

EDUCATING APRNS & PAS IN PAIN MANAGEMENT: A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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PURPOSE

This survey is the first attempt to assess pain education for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and physician associates (PAs) as reported by novice and experienced clinicians and present the opportunity to enhance pain management training for future clinicians.

BACKGROUND

- Current evidence suggests a gap in pain management education for physicians.¹⁻⁶ The Institute of Medicine⁷ and the National Pain Strategy⁸ have called for better training for all health care clinicians.
- There is a lack of information known about the education in pain management care provided in primary APRN and PA training, and how prepared these clinicians are to provide basic pain management after graduation.⁹⁻¹⁰

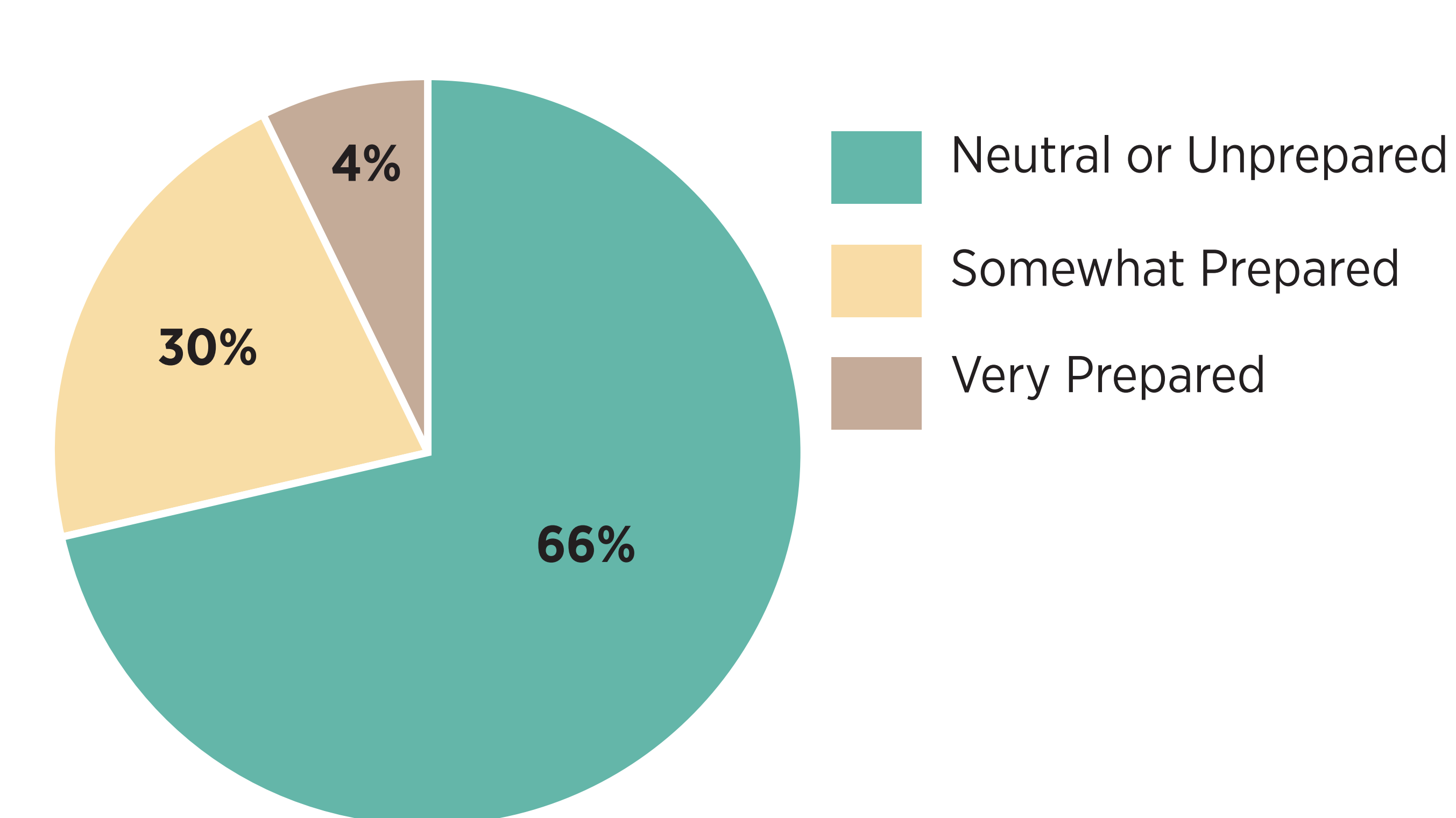
METHODS

- A Descriptive Survey Design was employed; ten survey questions were formulated and disseminated among APRNs/PAs nationwide.
- A brief (10 question) survey was administered online to APRNs and PAs nationwide using various databases to ensure diversity.

