

Psychologist Workforce Needs in the Age of COVID-19

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Learning Objectives

- Discuss the implications of psychologist workforce projections for population health needs
- Identify psychologists' practice patterns and populations served during the COVID-19 pandemic

The future? Crystal ball I have not

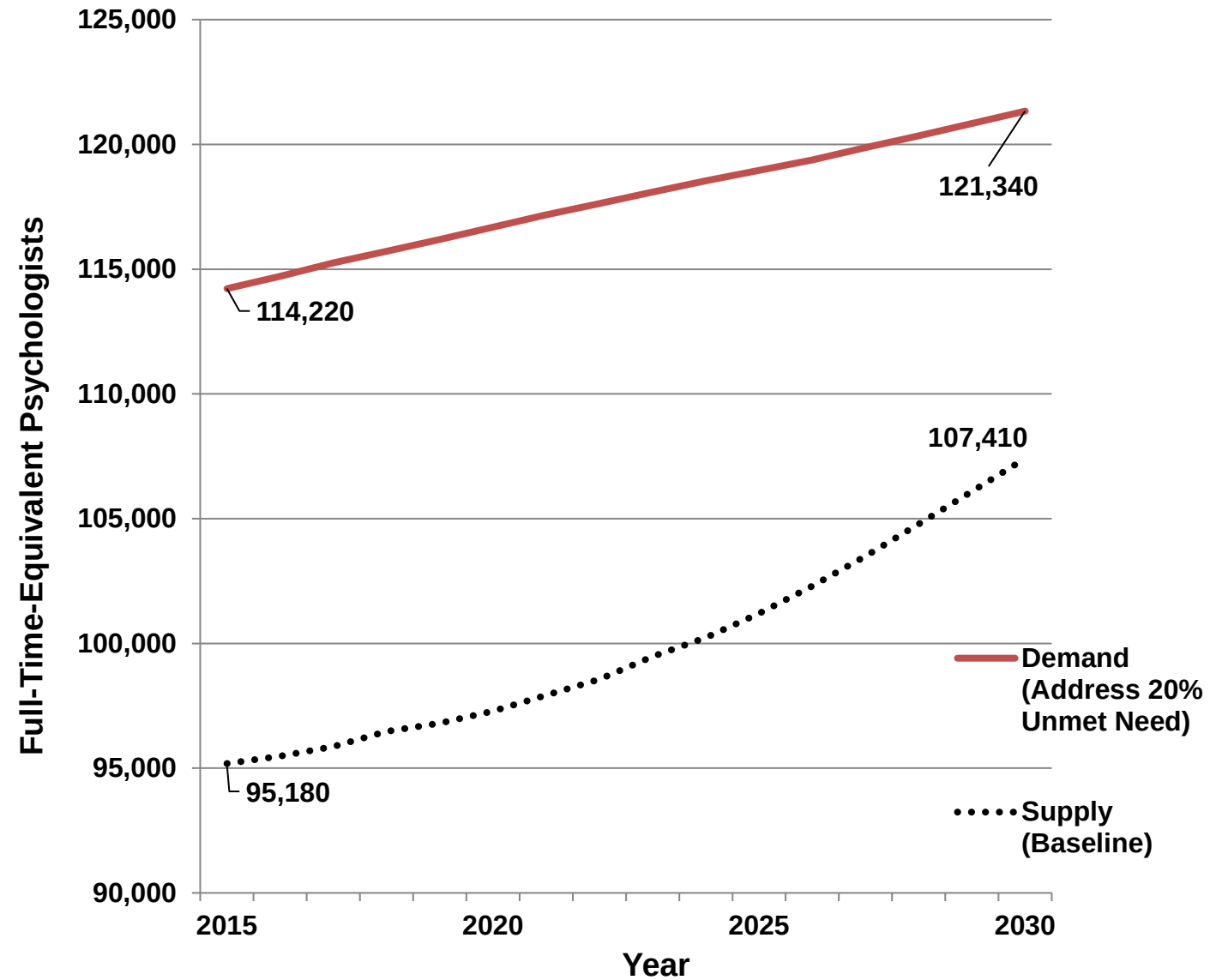
- Major Disruption: COVID-19
 - Projections assumption: current patterns continue
- Do current workforce and demand patterns still hold? NO
 - Increases in anxiety, depression, and stress
 - Worsening health, economic, and educational disparities
 - Telehealth/technology
 - Provider burnout and workload capacity



