
Poverty, Gender, and Youth

Social and Behavioral Science Research (SBSR)

5-1-2020

Guatemala indigenous municipalities: COVID-19 knowledge, attitudes, and practices

Population Council

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Ideas. Evidence. Impact.

GUATEMALA INDIGENOUS MUNICIPALITIES: COVID-19 KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES

Population Council Guatemala

May 1, 2020

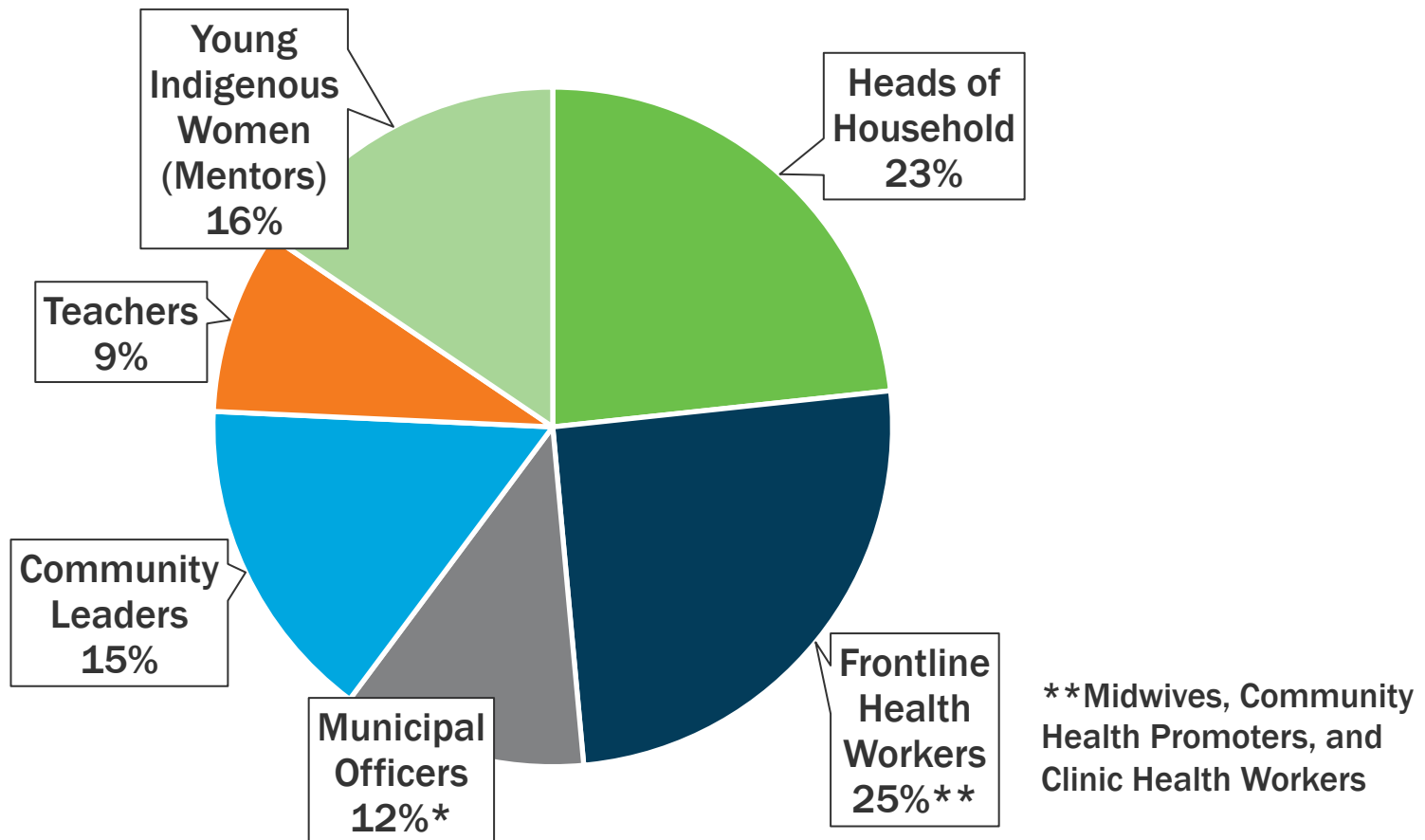
Overview (1)

- Indigenous population prioritized because of its vulnerability to COVID-19 due to social and economic marginalization
- Phone-based key informant interviews conducted April 14–18
 - 10 indigenous municipalities: Chisec, Patzún, San Andrés Semetabaj, San Juan Ostuncalco, San Juan Sacatepéquez, San Pedro Carchá, Santa María Chiquimula, Sololá, Totonicapán, and Uspantán
 - 144 interviews completed
 - 87.8% participation rate in interviews
 - 98% of informants willing to participate in future rounds

Overview (2)

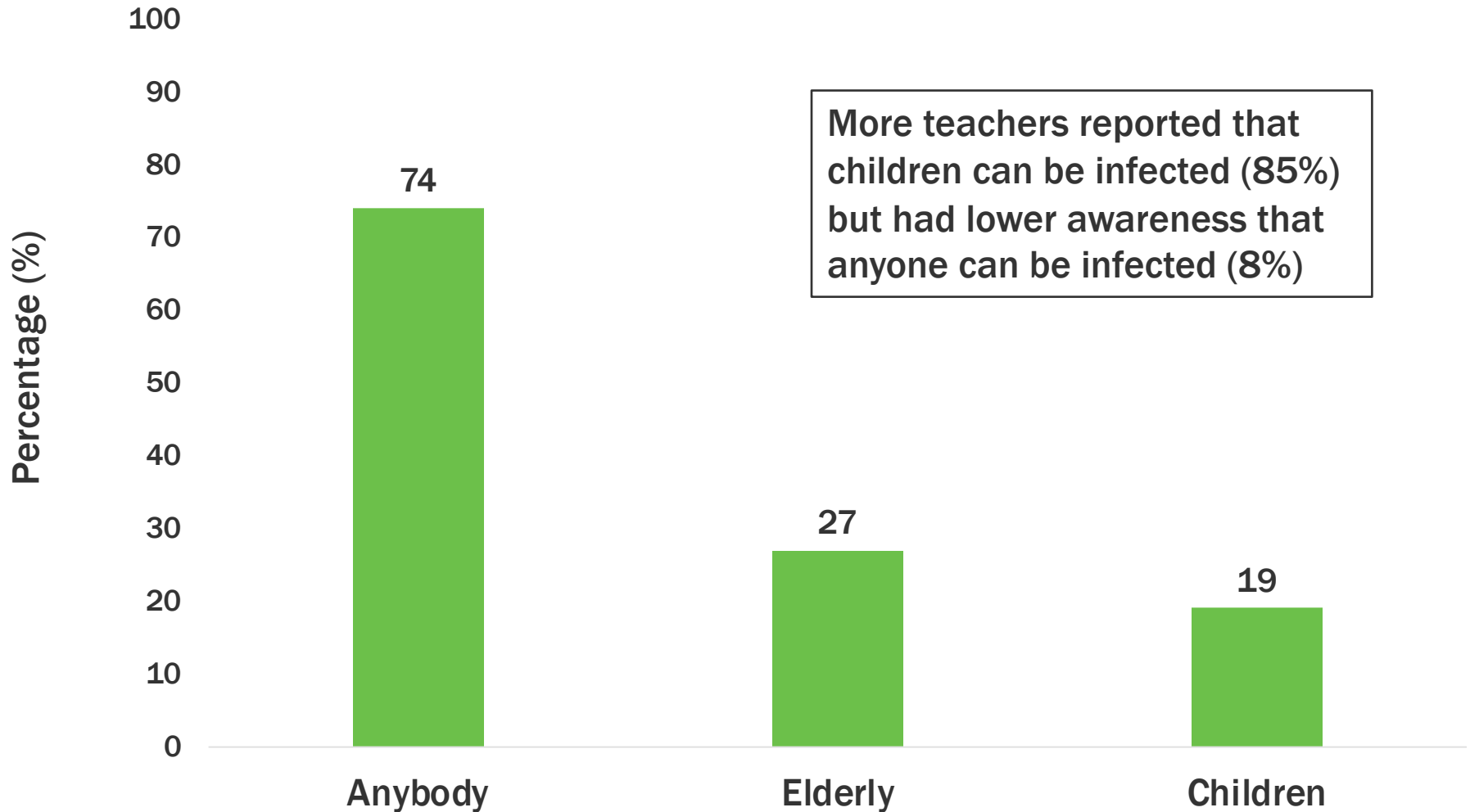
- Groups of key informants selected on long-standing partnerships with indigenous municipalities with the following profiles:
 - Heads of household (mostly female)
 - First respondents at the community level
 - Young indigenous women trained as mentors in Population Council programs
 - Municipal and health workers
 - 72% female
 - Mean age: 38 years (range 18–70)
- 100% awareness of COVID-19

