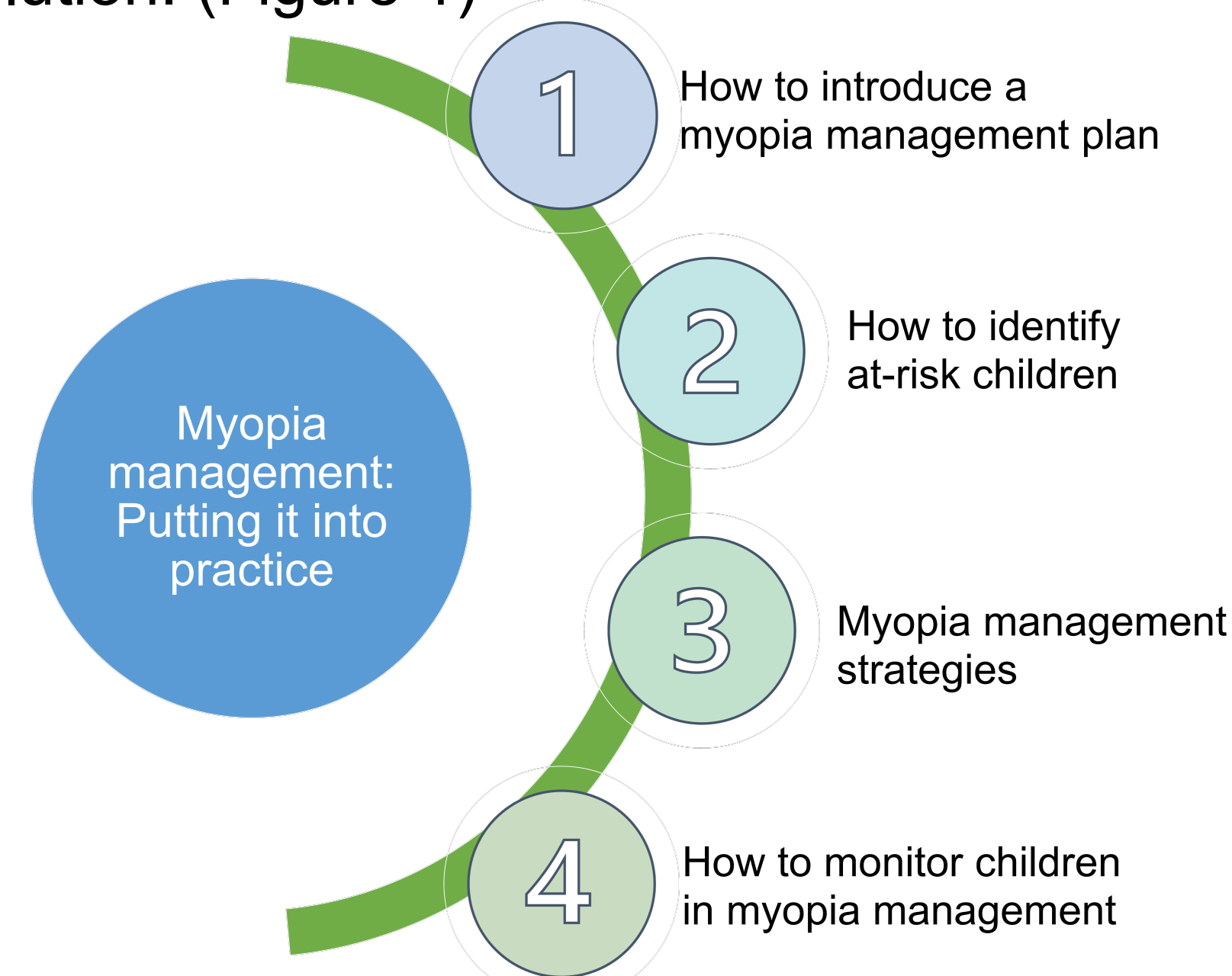


Figure 1. Lecture program

To measure the impact of the educational content from the program on clinical practice, 2 online surveys were fielded, one ahead of the event (pre-event survey) and one immediately following the event (post-event survey). Questions sought to capture an understanding of the demographics of the audience, participants' level of engagement with myopia management, and any changes to attitudes following the seminar.



Lectures can be viewed on-demand by scanning the QR code

Results

1,245 individuals, representing 95 countries attended the seminar. 375 participants responded to the pre-survey of which 326 (86.9%) were practicing eye care professionals and 53.6% were female. There were 257 responses to the post-survey questionnaire of which 231 (89.9%) were practicing eye care professionals and 51.9% were female (Figure 2 and 3). Approximately half of those attending the seminar (45.6%) had 10 years or less in-practice experience. (Figure 4)