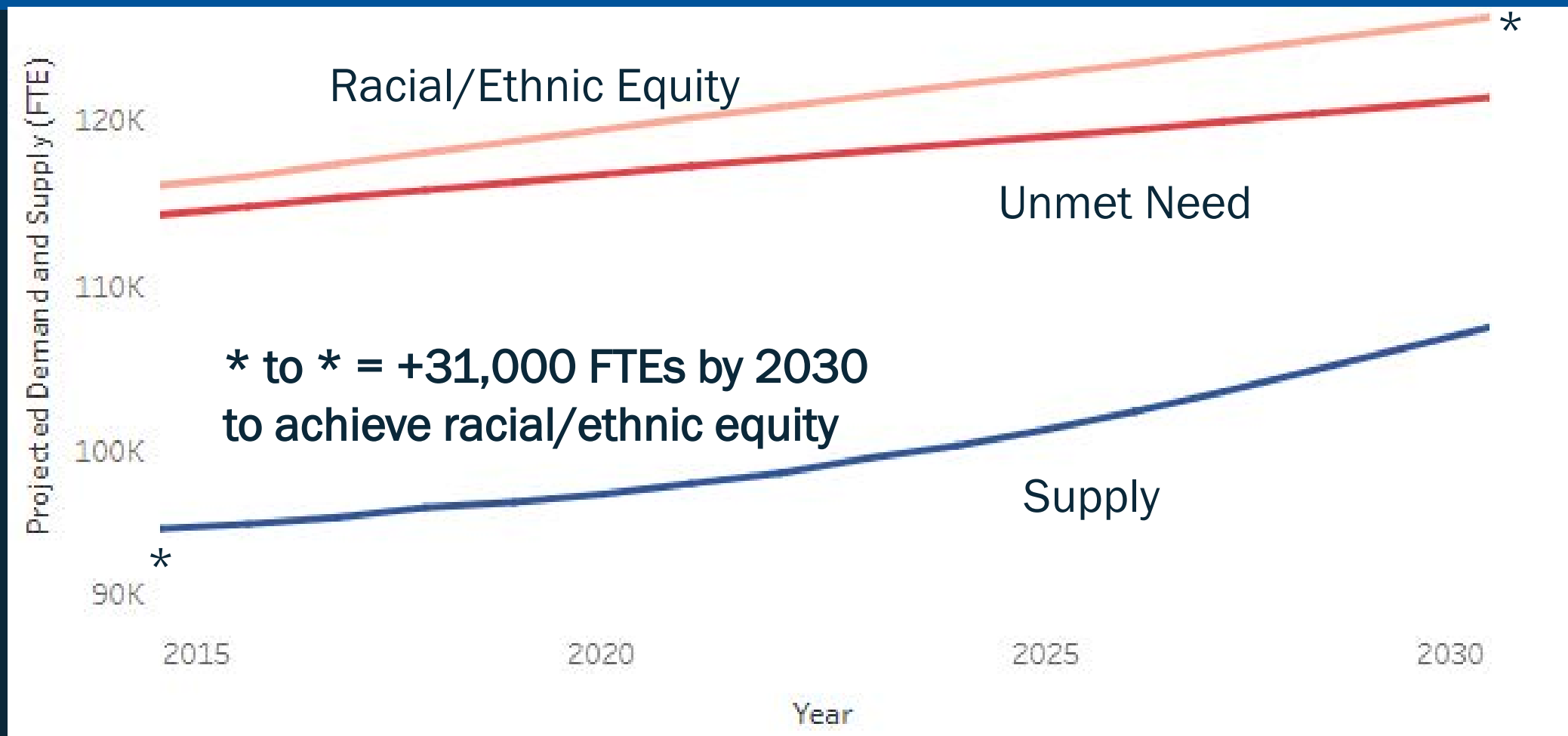
Pre-COVID-19 Workforce Projections

- Psychologist supply (licensed doctoral-level workforce) is **insufficient to address current need and unmet need** for mental health services.
- In order to achieve racial/ethnic equity, the **size** of the workforce would need to **increase dramatically**.
- Where is there a mismatch between population health needs and the current workforce? **Hispanic and Black populations, older adults, and hospitals**