Key Informant Groups (N=144)

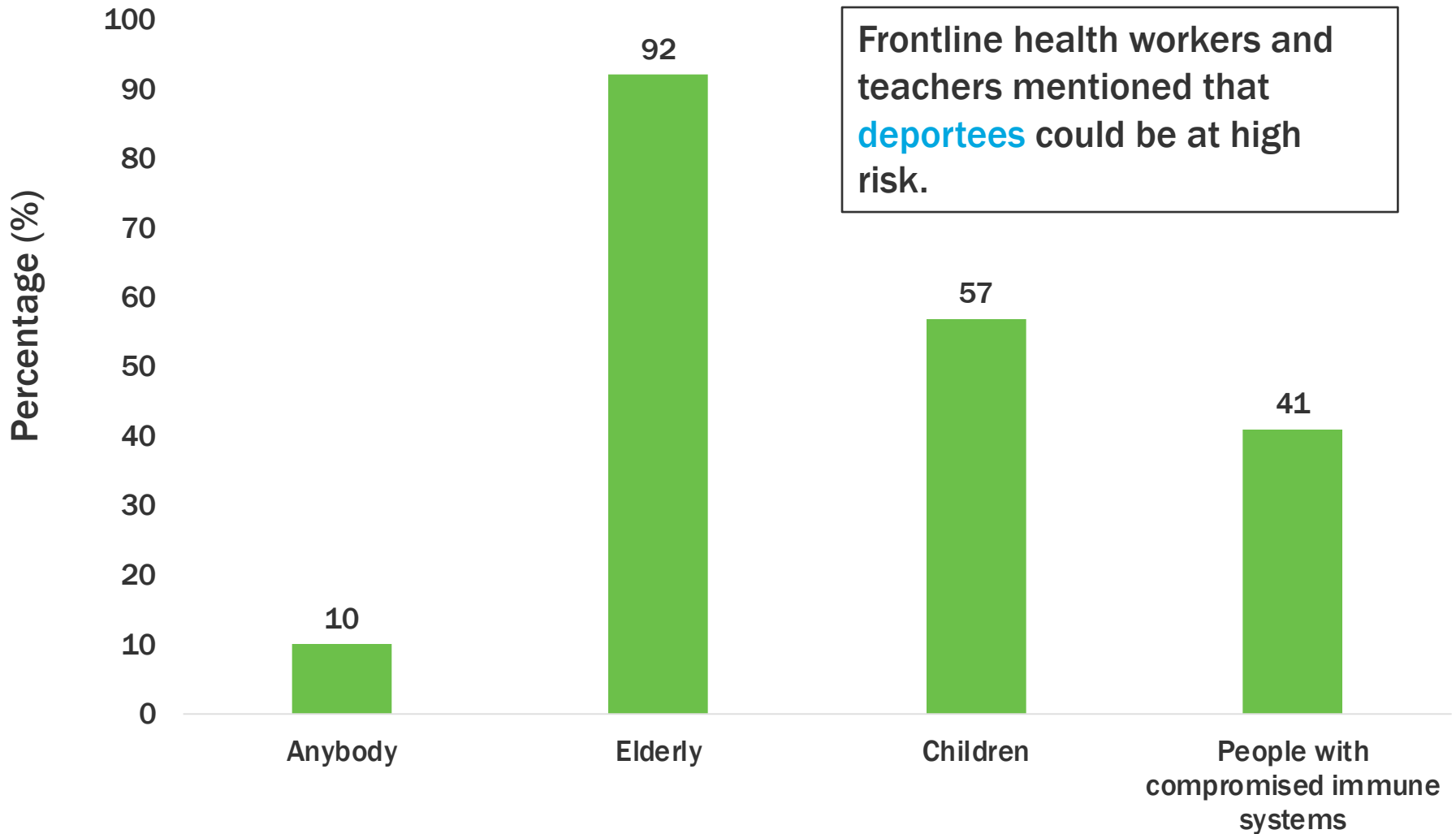


*Offices for Youth and Women

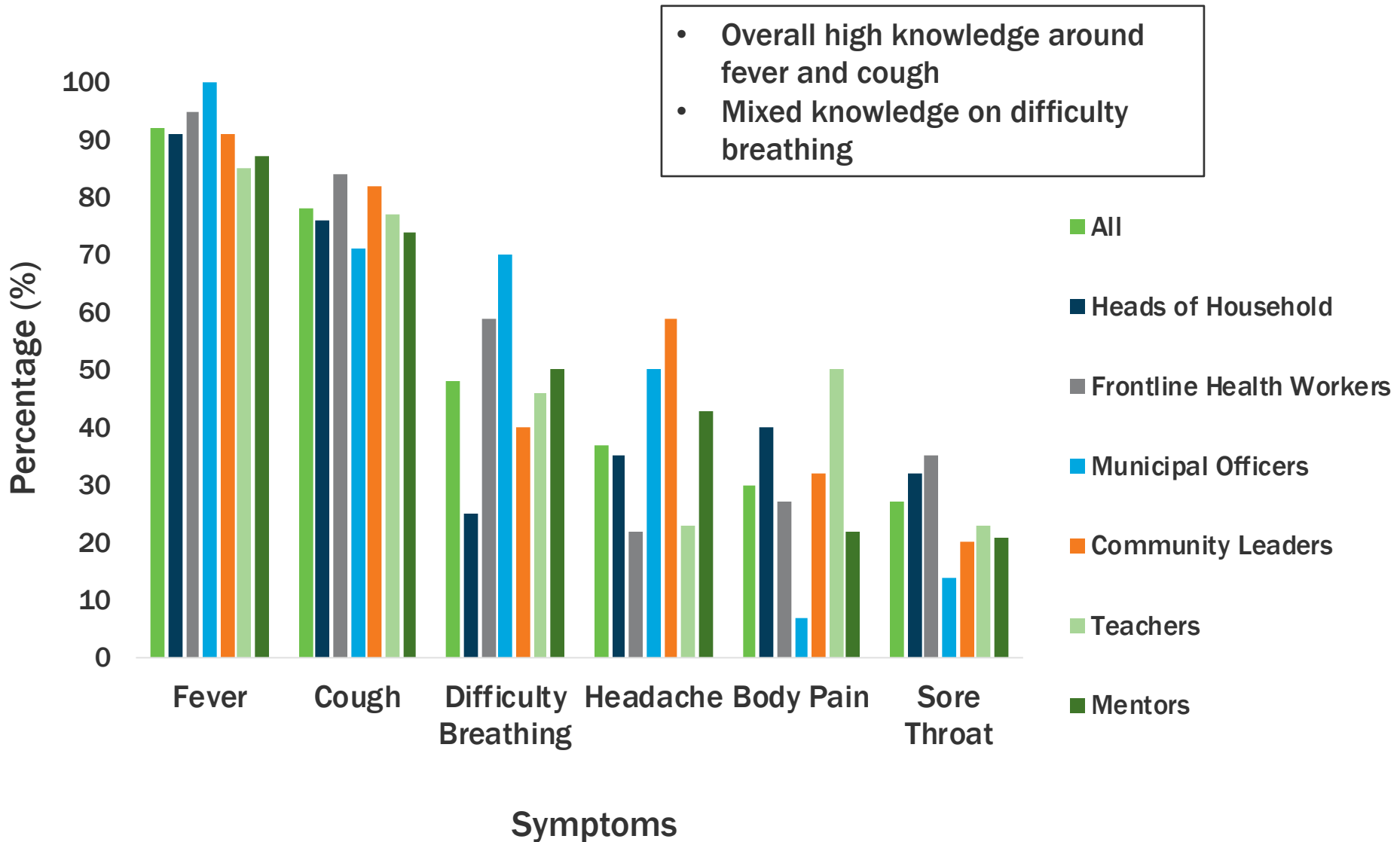
Who can be infected with Coronavirus?