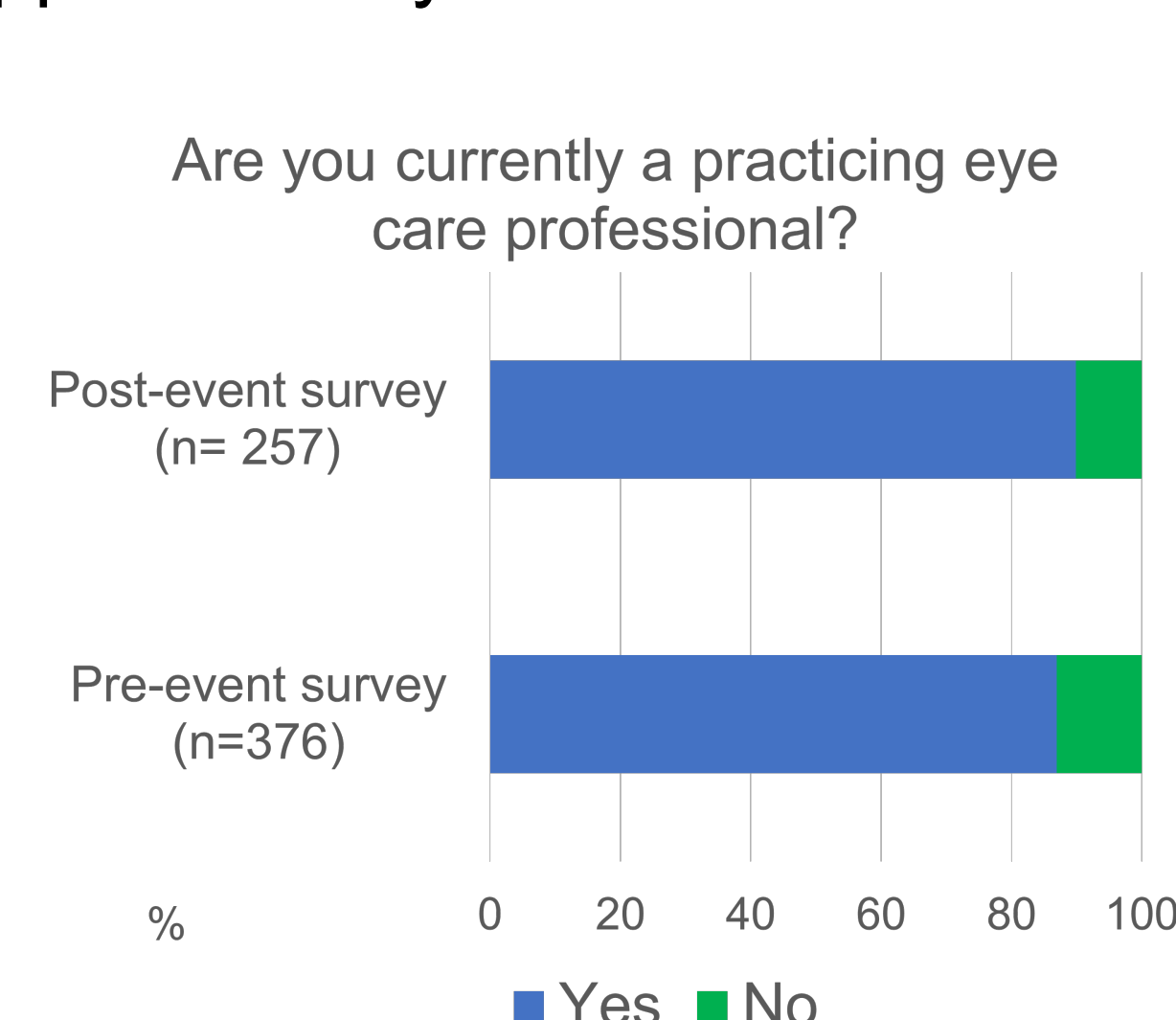


Figure 2

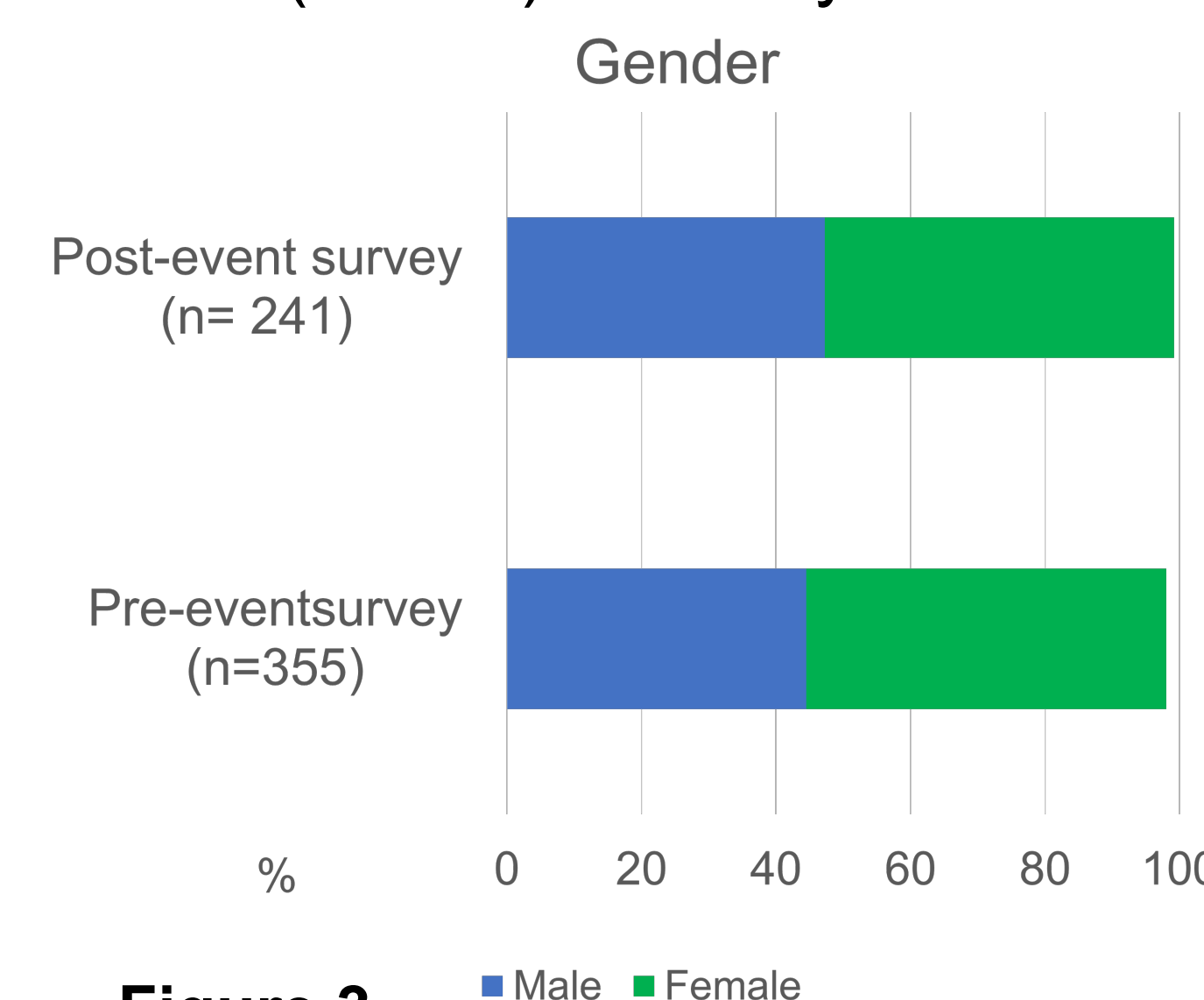


Figure 3

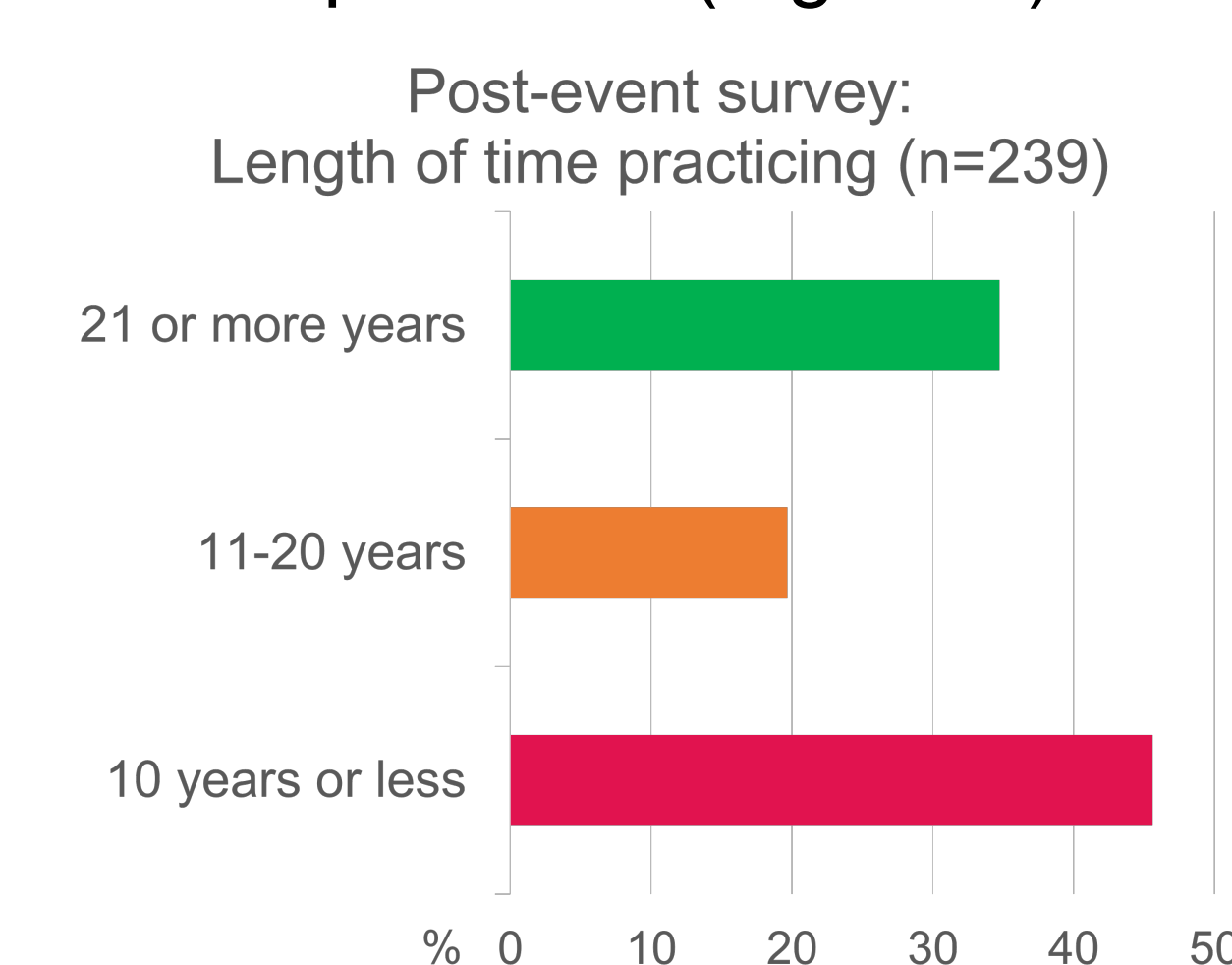


Figure 4

The majority of delegates who responded to the pre-event survey were already offering a range of myopia management options in their practices (Figures 5 and 6). Reasons for not offering myopia management are shown in figure 7 with the need to learn more the biggest barrier (76%) .

