



SASKATCHEWAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

SURVEY RESULTS

IMPROVING ACCESS TO SPECIALISTS AND
DIAGNOSTICS INITIATIVE – FALL RA 2017

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Title: director, economics

Date: 2017.11.21



SASKATCHEWAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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November 2, 2017

Re: Survey - Improving Access to Specialists and Diagnostics Initiative

Dear colleagues,

As the physician co-chairs of the Ministry of Health's *Improving Access to Specialists and Diagnostics Initiative*, we are writing to you to request two minutes of your time to fill-out the attached survey. The results will provide us with valuable information as we identify goals and objectives for the *Initiative* over the coming months.

By way of background, the *Initiative* is working to reduce the wait time to access specialist and diagnostic services by 50% by March 31, 2019. In February 2016, a provincial physician-to-physician telephone consultation service called *Leveraging Immediate Non-urgent Knowledge* (LINK) started piloting. The intent of LINK is to offer family physicians timely access to specialists in order to consult on acute or complex non-urgent patient health concerns.

As a next step, the *Initiative* joined the *Connected Medicine Collaborative*, a 15-month national effort led by the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (CFHI) spreading the use of eConsults. As part of the *Collaborative*, we will study how eConsults (i.e. secure email or texts) can be added to LINK and further support physician-to-physician consultations. Ultimately, we hope these projects will contribute towards a reduction in first consult wait times and health system costs.

Physician leadership, advice and direction will be crucial to achieving success in this *Initiative*. We know how busy you are, and appreciate you sharing your time and experience with us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kishore Visvanathan & Dr. Sean Groves
Co-chairs, *Improving Access to Specialists and Diagnostics Initiative*

Encl (1)



- SURVEY -
IMPROVING ACCESS TO SPECIALISTS AND DIAGNOSTICS INITIATIVE
(Non-urgent cases)

FAMILY PHYSICIAN SURVEY:

1. Have you ever had a challenging clinical case in which advice from a specialist would be welcome, yet your patient may not need a face-to-face consultation with that specialist?

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

- a) If YES, how often does this happen in your practice?

- ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS
- ☐ OFTEN
- ☐ SOMETIMES
- ☐ RARELY

- b) In the clinical cases described in question #1, have you found it easy to get timely clinical advice from the specialist?

