

# Getting to Satisfaction: Collecting and Interpreting Referrer Satisfaction Data

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## Background

The Inpatient Palliative Care (PC) team at Primary Children's Hospital recognized the importance of the experience of referring providers. A tool was designed to measure satisfaction and collect feedback from providers who might potentially refer to its service. It was the hypothesis that satisfaction with the service was high, but opportunities for improvement could be found by eliciting feedback.

## Objectives

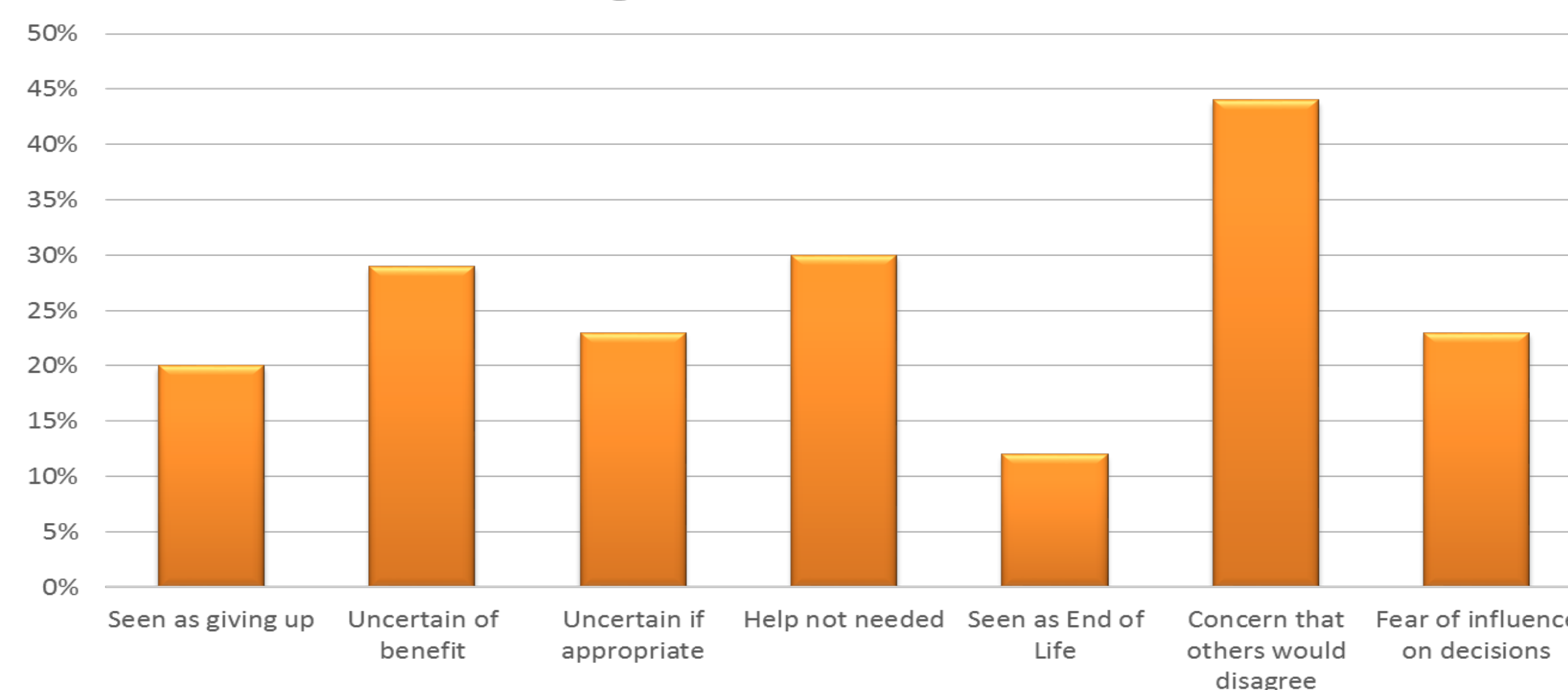
1. Explore perspectives of those who refer to PC regarding:
  - Factors Influencing Referral
  - Impact on Care Team
  - Perceived Impact on Families
2. Understand satisfaction of referring providers
  - Measure satisfaction in providers and families that use PC
  - Collect feedback from providers that use or will use PC

## Methods

- Prospective cohort study of providers that use PC consulting (past, present and future)
- Survey sent to Division Chiefs and Faculty
- Divisions enrolled at Primary Children's Hospital from 1/24/2014- 2/28/2014
- The survey was administered using "SurveyMonkey"
- Survey used:
  - Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no response
  - Yes/No items
  - Open-ended feedback
- Response rate: 33% (128/393)

## Results

Factors Influencing Referral at Least Some of the Time



## Open Ended Responses

### Improving services:

- Have better communication with providers/care teams
- Increase access to PC services
- More thorough and timely chart notes and more frequent conversations with the referring/treating team
- PC team to be available on weekends, evenings, and/or having an increased on-call presence