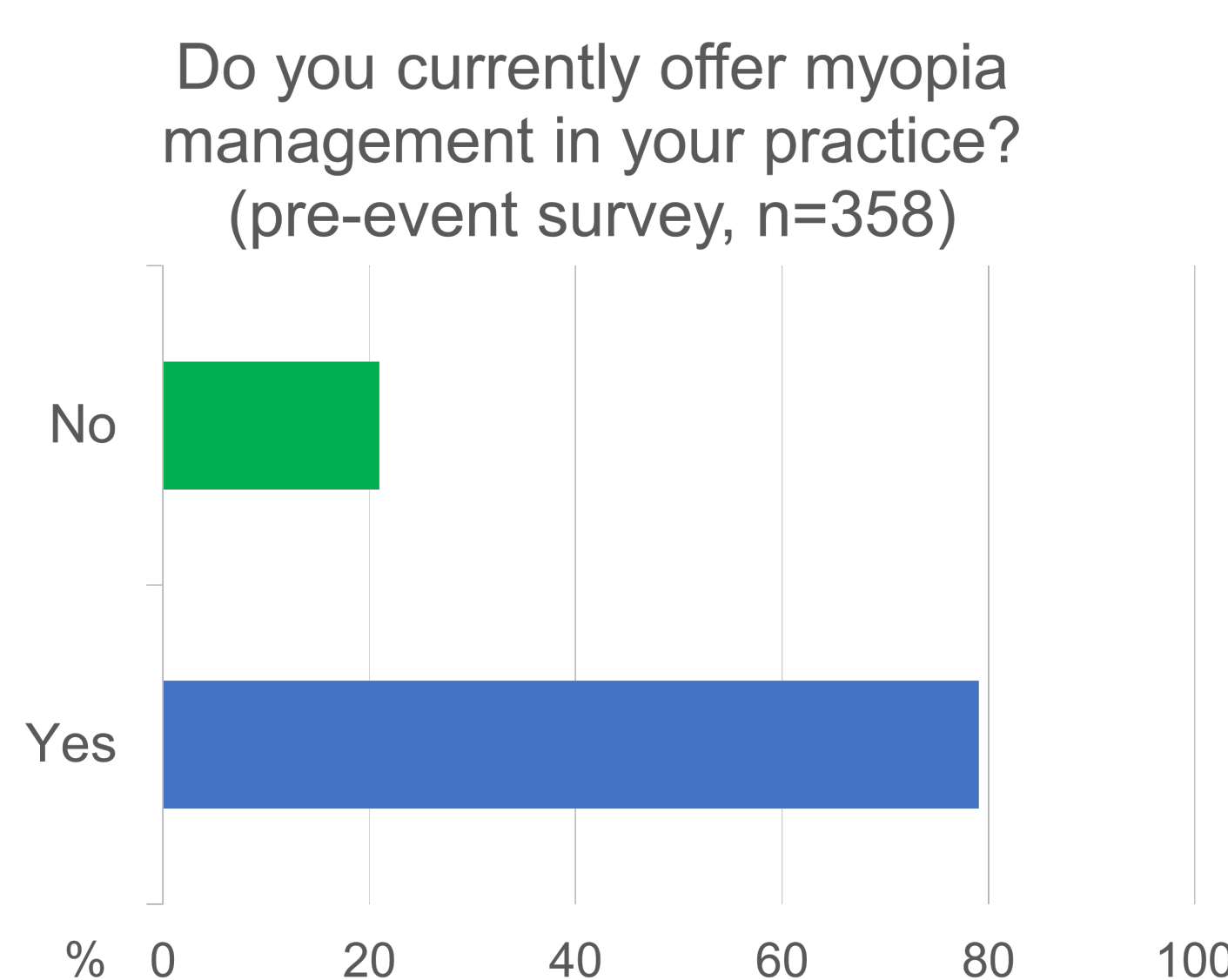


Figure 5

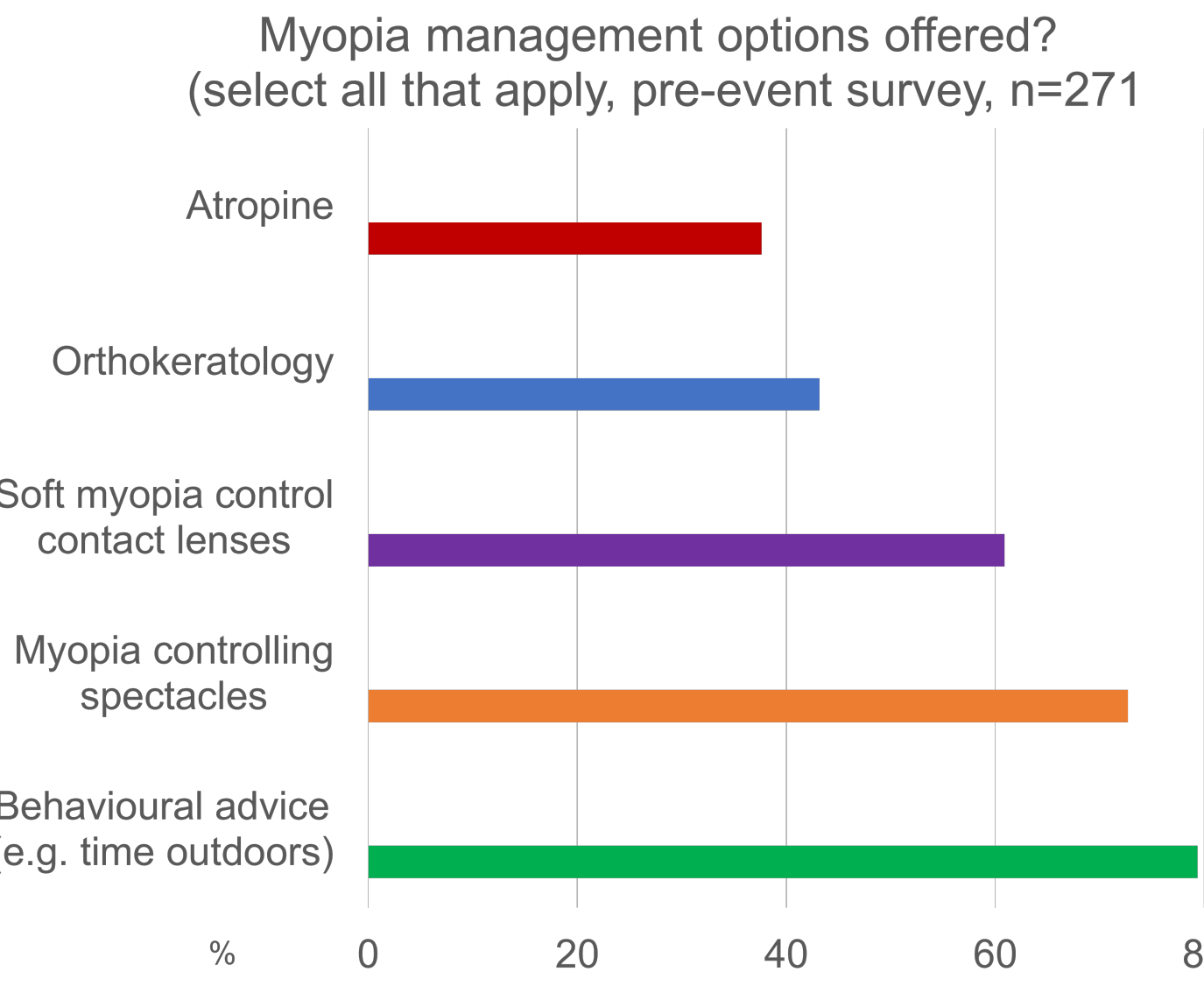


Figure 6

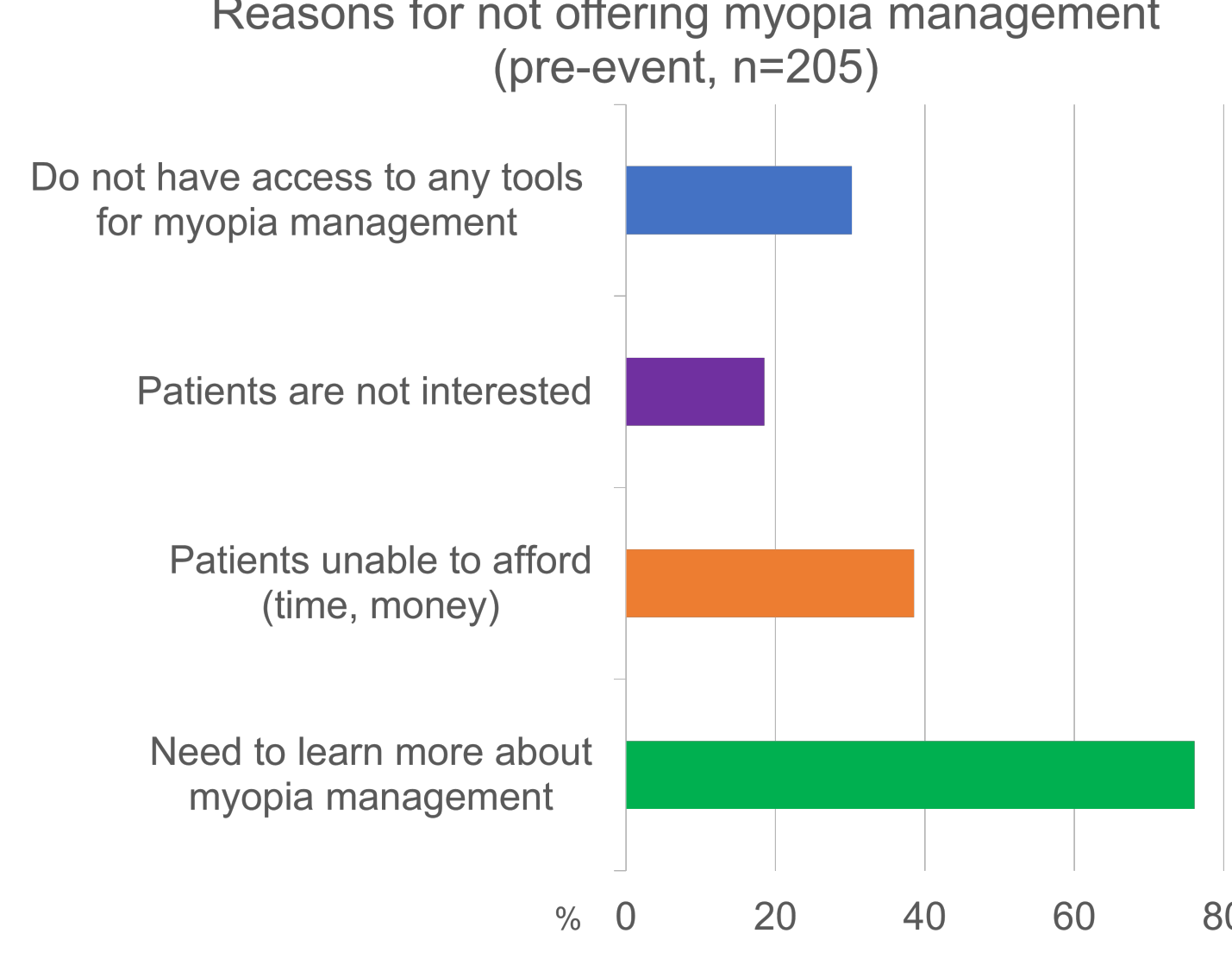


Figure 7

Post survey, 96% of delegates who were already engaging in myopia management were likely to change their current approach (figure 8) and 83% of those yet to incorporate myopia management were inspired to incorporate myopia management in their practices (figure 9). 83% of the pre-survey group responded that they 'strongly agree' and 13% 'somewhat agree' that myopia management should be the standard of care. On the post survey, these increased to 87% strongly agree and 9% somewhat agree (figure 10).