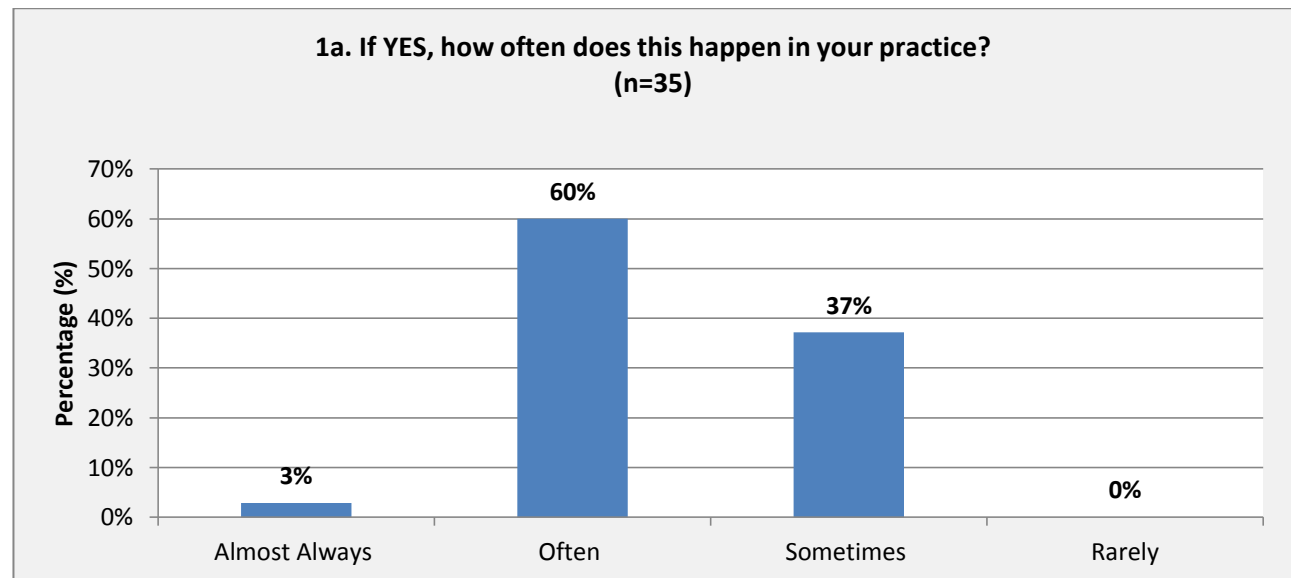
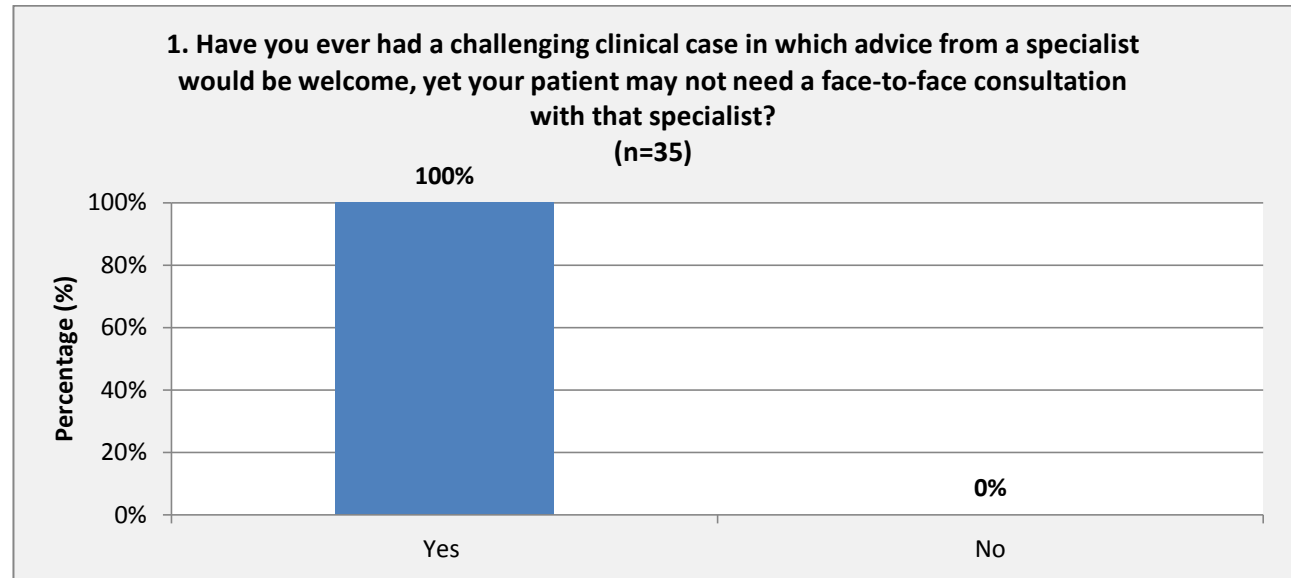
- ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS
- ☐ OFTEN
- ☐ SOMETIMES
- ☐ RARELY

- c) In the clinical cases described in question #1, how would you prefer to communicate with the specialist? Please select all that apply:

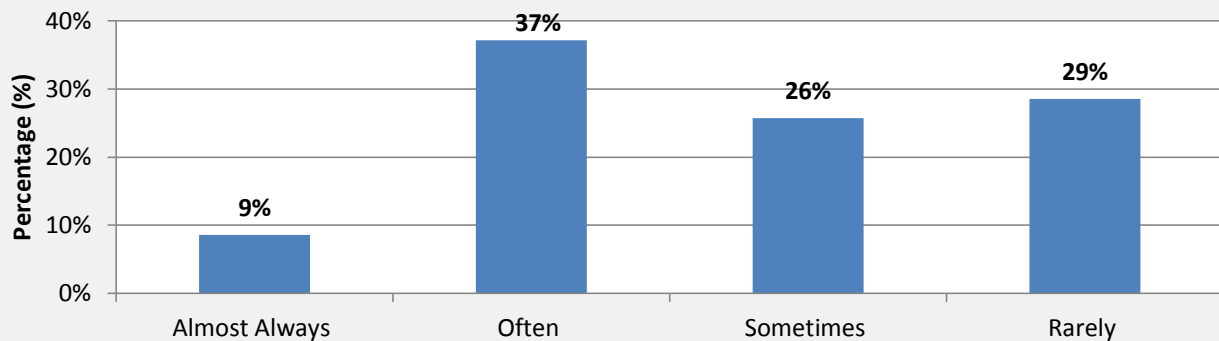
- ☐ TELEPHONE
- ☐ TEXT
- ☐ E-MAIL
- ☐ FAX
- ☐ ELECTRONICALLY VIA EMR

Thank you for your participation!