Gap in Supply and Unmet Need



Racial/Ethnic Equity



Behavioral Health Needs You

- Areas where demand is projected to grow
 - Hispanic populations (and Black/African American populations)
 - › Hispanic populations: +30% or +4120 FTEs by 2030
 - › Black/African American populations: +11% or +1140 FTEs by 2030
 - Older adults
 - › Account for nearly all of the increase in demand by 2030
 - › +54% or +5790 FTEs by 2030
 - Hospitals
 - › +26% or +3060 FTEs by 2030



COVID-19 Impacts

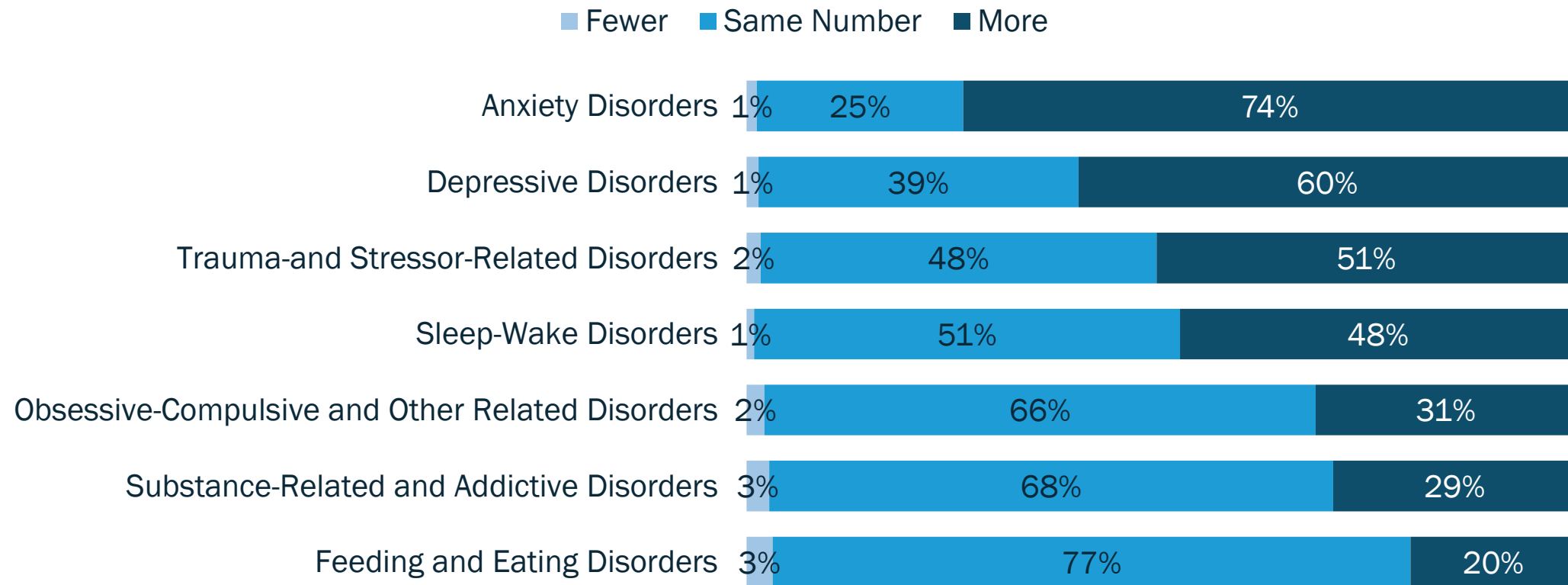
- Three APA online surveys sampling licensed doctoral-level psychologists
 - 2020 telehealth surveys
 - › COVID-19 Membership Professional Needs Survey conducted in April-May 2020, N = 2,402 (not shown)
 - › COVID-19 Telehealth Practitioner Survey conducted in September-October 2020, N = 1,798
 - 2021 Health Service Psychologist Survey conducted in April 2021, N = 842