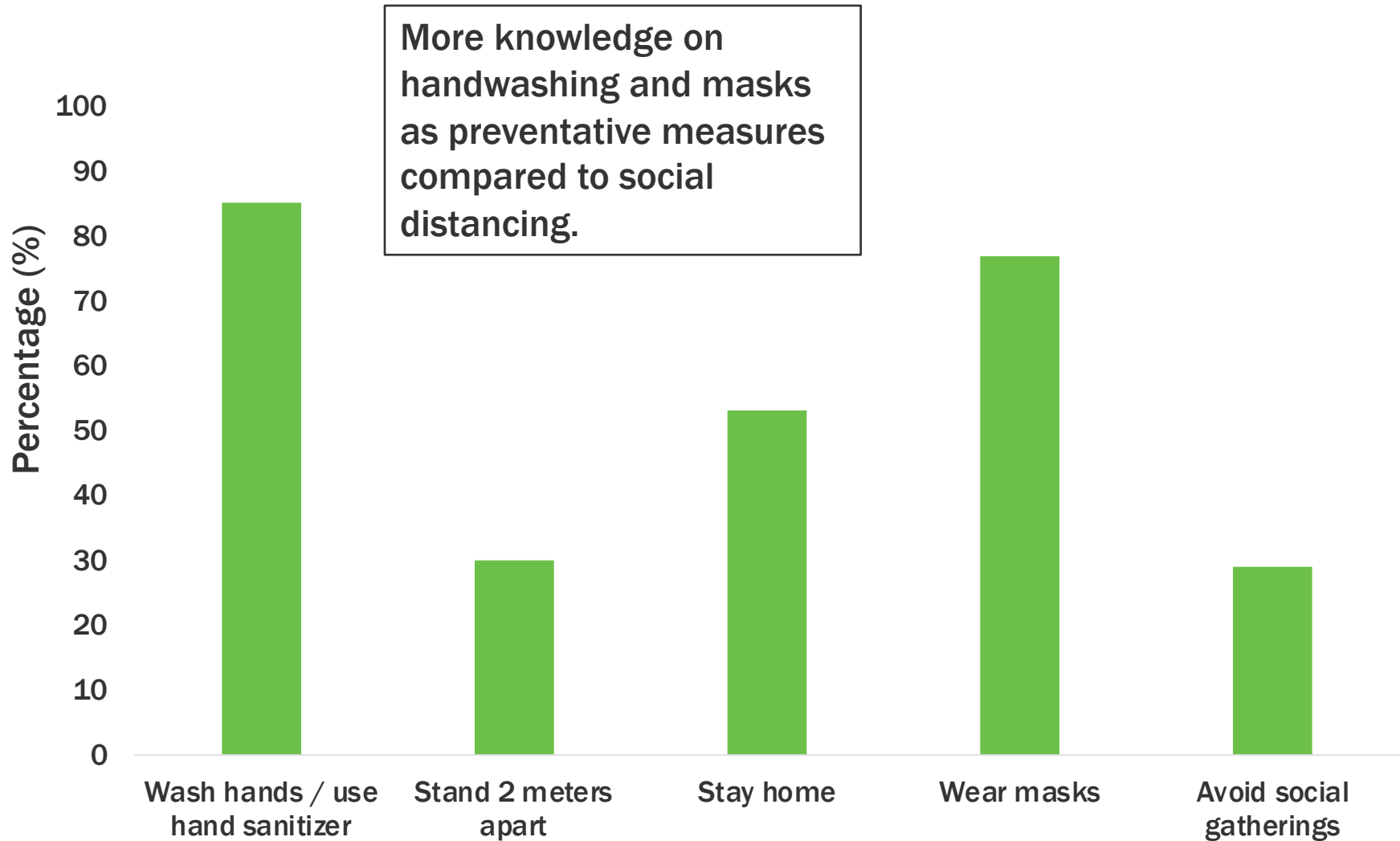
Who is at high risk of severe illness if they get COVID-19?



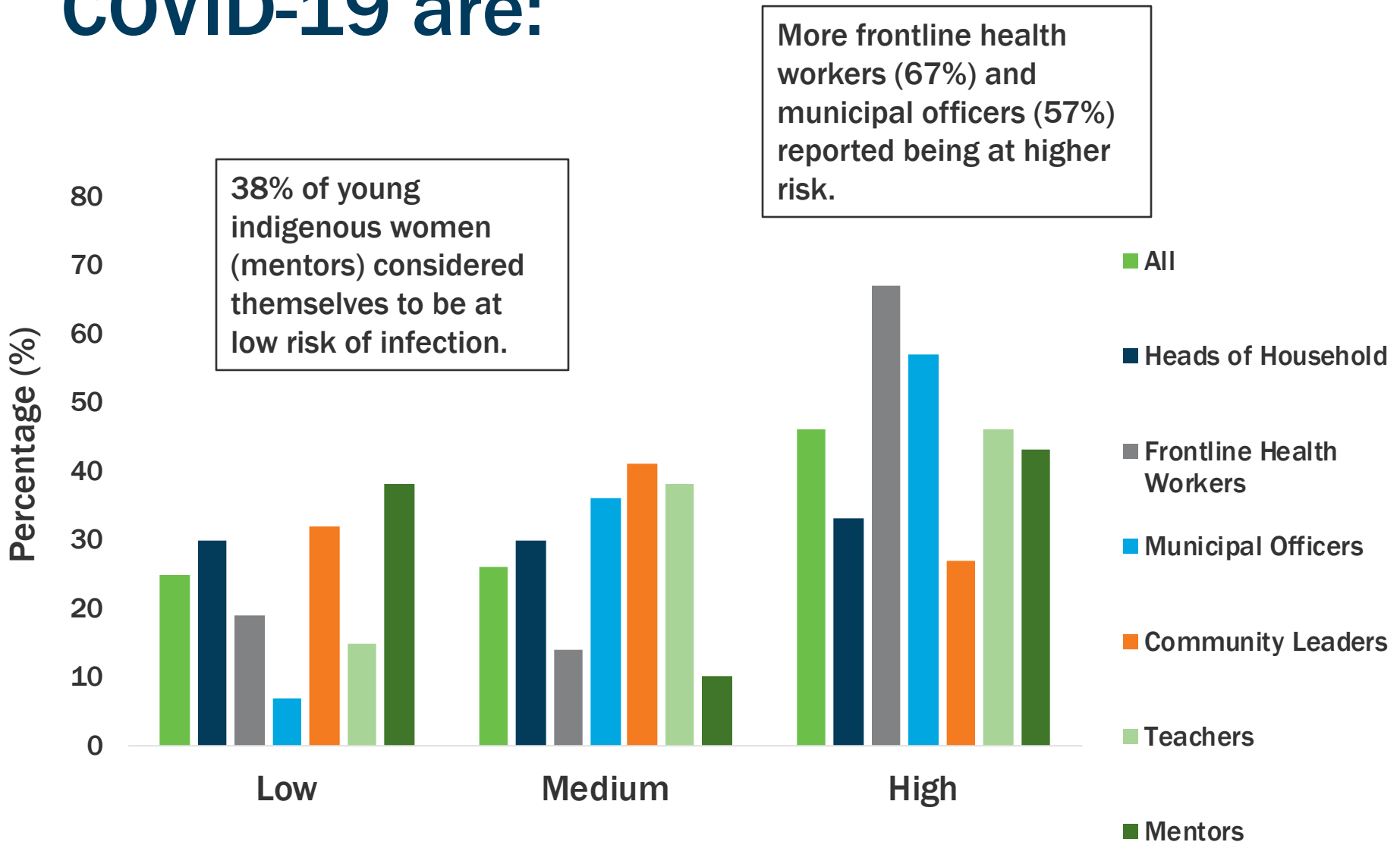
What are the symptoms of COVID-19?