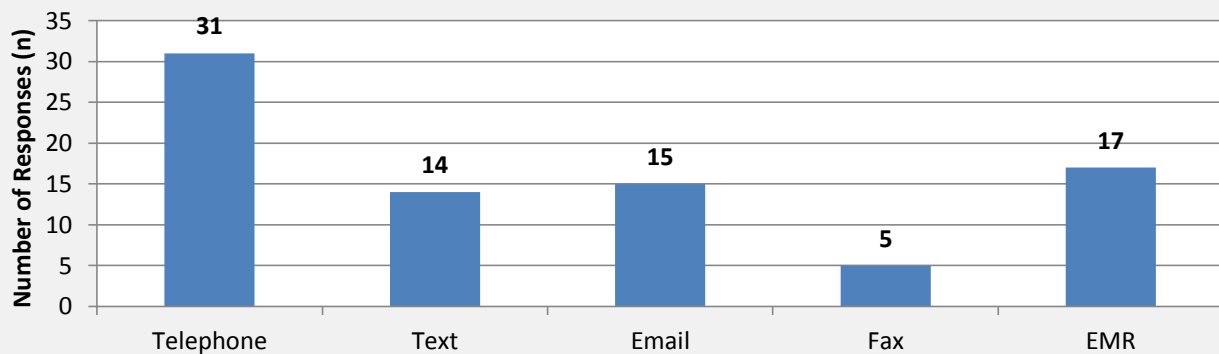
FAMILY PHYSICIAN SURVEY RESULTS (n=35):



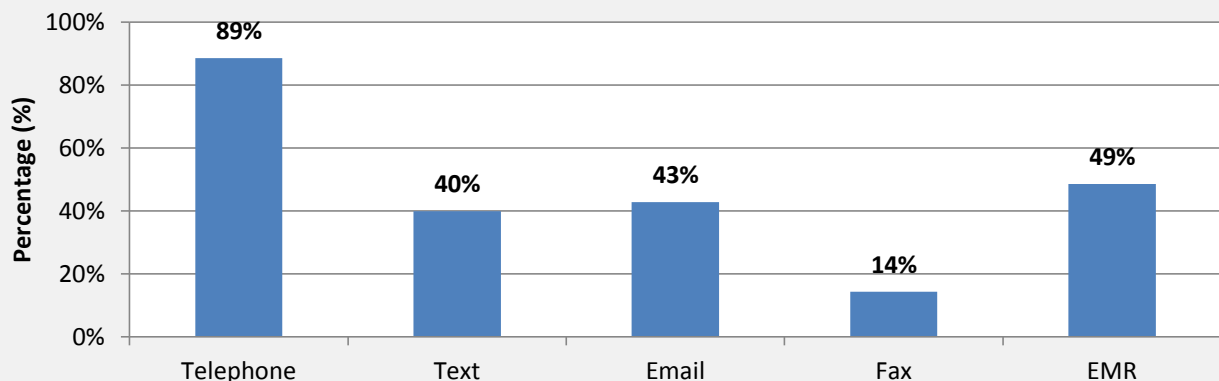
1b. In the clinical cases described in question #1, have you found it easy to get timely clinical advice from the specialist?
(n=35)



1c. In the clinical cases described in question #1, how would you prefer to communicate with the specialist? Please select all that apply:



1c. In the clinical cases described in question #1, how would you prefer to communicate with the specialist? Please select all that apply:



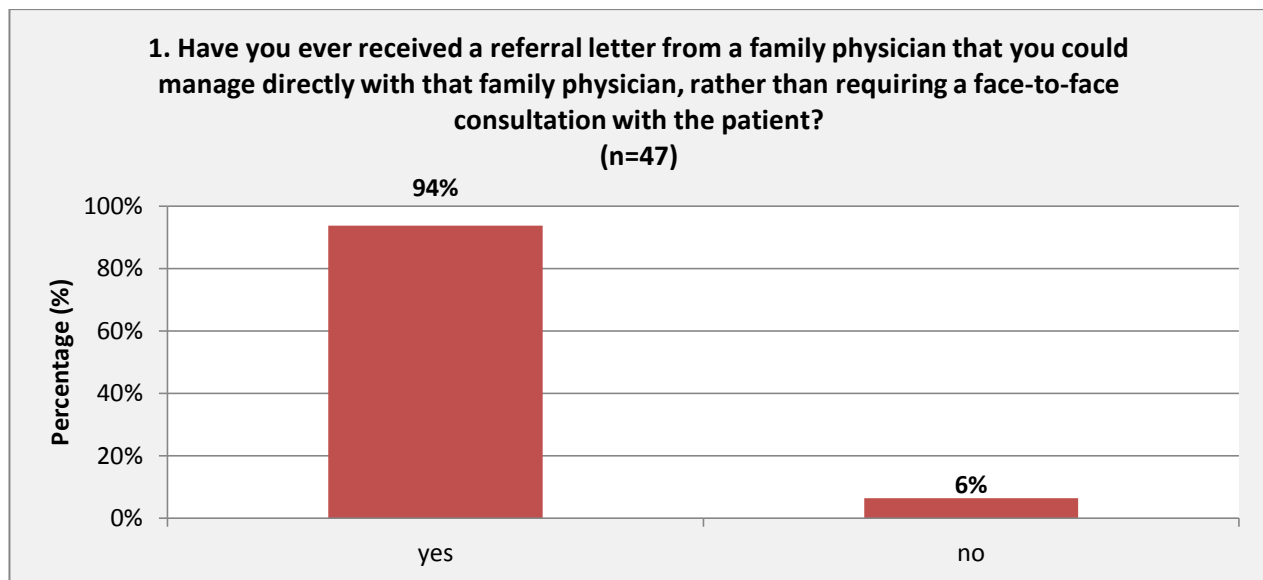
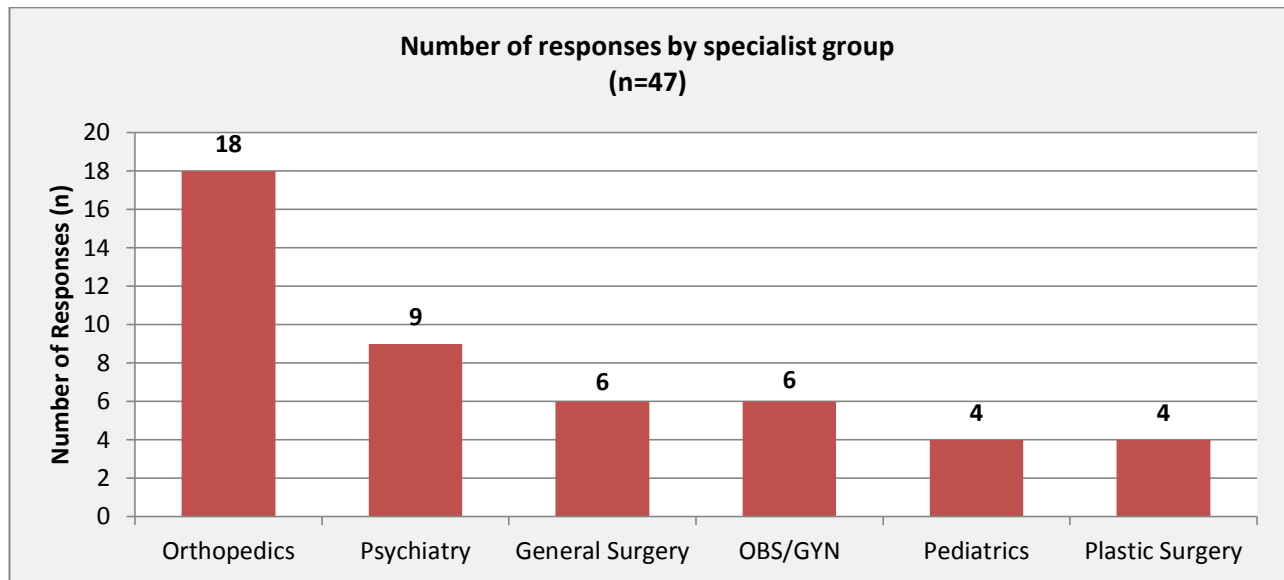
SPECIALIST / CONSULTANT SURVEY:

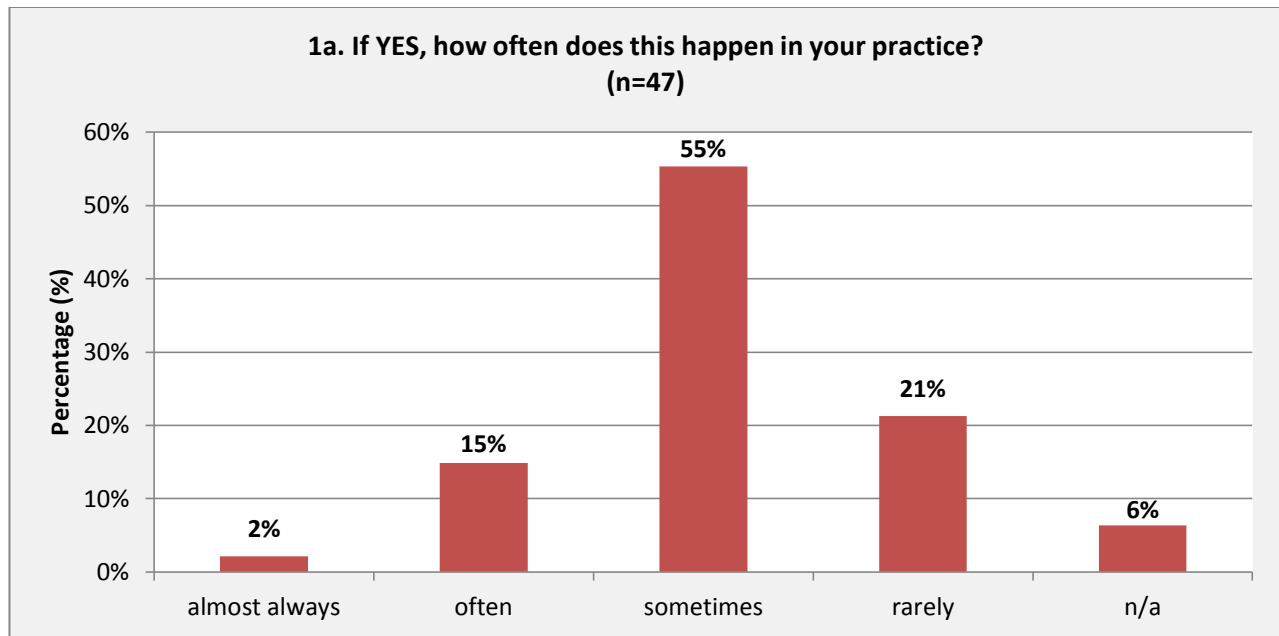
Please state your area of specialty: _____

1. Have you ever received a referral letter from a family physician that you could manage directly with that family physician, rather than requiring a face-to-face consultation with the patient?
 - ☐ YES
 - ☐ NO
 - a) If YES, how often does this happen in your practice?
 - ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS
 - ☐ OFTEN
 - ☐ SOMETIMES
 - ☐ RARELY
 - b) In the clinical cases described in question #1, have you found it easy to provide timely clinical advice to the family physician?
 - ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS
 - ☐ OFTEN
 - ☐ SOMETIMES
 - ☐ RARELY
 - c) In the clinical cases described in question #1, how would you prefer to communicate with the family physician? Please select all that apply:
 - ☐ TELEPHONE
 - ☐ TEXT
 - ☐ EMAIL
 - ☐ FAX
 - ☐ ELECTRONICALLY VIA EMR
2. Regarding completeness, how often do referral letters contain enough information to determine whether a face-to-face consultation with the patient is necessary?
 - ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS
 - ☐ OFTEN
 - ☐ SOMETIMES
 - ☐ RARELY

Thank you for your participation!

