

Sidra Sarfaraz MSc¹, Tarek Turk MD², Luvneet Verma MD², Marlene Dytoc MD, FRCPC²

¹Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

²Division of Dermatology, Department of Medicine, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Background

- Teledermatology utilization increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic
- While many advantages of teledermatology have been reported, there is a lack of evidence-based, gold-standard guidelines for assessment and management through teledermatology, particularly for chronic dermatologic conditions
- Objective of this study was to conduct a survey of Canadian dermatologists and dermatology resident physicians with the goal of understanding the current practice patterns, advantages, and challenges of teledermatology, including for atopic dermatitis (AD)

Methodology

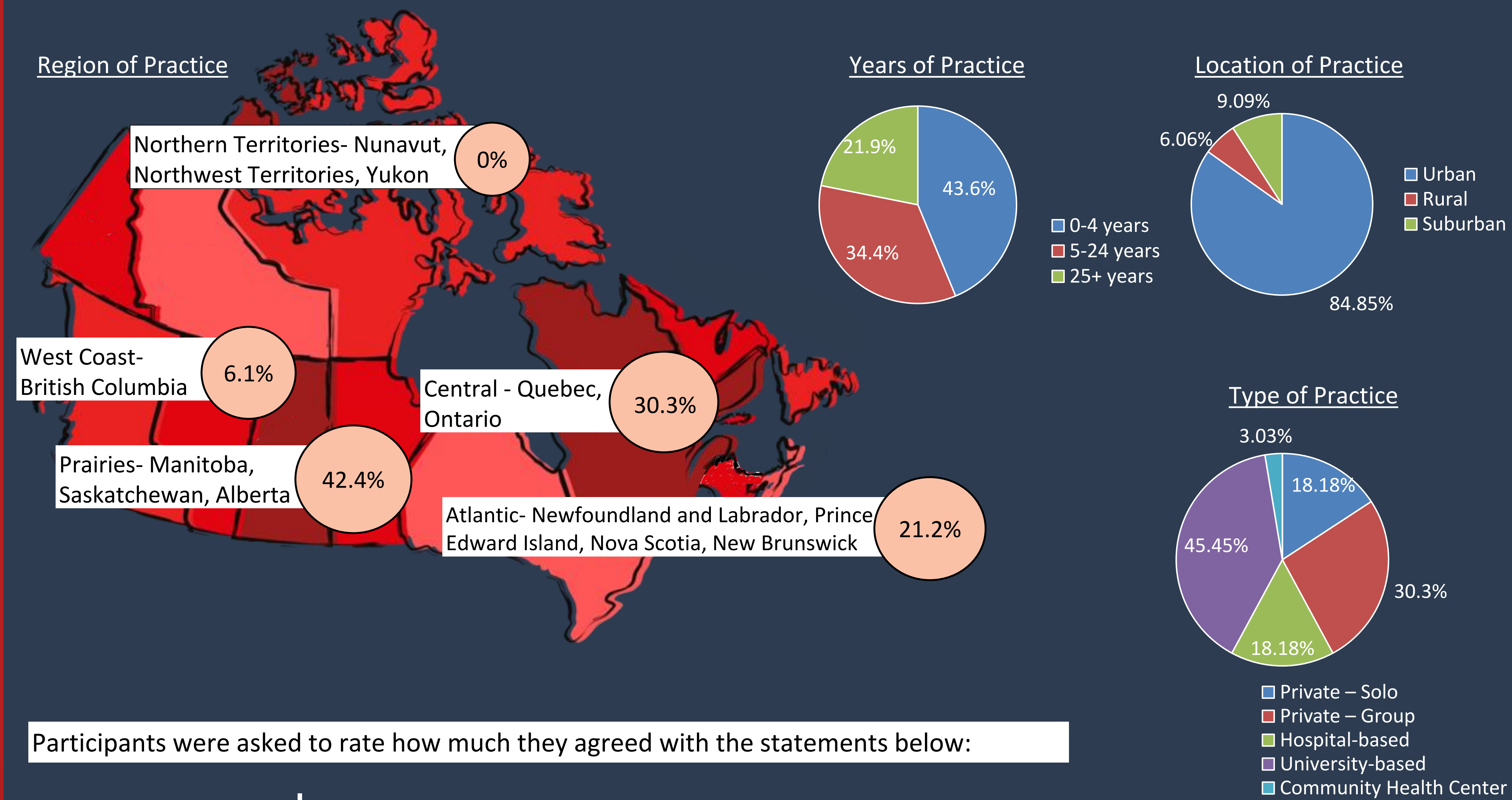
- A 42-question survey was distributed to Dermatologists and Dermatology residents across Canada in English and French
- Questions were asked on:
 - Participants' general characteristics and practice patterns; opinions regarding challenges of teledermatology, and teledermatology education and training; attitudes on research; suggestions for improvement
- Descriptive statistics consisted of counts and percentages out of the total number of responses for each question
- Medians were calculated for Likert scale answers
- Thematic analysis was conducted for answers to open-ended questions
- The study design was approved by the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board (Pro00115599)