Key Practice Patterns Sept 2020

- 96% of psychologists treated at least some patients remotely
 - 64% all patients remote
 - 32% some patients remote and some patients in person
- 3 in 10 psychologists (29%) reported seeing more patients since the beginning of the pandemic
- 1 in 3 psychologists (33%) reported working with patients in a different state than where they practice

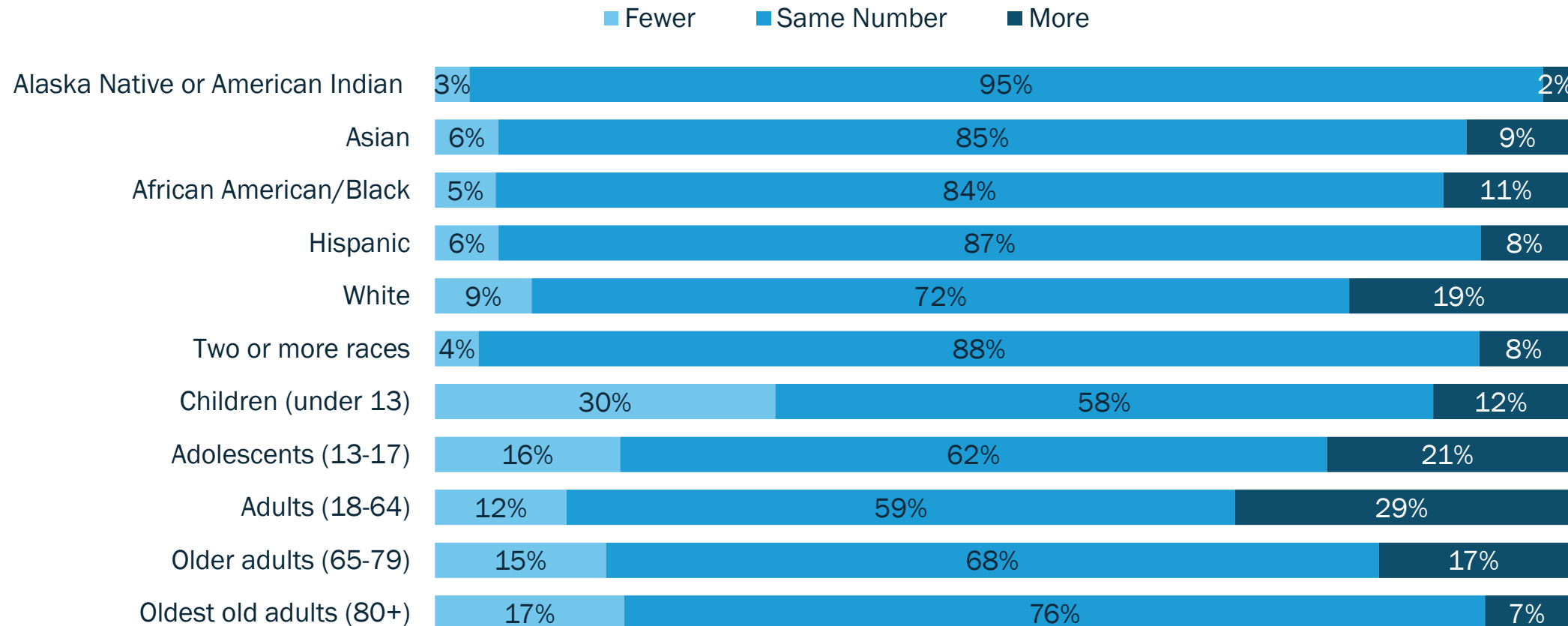
Changes in Treatment Areas

Has the number of patients changed since the pandemic began?