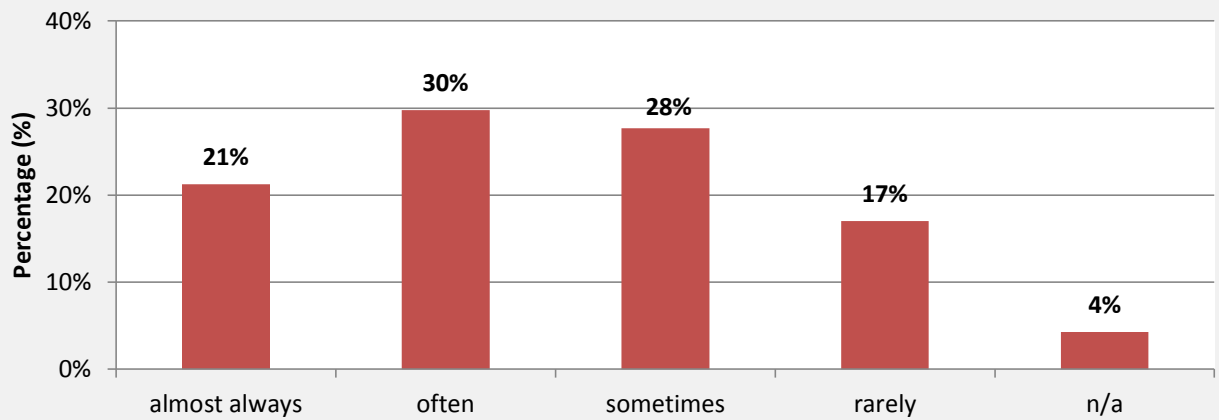
SPECIALIST / CONSULTANT SURVEY (n=47):





Question 1a	Orthopedics	Psychiatry	General Surgery	OBS/GYN	Pediatrics	Plastic Surgery	Total
almost always	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
often	4	1	0	0	1	1	7
sometimes	11	1	5	6	1	2	26
rarely	3	4	0	0	2	1	10
n/a	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
Total	18	9	6	6	4	4	47

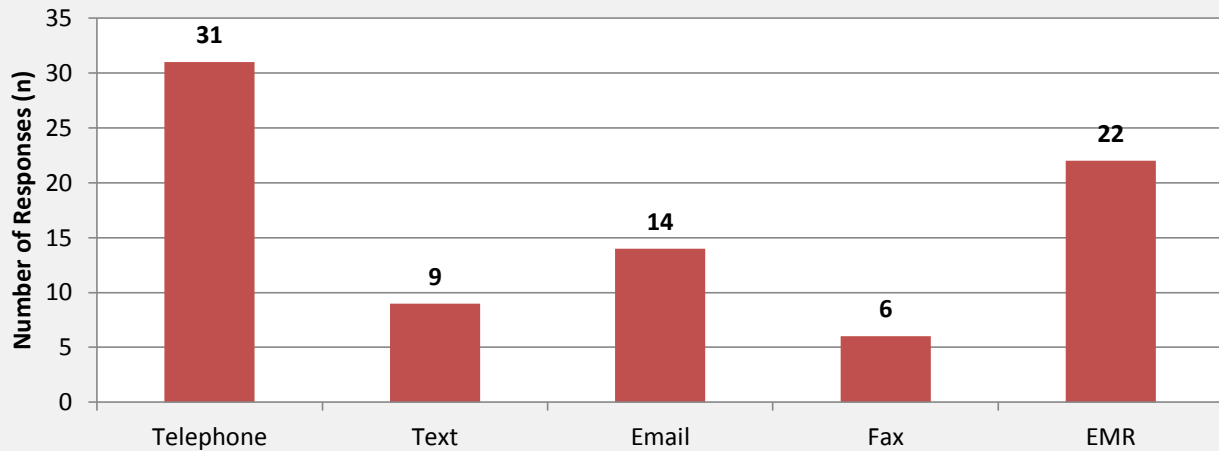
**1b. In the clinical cases described in question #1, have you found it easy to provide timely clinical advice to the family physician?
(n=47)**



Question 1b (n)	Orthopedics	Psychiatry	General Surgery	OBS/GYN	Pediatrics	Plastic Surgery	Total
almost always	2	2	1	1	0	4	10
often	8	2	2	1	1	0	14
sometimes	5	3	1	3	1	0	13
rarely	3	0	2	1	2	0	8
n/a	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Total	18	9	6	6	4	4	47