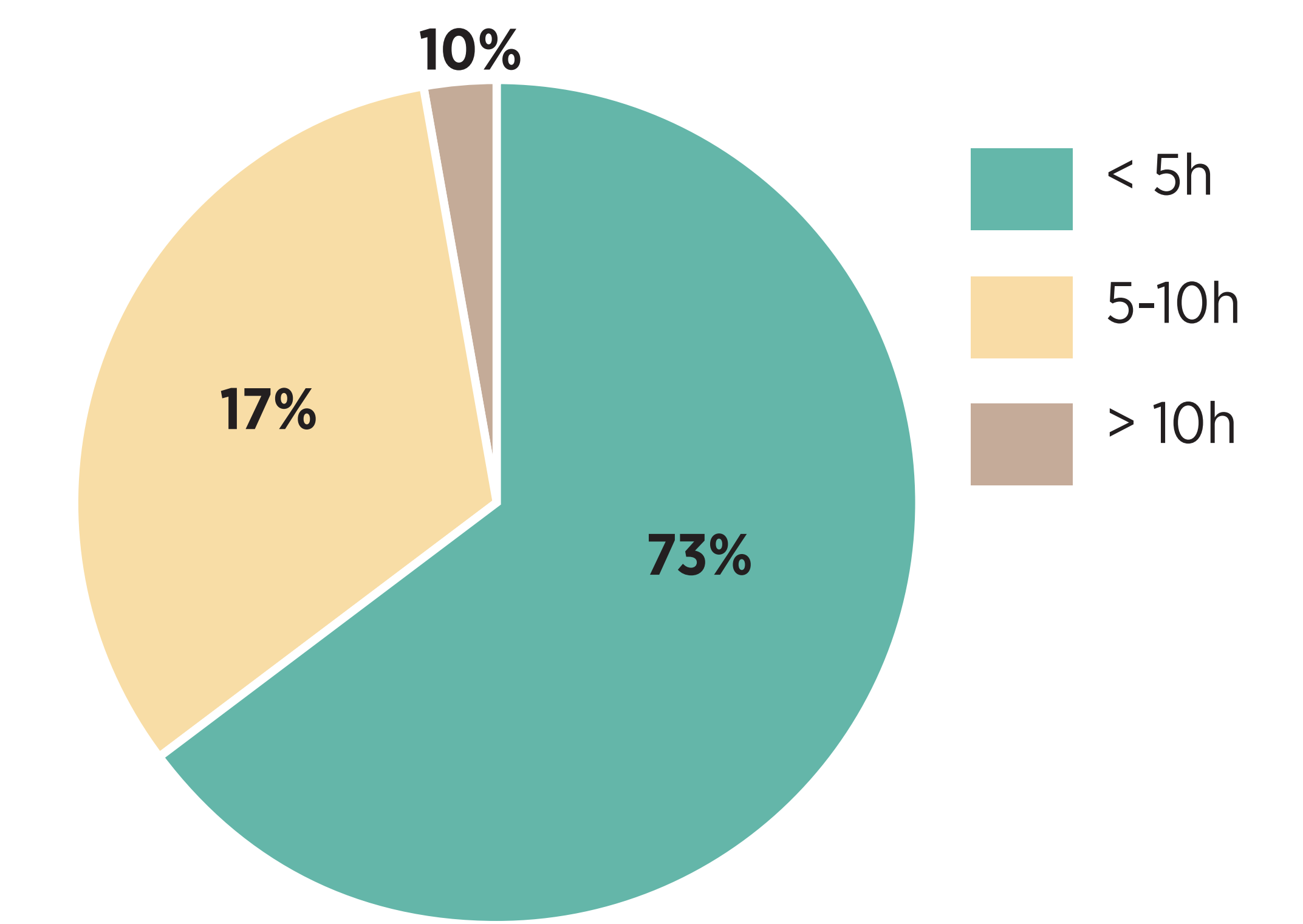
RESULTS

- Of the 470 respondents, 276 (58%) were APRNs and 194 (41%) were PAs, representing 47 states, D.C., Canada, and the Netherlands, with 57% practicing for 5+ years.
- 248 respondents (53%) report they spend at least 50% clinical time managing pain. Of those, 165 work in a pain management or palliative care specialty. The remainder work in other specialties, with the majority working in family/internal medicine.
- The majority of respondents (75%) report <5 hours of pain management education within primary training; in comparison to U.S. medical schools 11 hours.⁴
- Predominant education was performed “on the job” and through self-directed professional development opportunities
- In preparation to care for patients with basic chronic or acute pain management needs, 66% felt “neutral or unprepared” in their first year in clinical practice.

Level of Preparedness for Clinical Practice



Hours of Pain Management Training



CONCLUSIONS

APRNs and PAs reported low confidence and perceived competence in providing pain management in acute and chronic settings during the first year of practice. Initial findings call for transformation within APRN and PA education as well as specialty, pain management training.

MORE INFORMATION

Scan the QR code or email Heather.Jackson@vumc.org for additional inquiries.