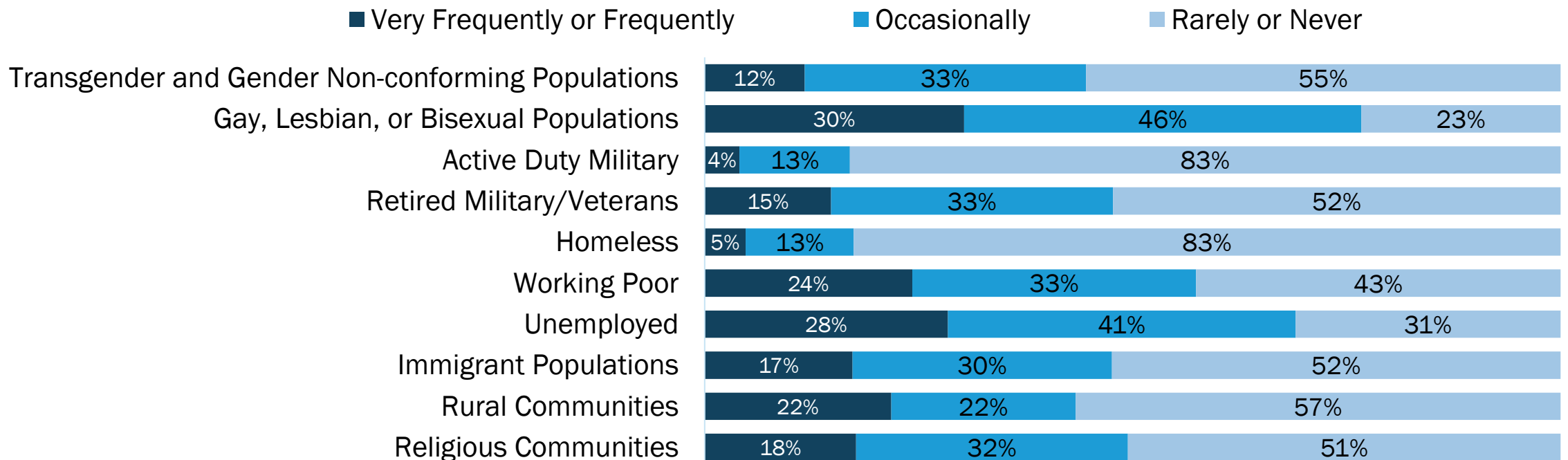
Changes in Populations Served

Has the number of patients changed since the pandemic began?



Selected Populations Served

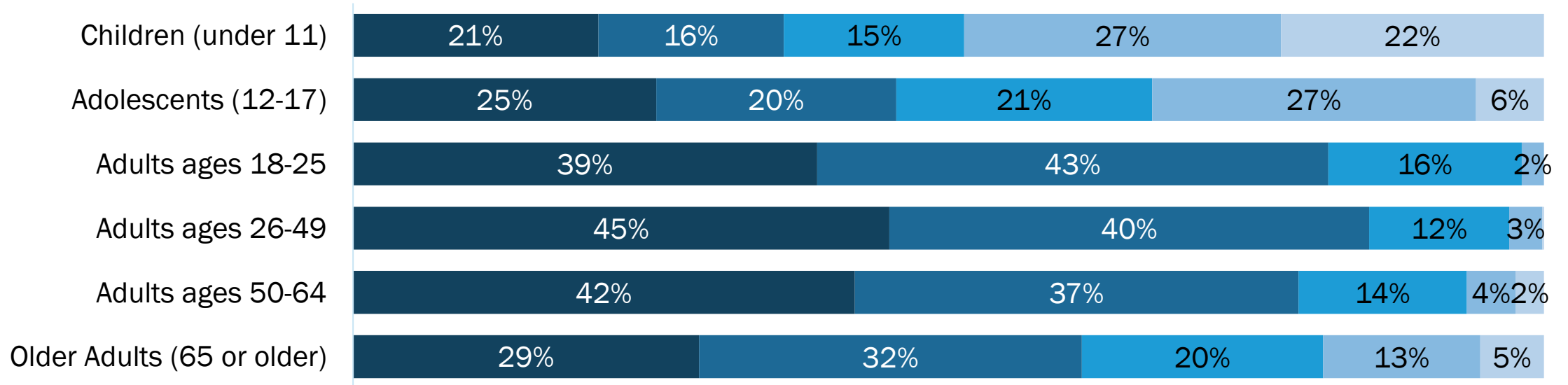
In a typical week, at what frequency do you provide services to the following population groups?