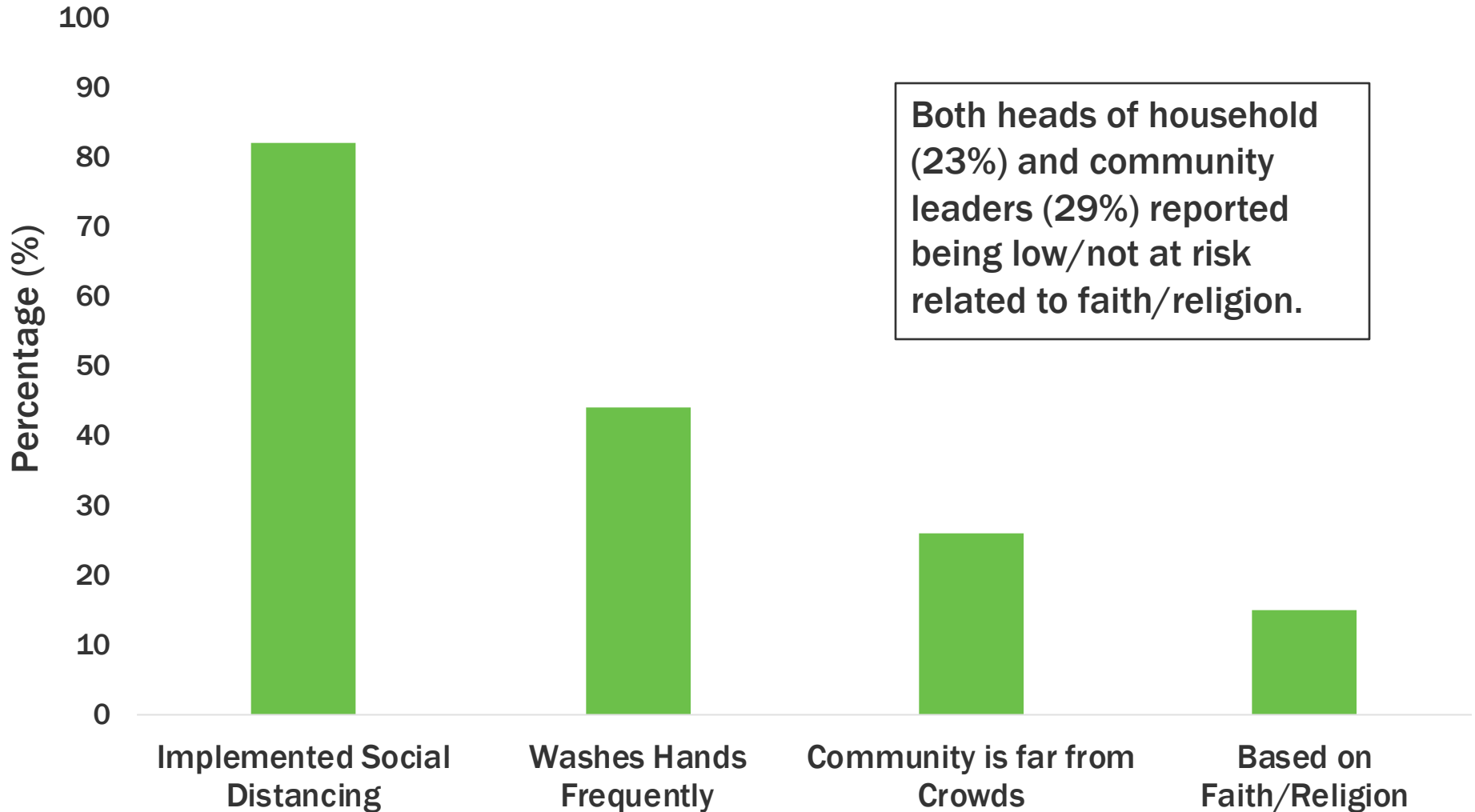
How can infection be prevented?



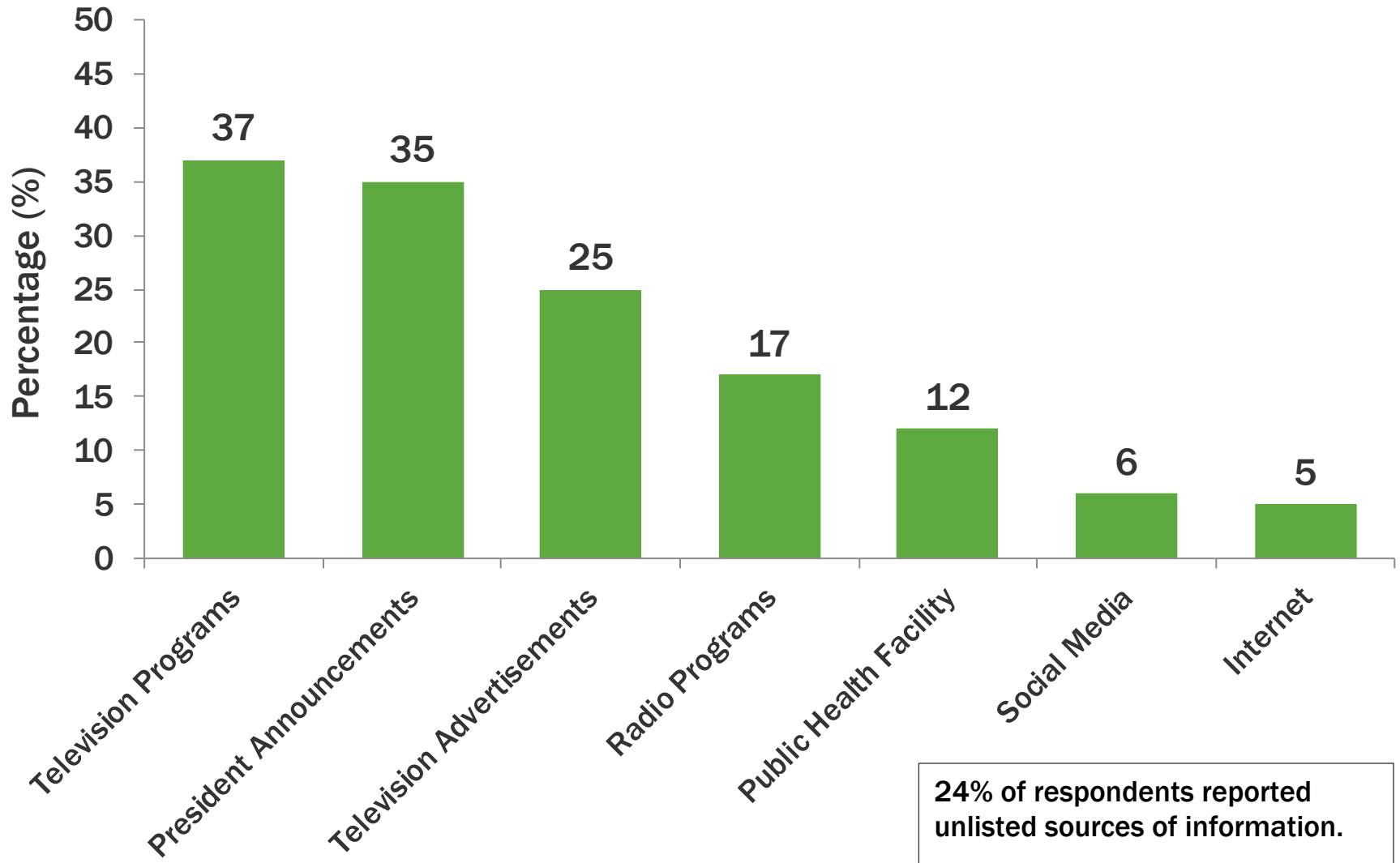
My chances of getting infected with COVID-19 are:



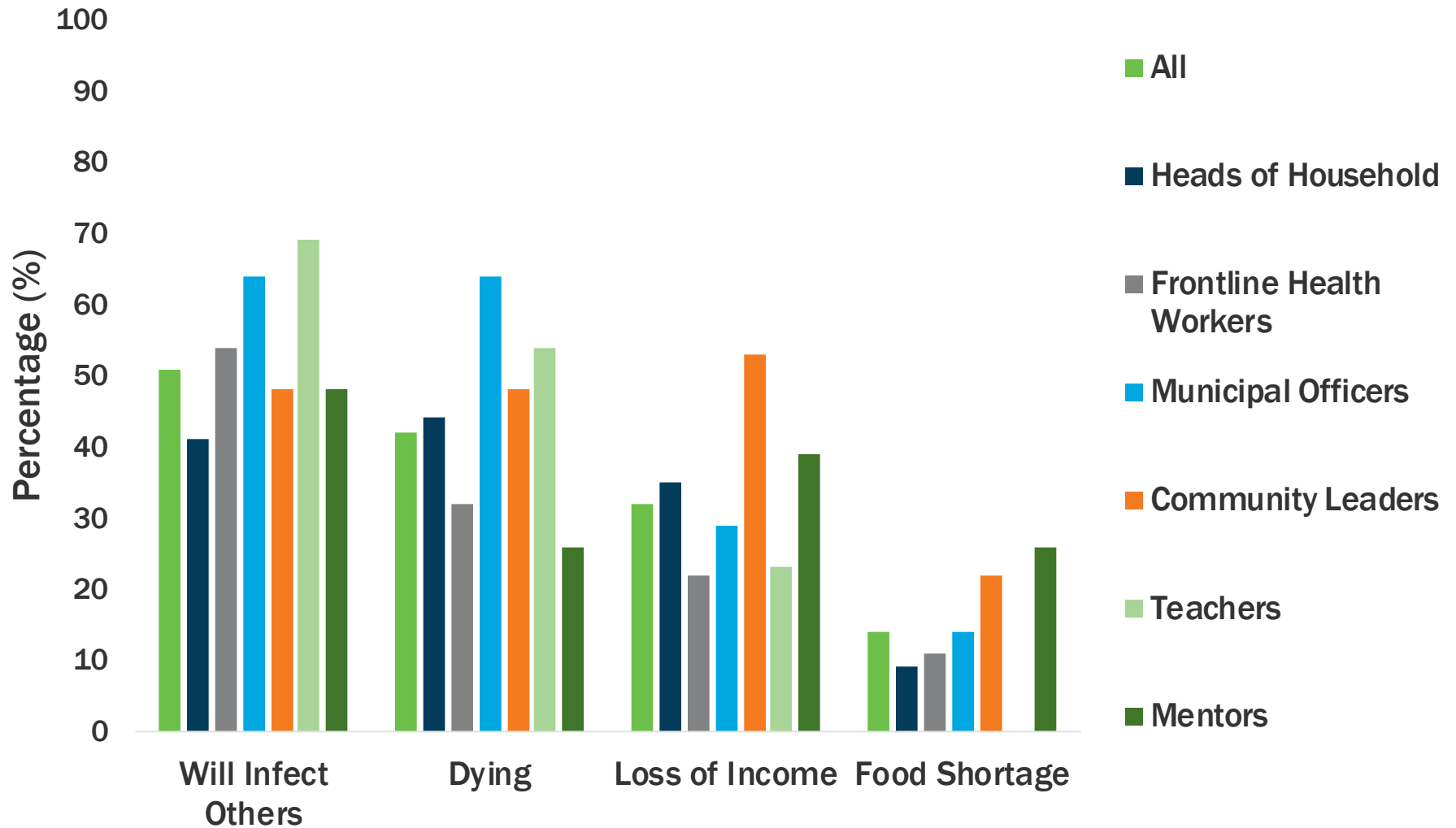
Why do you think you are at low risk or not at risk of getting COVID-19?



Of the sources you use for information, which do you trust the most for COVID-19 information?

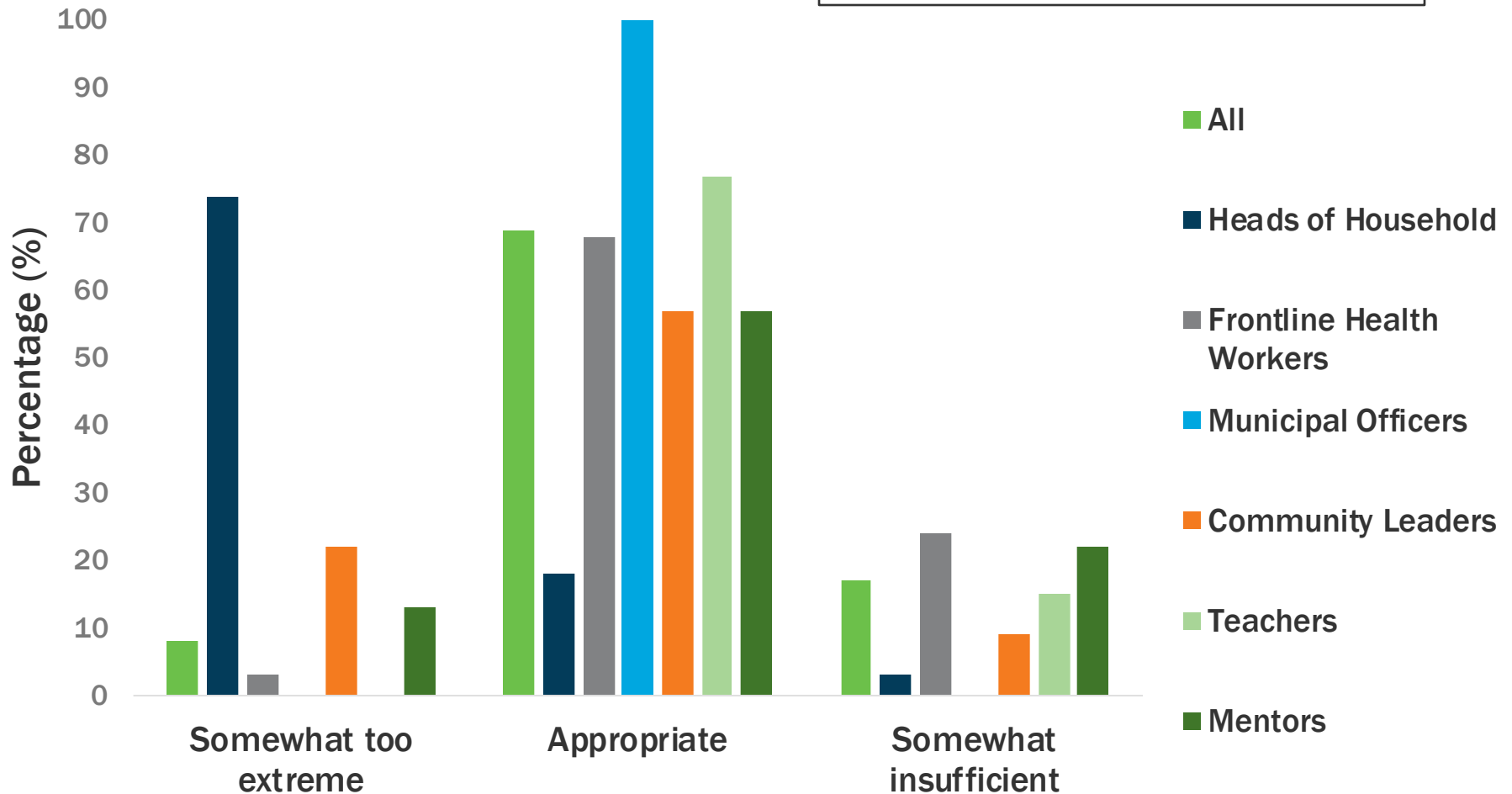


What are your main fears regarding COVID-19?