Results

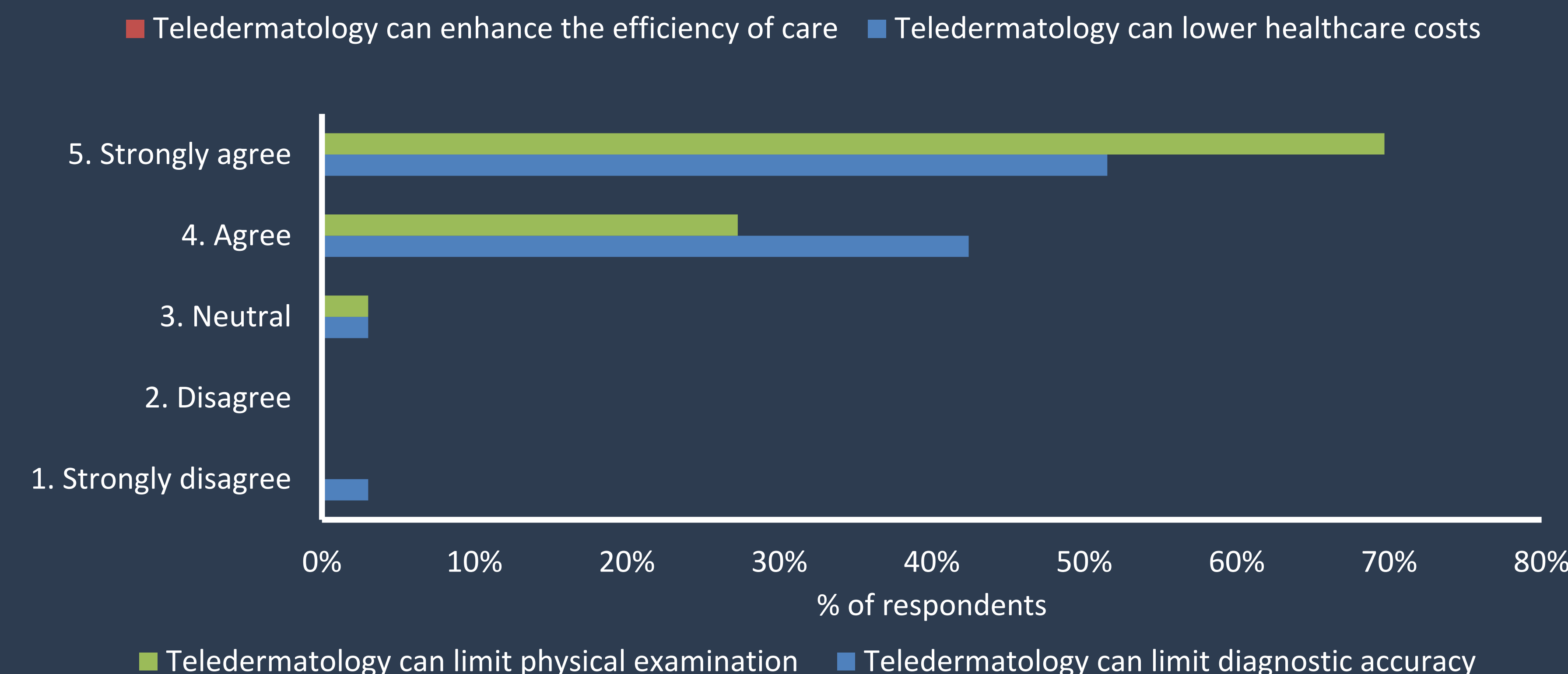
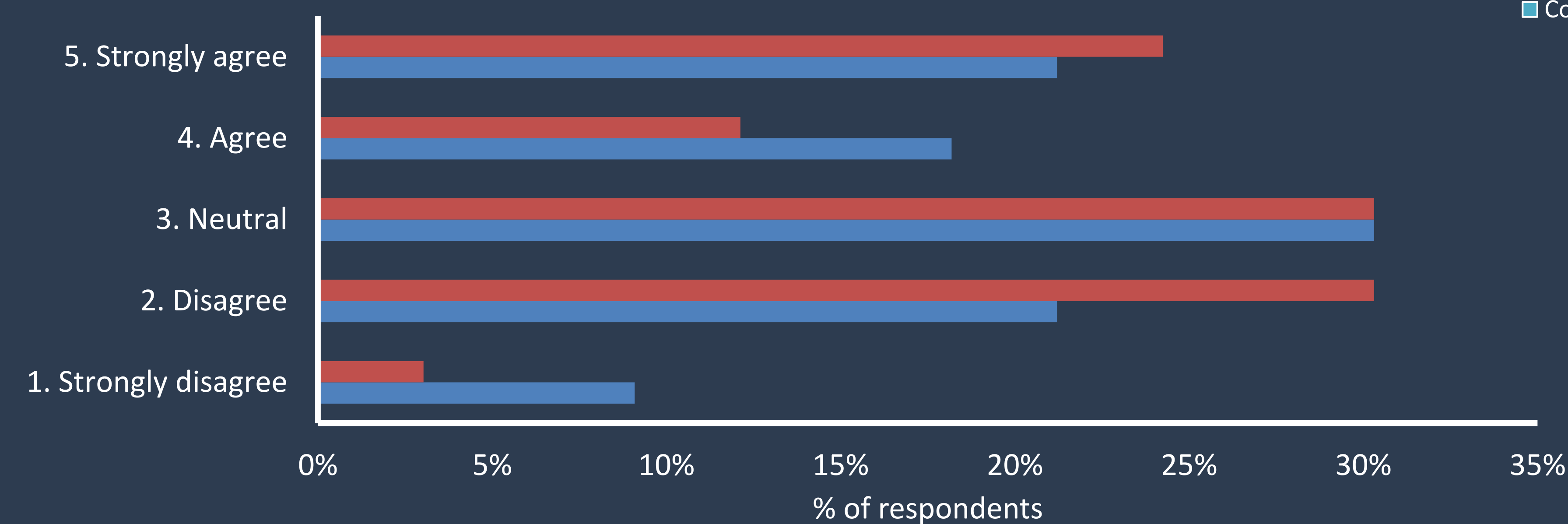
Table 1. General demographics of survey respondents. Total n of respondents: 33