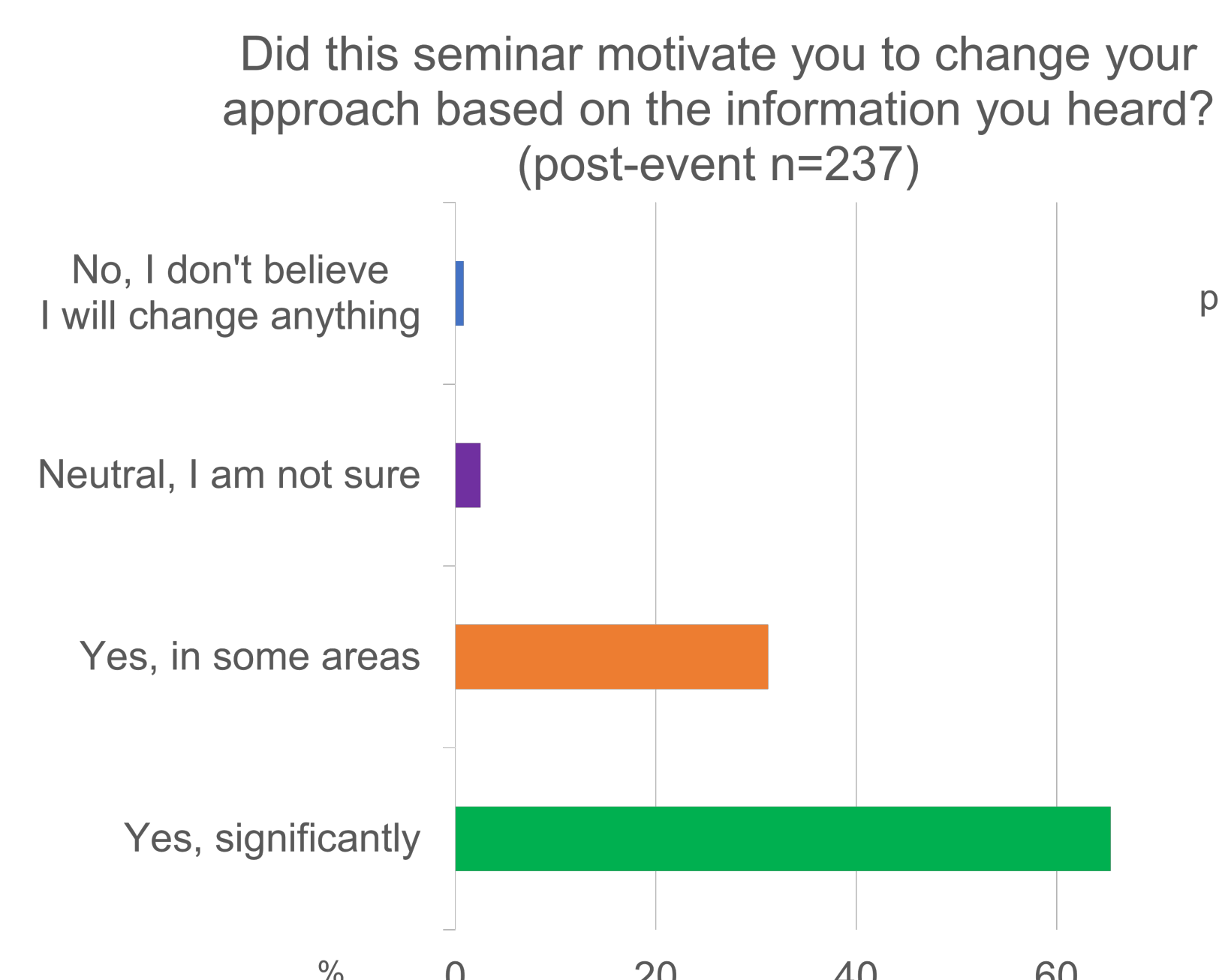


Figure 8

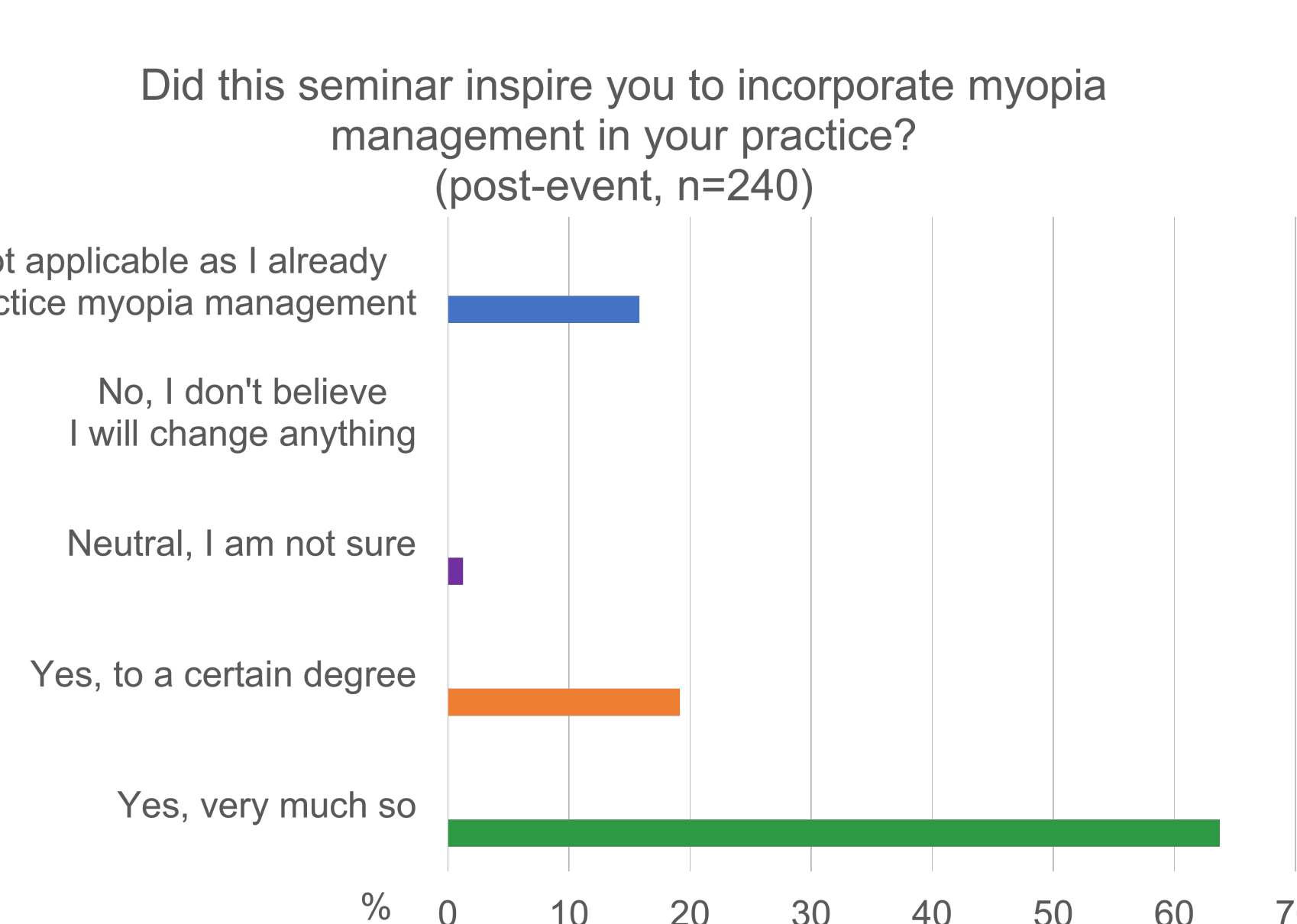


Figure 9

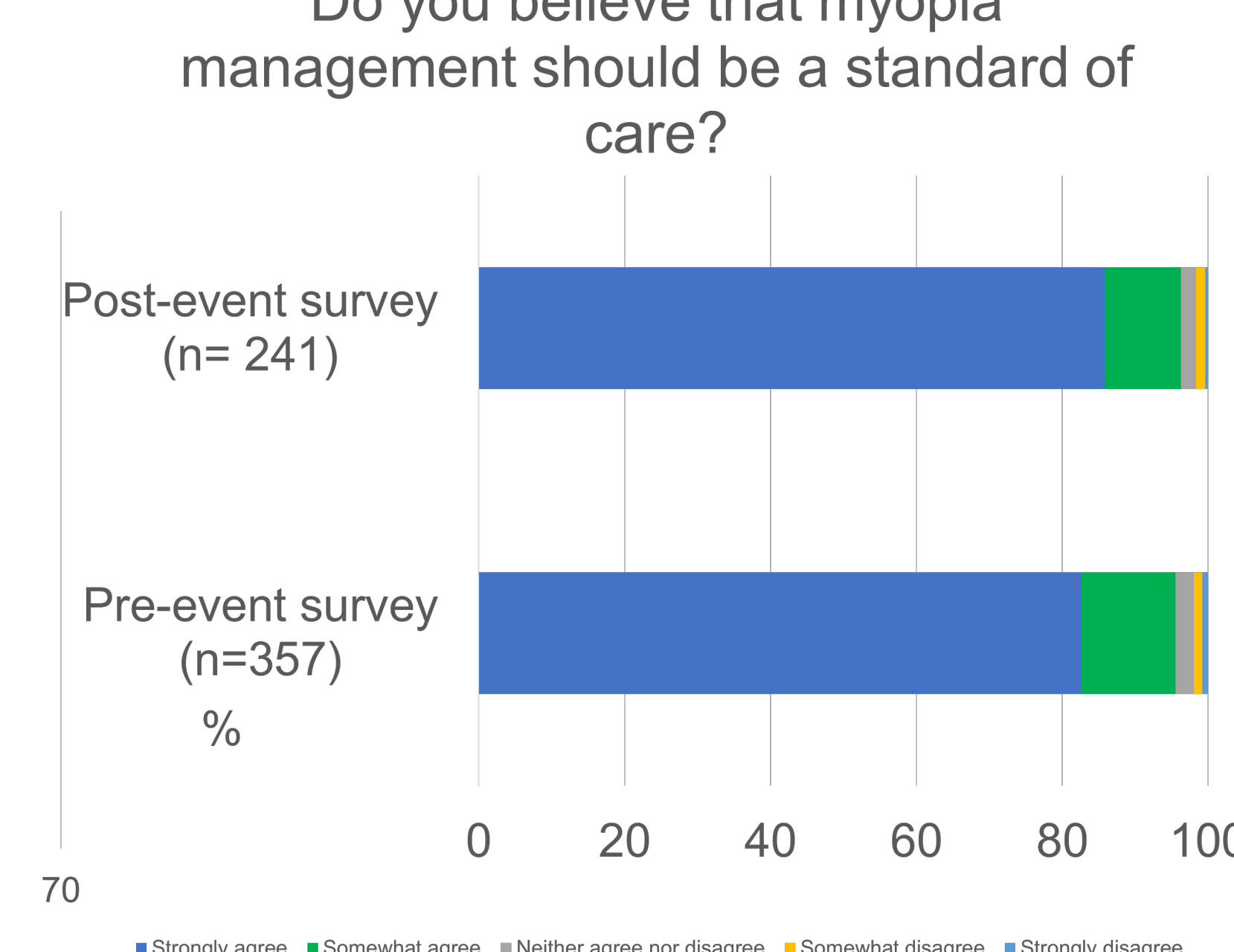


Figure 10

Discussion

There are clear indicators that despite high levels of engagement with myopia management among delegates who attended the seminar, eye care professionals (ECPs) have an appetite for ongoing education.

The authors appreciate there are limitations in drawing conclusions from survey responses where those completing were likely self-selected with the majority declaring active engagement in myopia management. Nevertheless, whether active or not, the results of the survey demonstrated that the ECPs felt on-going learning about managing childhood myopia was important. There was a strong positive response from those yet to engage with myopia management following the seminar demonstrating the impact of evidence-based educational content.

One concern in interpreting the results was the high number of respondents from the Philippines which was driven through local activity.

Conclusion

In order to move the profession towards embracing myopia management as a standard of care, the optometry sector should be mindful to create accessible, multi-platform evidence-based educational resources that reflect the fast-based growth of knowledge in how to approach the management of progressive myopia.

References:

1. Flitcroft DI. The complex interactions of retinal, optical and environmental factors in myopia aetiology. Prog Retin Eye Res. 2012 Nov;31(6):622-60.
2. Block S., et al. Development and Introduction of World Council of Optometry Resolution on Myopia Management Standard of Care. Optom Vis Sci 2022; :E-abstract 05215016

Correspondence:

WCO: Sandra S. Block, OD, M Ed, MPH, FAAO, FCOVD, FNAP
Email: sblock@ico.edu