Question 1b (%)	Orthopedics	Psychiatry	General Surgery	OBS/GYN	Pediatrics	Plastic Surgery	Total
almost always	11%	22%	17%	17%	0%	100%	21%
often	44%	22%	33%	17%	25%	0%	30%
sometimes	28%	33%	17%	50%	25%	0%	28%
rarely	17%	0%	33%	17%	50%	0%	17%
n/a	0%	22%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

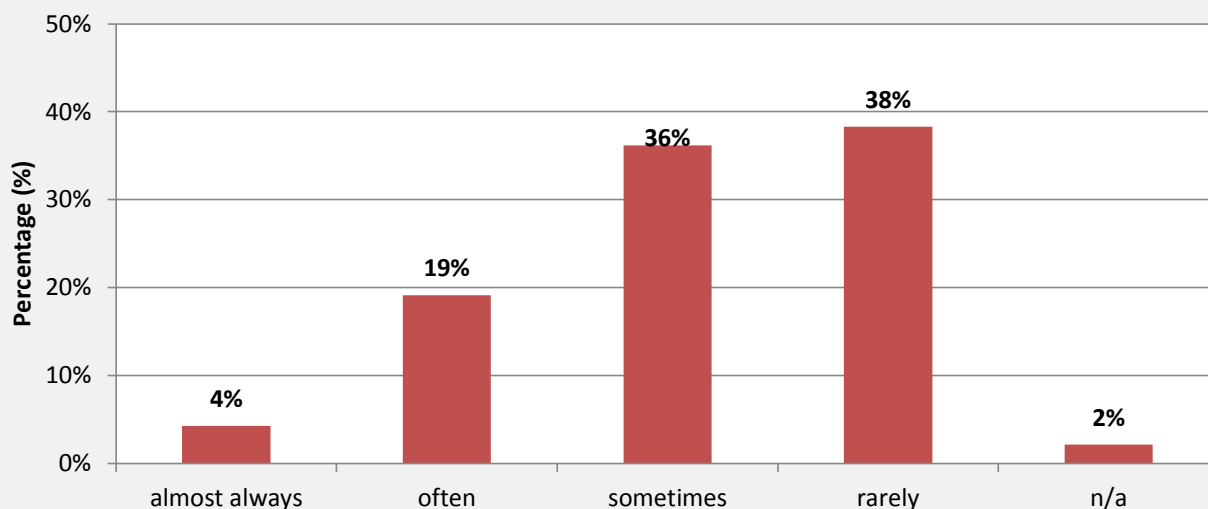
1c. In the clinical cases described in question #1, how would you prefer to communicate with the family physician? Please select all that apply:



Question 1c (n)	Orthopedics	Psychiatry	General Surgery	OBS/GYN	Pediatrics	Plastic Surgery	Total
Telephone	9	7	5	4	3	3	31
Text	6	0	2	0	0	1	9
Email	9	1	0	1	2	1	14
Fax	2	1	0	1	0	1	5
EMR	12	0	3	5	2	0	22

Question 1c (%)	Orthopedics	Psychiatry	General Surgery	OBS/GYN	Pediatrics	Plastic Surgery
Telephone	50%	78%	83%	67%	75%	75%
Text	33%	0%	33%	0%	0%	25%
Email	50%	11%	0%	17%	50%	25%
Fax	11%	11%	0%	17%	0%	25%
EMR	67%	0%	50%	83%	50%	0%

**2. Regarding completeness, how often do referral letters contain enough information to determine whether a face-to-face consultation with the patient is necessary?
(n=47)**



Question 2	Orthopedics	Psychiatry	General Surgery	OBS/GYN	Pediatrics	Plastic Surgery	Total
almost always				2			2
often	5	2			1	1	9
sometimes	7	4	3	1	1	1	17
rarely	6	2	3	3	2	2	18
n/a		1					1
Total	18	9	6	6	4	4	47

Question 2	Orthopedics	Psychiatry	General Surgery	OBS/GYN	Pediatrics	Plastic Surgery	Total
almost always	0%	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%	4%
often	28%	22%	0%	0%	25%	25%	19%
sometimes	39%	44%	50%	17%	25%	25%	36%
rarely	33%	22%	50%	50%	50%	50%	38%
n/a	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%