Cultural Competency by Age

How knowledgeable do you feel to work with clients from the following population groups?

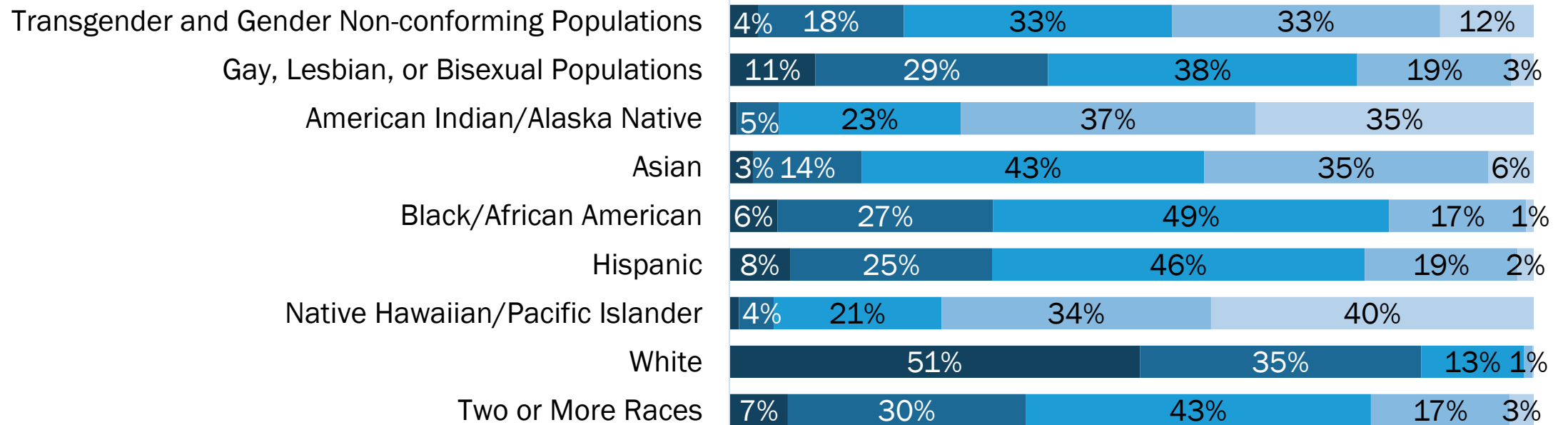
■ Extremely knowledgeable ■ Very knowledgeable ■ Knowledgeable ■ Somewhat knowledgeable ■ Not at all knowledgeable



Selected Cultural Competency

How knowledgeable do you feel to work with clients from the following population groups?