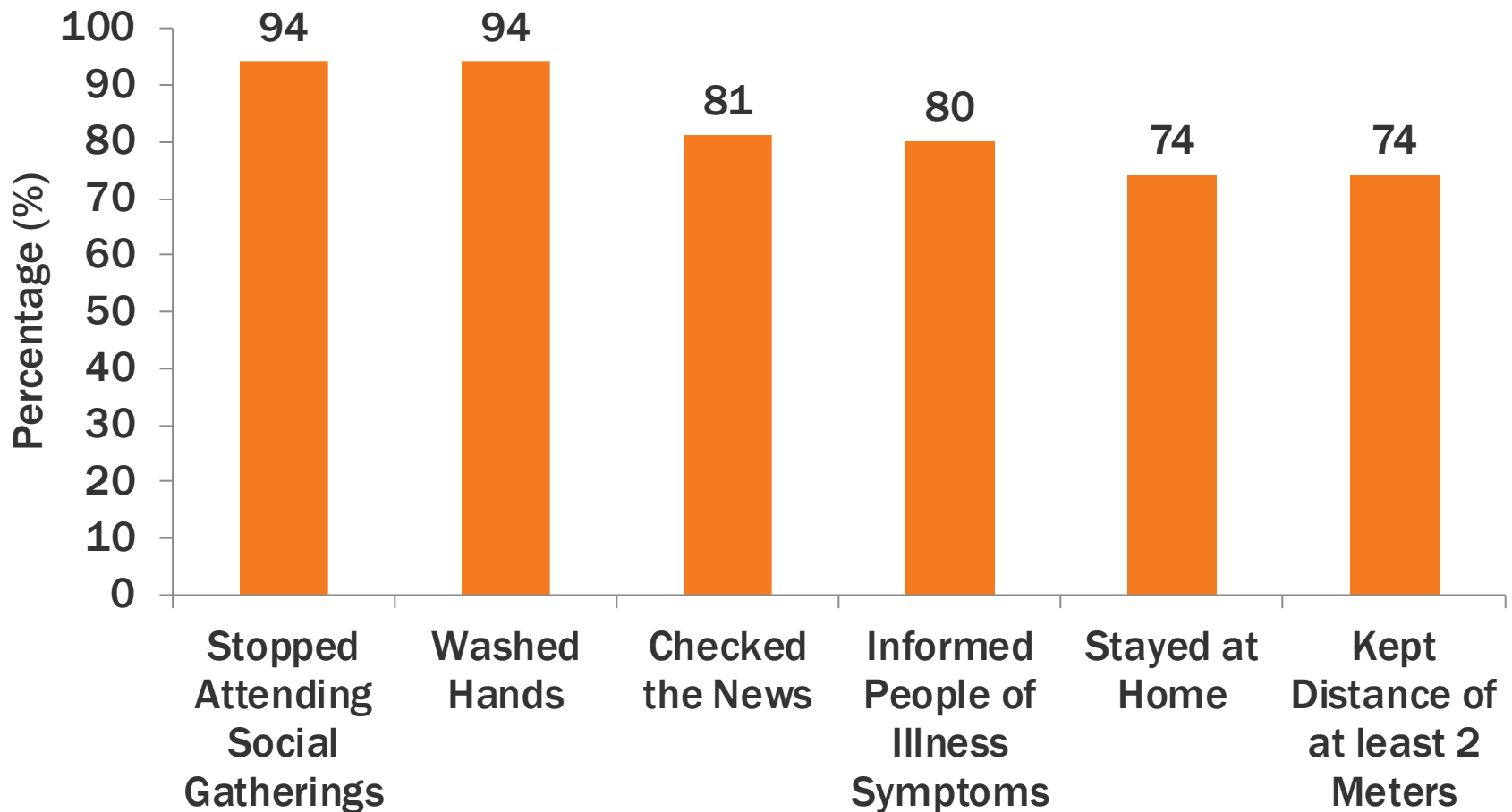


The government's reaction to the current COVID-19 outbreak is:

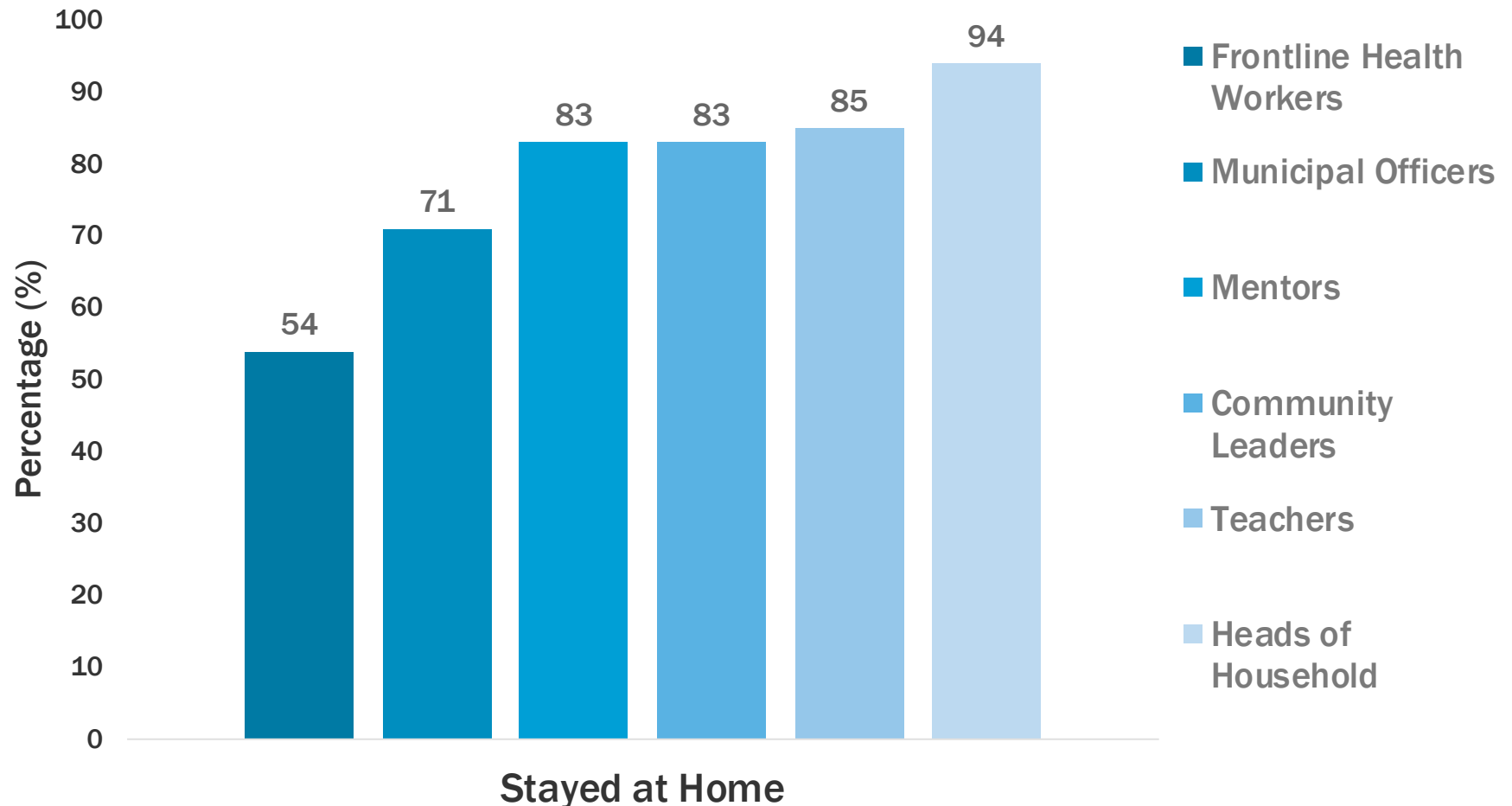
A majority (81%) of respondents think that the government has been either somewhat or very truthful about the COVID-19 outbreak.