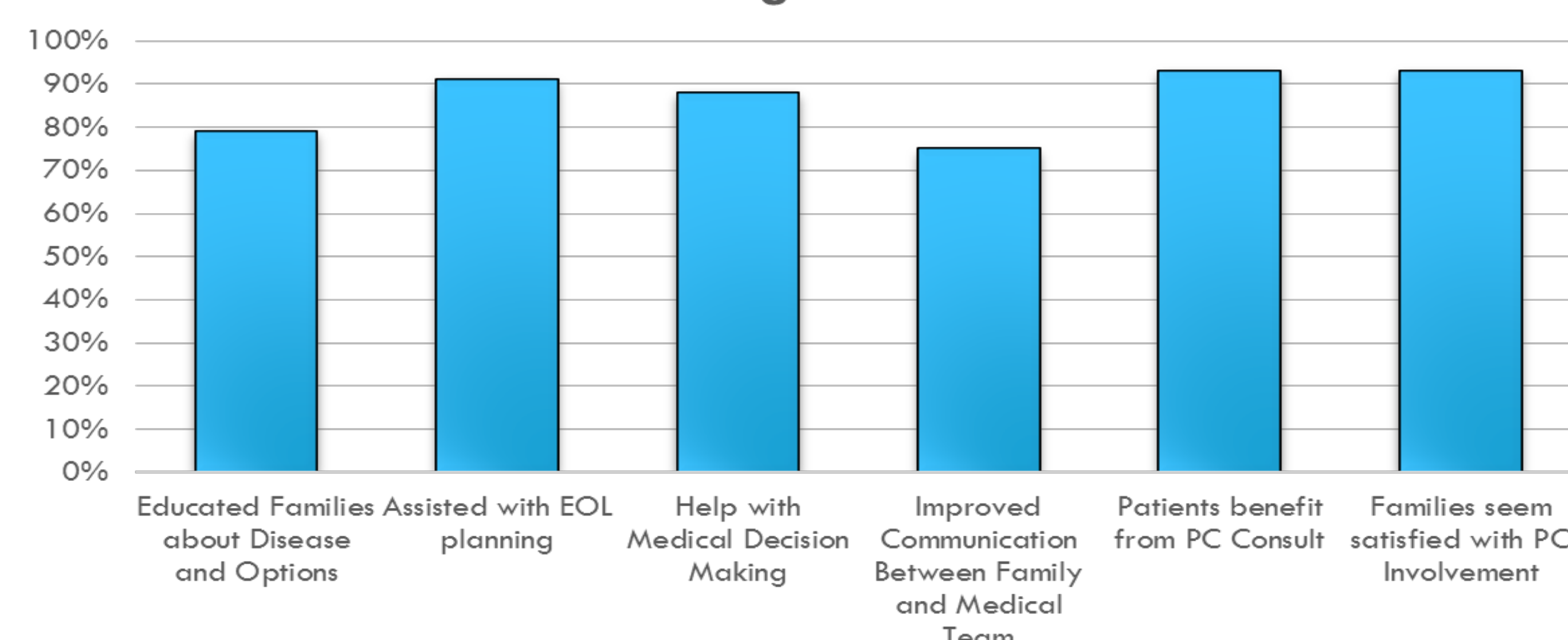
### Strength of PC:

- Supports of families and staff
- "helping families sort out pros/cons within the huge amount of data provided..."
- "I've learned new ways to talk about problems, how to answer families' questions by observing interactions between [the PC team] and my patients"
- "They make the hospital and our care better"

Impact on Care Team: Providers Agree or Strongly Agree



Impact on Families: Providers Agreed or Strongly Agreed



## Discussions

**Satisfaction as a Metric:** Satisfaction is an important concept in healthcare, but rarely addresses providers. There are a few issues regarding satisfaction as a metric. The first is the difficulty of pleasing everyone. While the current service structure seems to work well for most, there is a group who feel they need more. Satisfaction is also limited because it does not always reflect quality of care. There will be times when PC teams are not popular with families and providers despite providing quality care.

**Barriers to referral:** The major theme that emerged was provider perception/understanding. A portion of the education done by PC teams for providers is aimed at dispelling misinformation and providing useful criteria for referral. This survey shows there is still work to be done.

**PC Team Impact on Patients and Families:** Ninety-three percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that patients benefitted from PC consults. One respondent wrote that, "they offer a good bridge between medical recommendations for care ... and the patient's and patient family's wishes." Some providers felt that a referral to the service has at times caused conflict or complicated care plans. Complicating a medical plan can happen with any specialist, but may be more pronounced with the PC team focus on the view of the family and their values.

**PC Team Impact on Providers:** The majority of the providers felt that the PC team had supported them emotionally with difficult cases and noted that PC team involvement increased provider confidence in the provision of comfort care. The PC team was perceived as improving understanding of the patient's goals of care and communication between families and providers.

## Conclusion

The tool was effective in measuring satisfaction among referring physicians and for collecting actionable information. For example, based on feedback the PC team underwent a QI project to improve charting. This tool could be successfully used by other adult and pediatric PC teams who are interested in improving the quality of service provided in their institution.