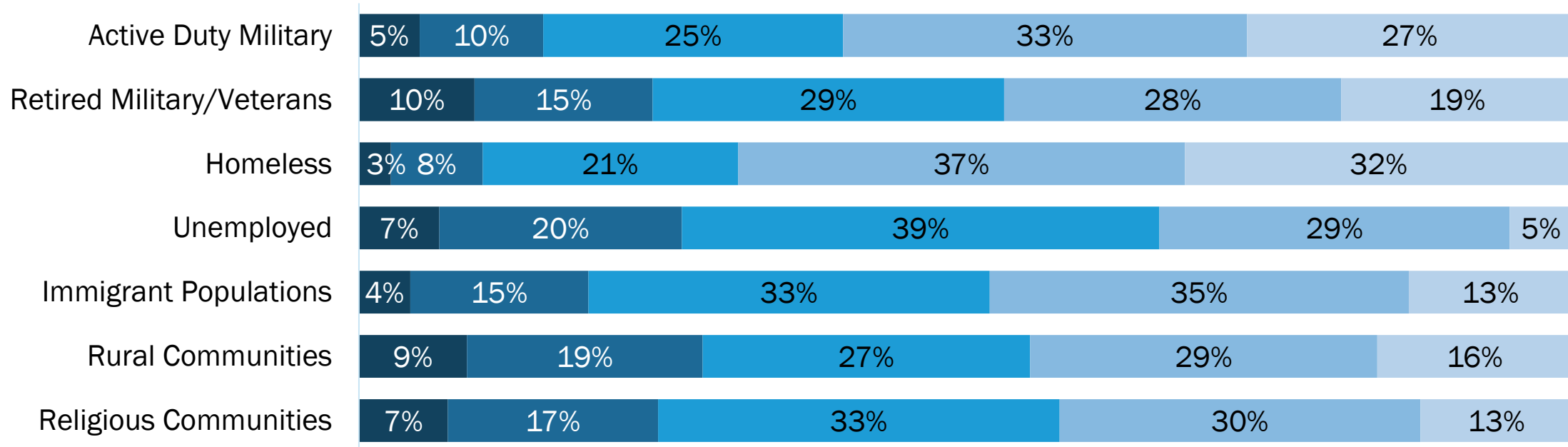
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Selected Cultural Competency

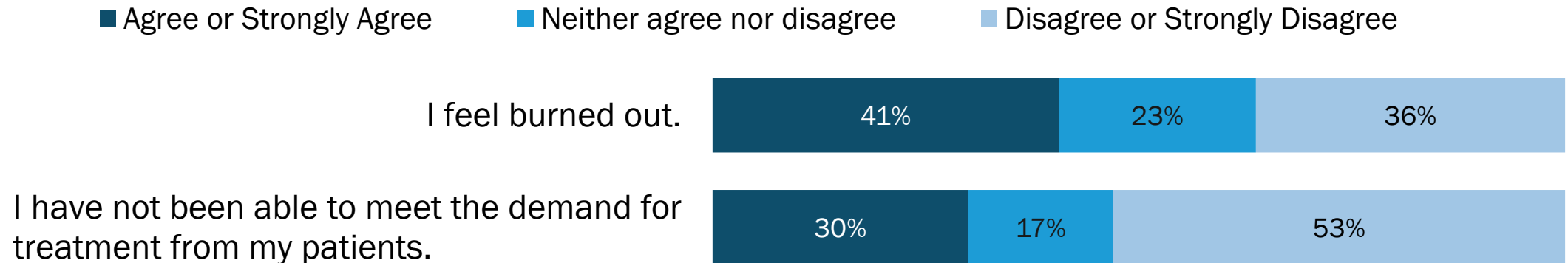
How knowledgeable do you feel to work with clients from the following population groups?

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Provider Well-being

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Food for Thought to Turn Research into Action

- Consistent tracking of career/workforce outcomes
 - Starts within programs/institutions
- Community outreach
 - Act locally
 - Start early
- Funding/resources to better meet the needs of underserved communities
 - Be an advocate for psychology
- More research on behavioral health workforce equity

Implications

- Do we have the right psychologist workforce? NO
- Are we training psychologists to meet population health needs? Yes, but ...
- Is behavioral health is prepared for the future? Yes, and ...

References

- American Psychological Association. (2018). *Psychologist workforce projections 2015-30*. <http://www.apa.org/workforce/publications/supply-demand/default.aspx>
- American Psychological Association. (2020). *2020 COVID-19 Telehealth Practitioner survey*. <https://www.apa.org/workforce/publications/response-coronavirus>
- American Psychological Association. (2021). *2021 Health Service Psychologist survey* [unpublished special analysis].

Thank you!

Questions? cws@apa.org or kstamm@apa.org