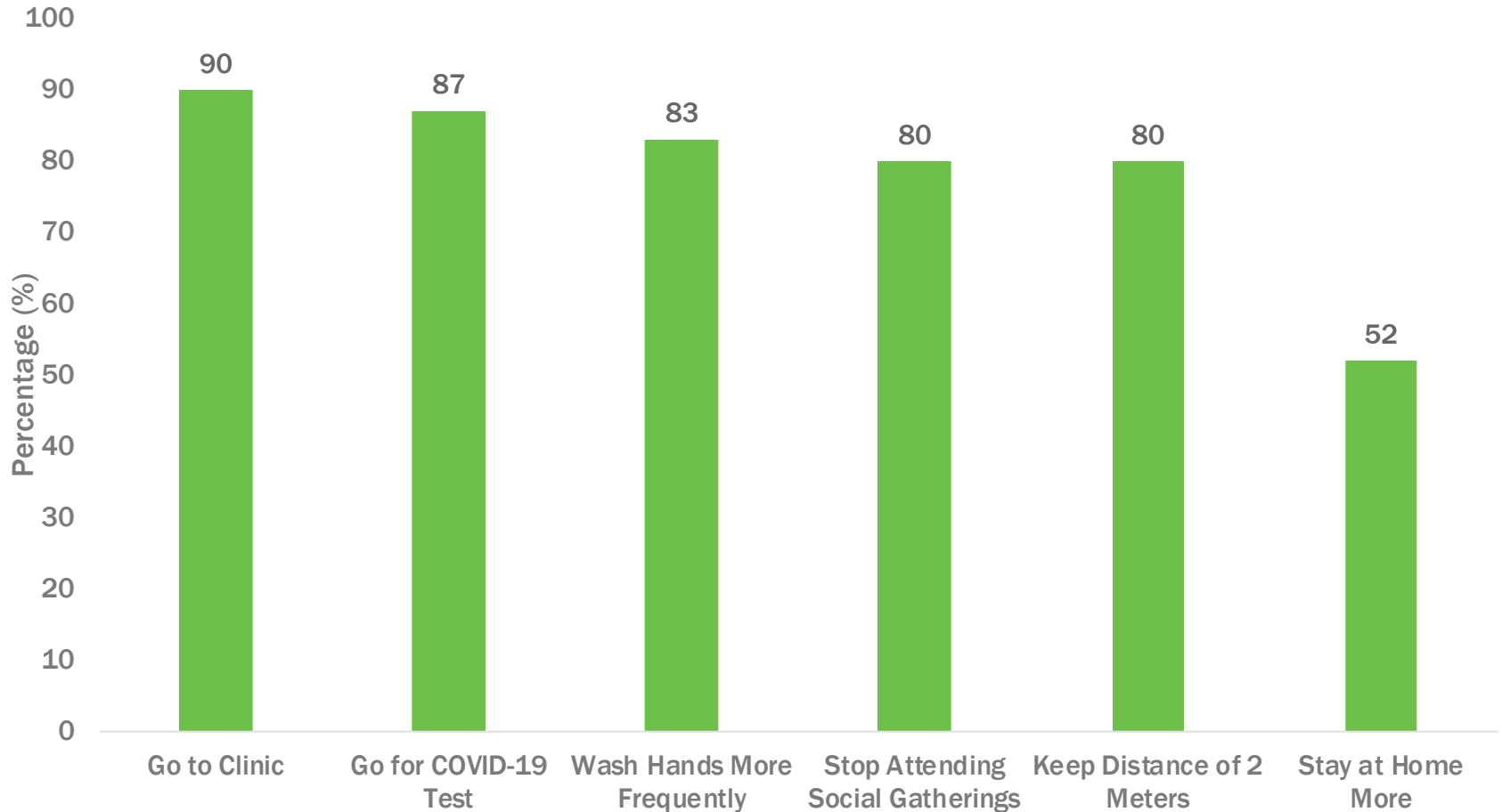
What activities have you done more in this past week compared to a month ago?



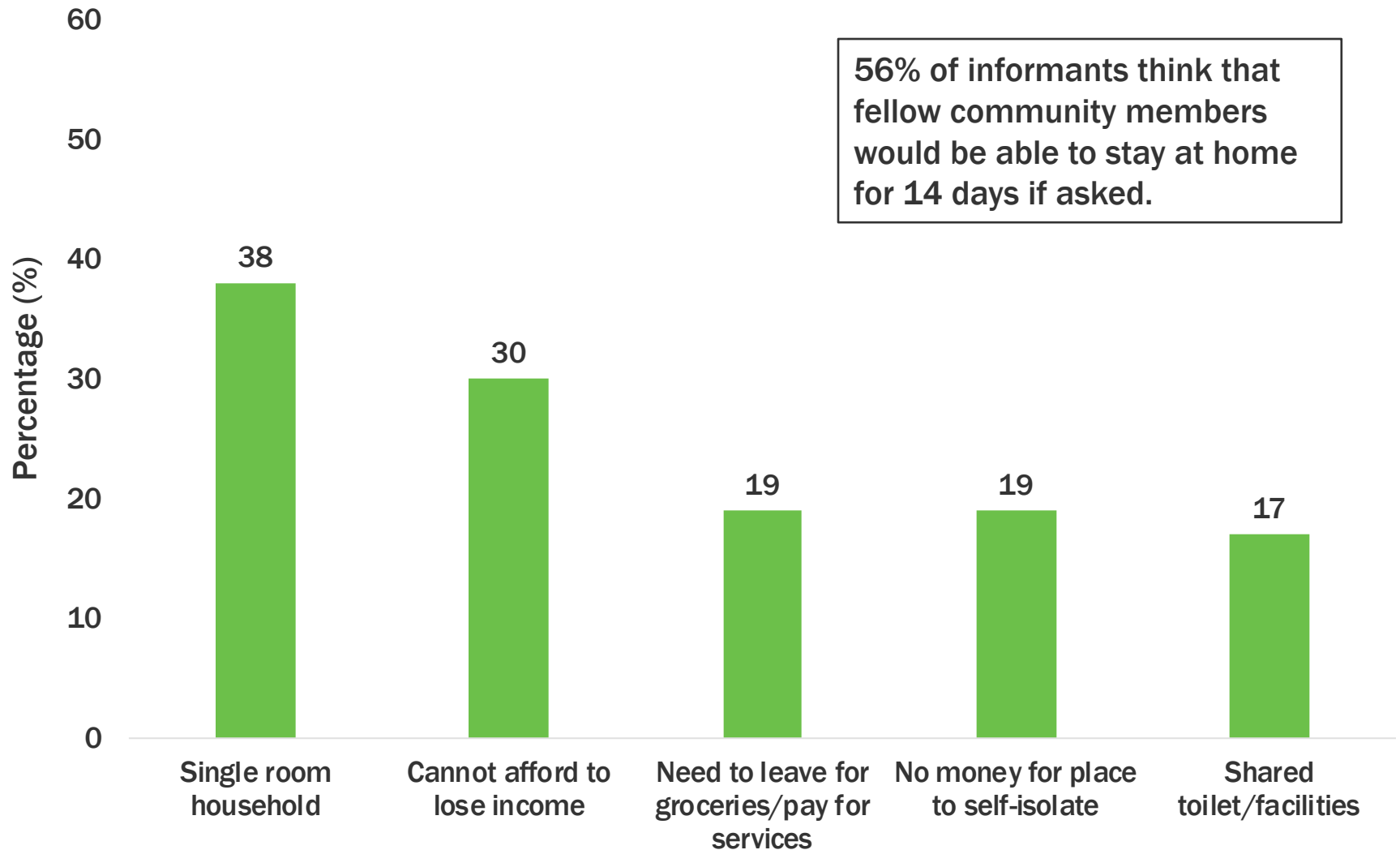
Groups that have stayed at home more in this past week compared to a month ago:



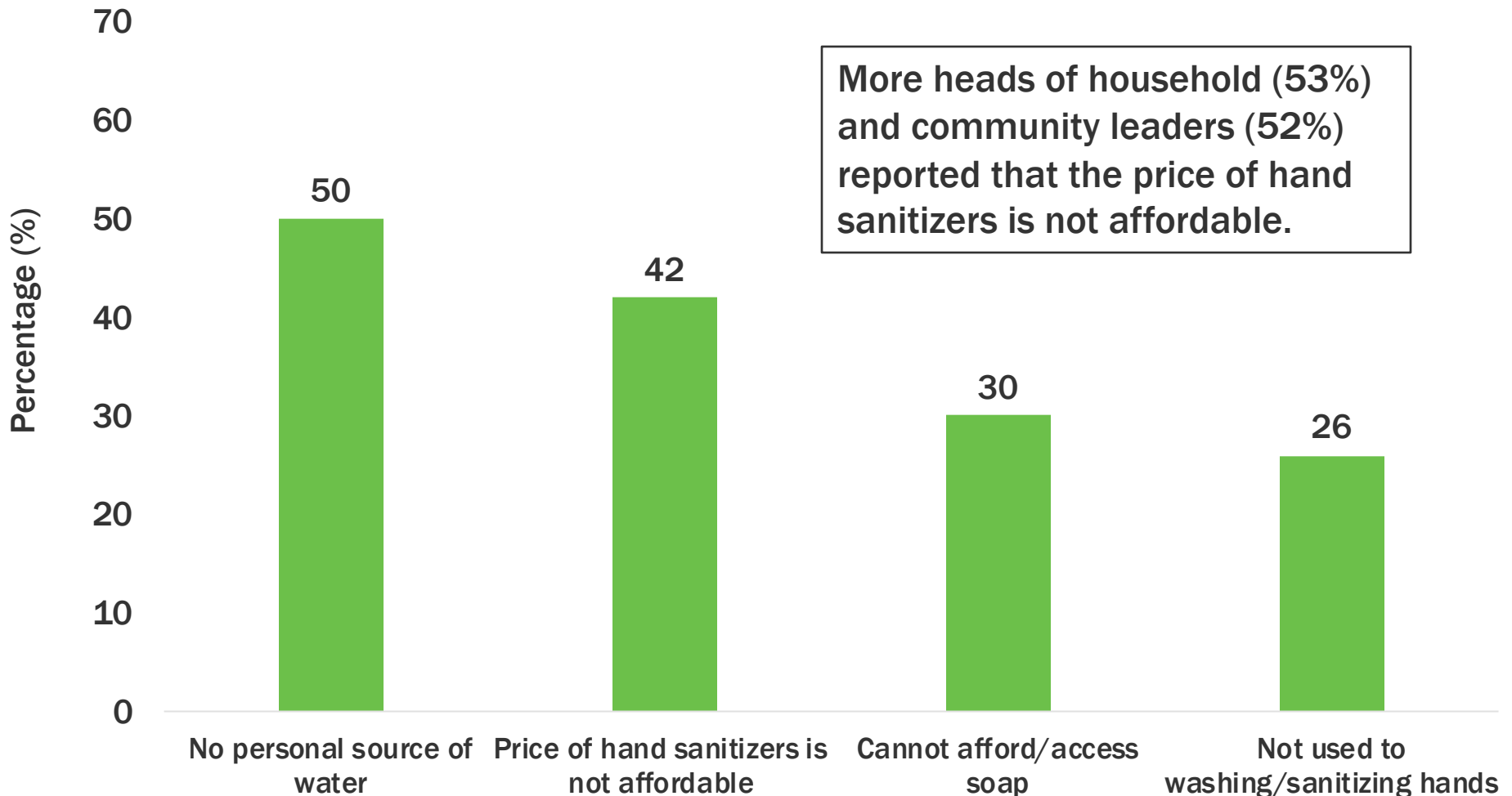
If you had symptoms of COVID-19, what would you do?



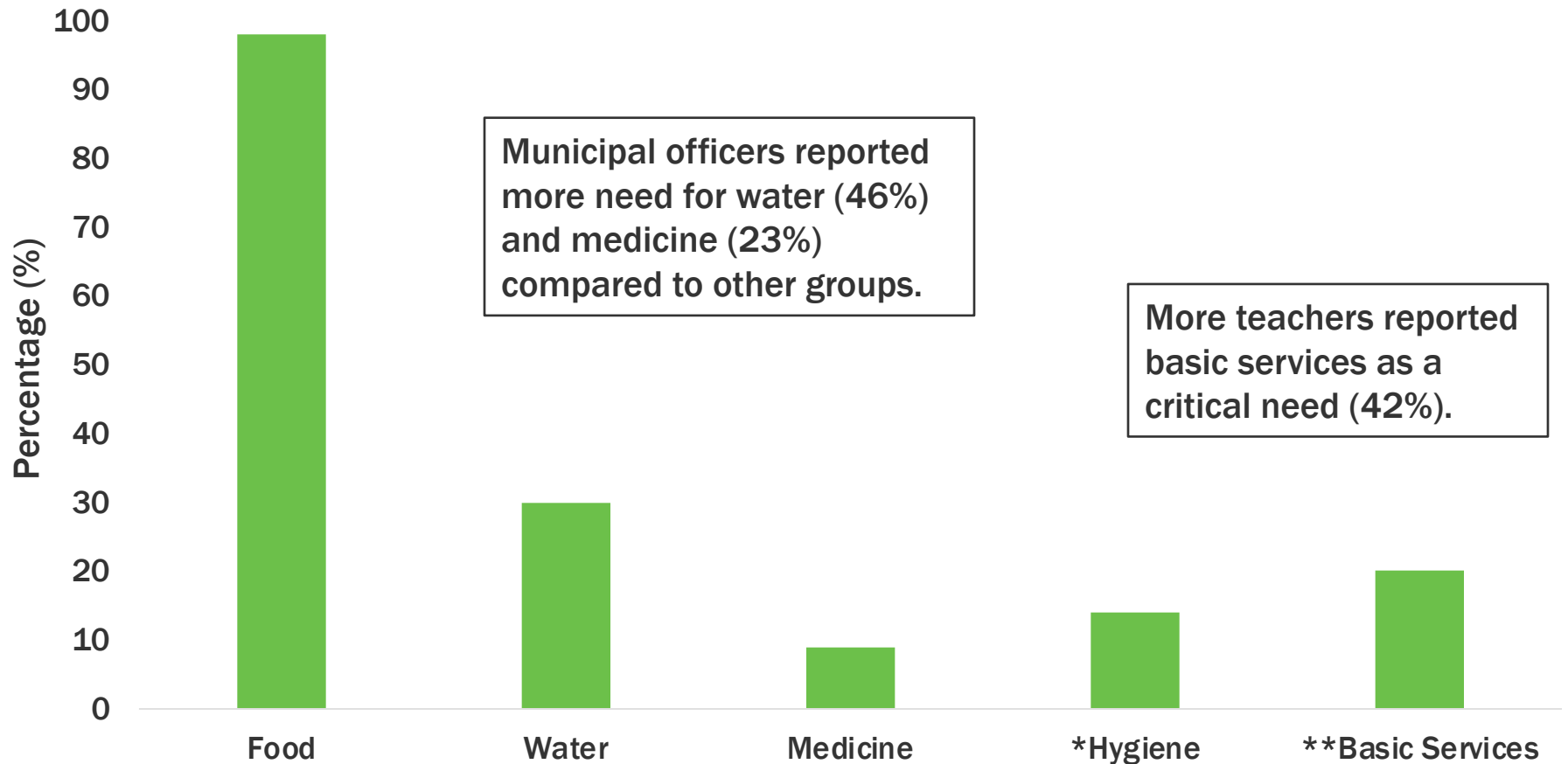
What are your community's challenges to self-isolating?



What are your community's challenges to frequent handwashing or using hand sanitizers?



If you were told by the government to stay in your house for the next two weeks, what would your critical needs be?



*Hygiene (personal hygiene and cleaning products)

**Basic services (electricity, water, housing, and waste removal)

Recommendations:

Knowledge and Perceptions

- The Government of Guatemala should intensify efforts to deliver accurate information on the prevention of COVID-19 to indigenous communities with a focus on:
 - Developing a COVID-19 road map for community action after the first case is identified in a given municipality, considering alternatives for self-isolation for poorest households.
 - Conveying tailored, actionable information with a multilingual approach.
 - Engaging and mobilizing community leaders, teachers, midwives, and young indigenous female mentors to deliver information at the community and household levels.

Recommendations:

Government Emergency Plans

- Support frontline health workers and municipal officers who say they are at high risk and are not able to stay at home due to their profesión by providing personal protective equipment.
- Central and municipal government should intensify efforts to address the impact of food insecurity and loss of income, and guarantee indigenous communities access to hygiene products and medicine.

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Partnering with national health ministries and other government agencies in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America, Population Council global and in-country scientists are conducting COVID-19 public health and social science research to produce relevant and timely evidence to support policymakers in controlling the spread of coronavirus, evaluating the effectiveness of prevention and mitigation measures, and assessing the longer-term health, social, and economic effects of the pandemic.

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