Characteristic	N (%)
Gender	
Female	18 (56.3)
Male	14 (43.8)
Other	0
Prefer not to say	0
Age (Mean: 44.2, SD: 14.30)	
26-49	20 (66.7)
50-69	8 (26.7)
70-91	2 (6.7)
Title	
Resident	9 (27.3)
Fellow	1 (3.0)
Staff Physician	22 (66.7)

Results

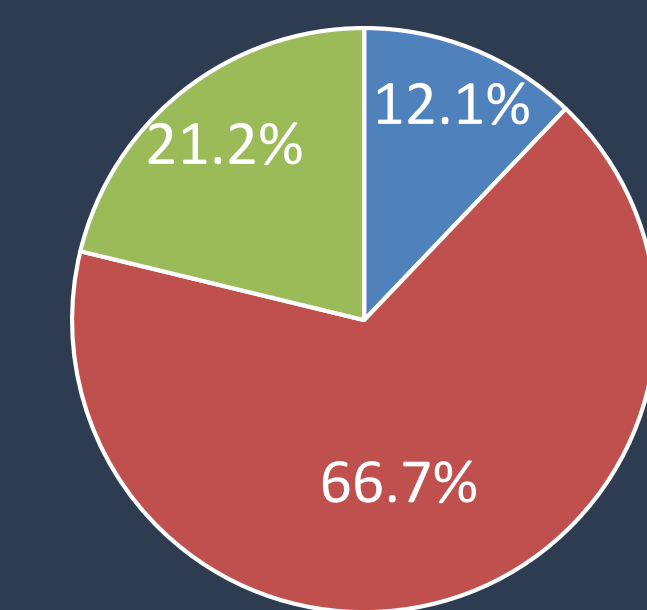


Participants were asked to rate how much they agreed with the statements below:

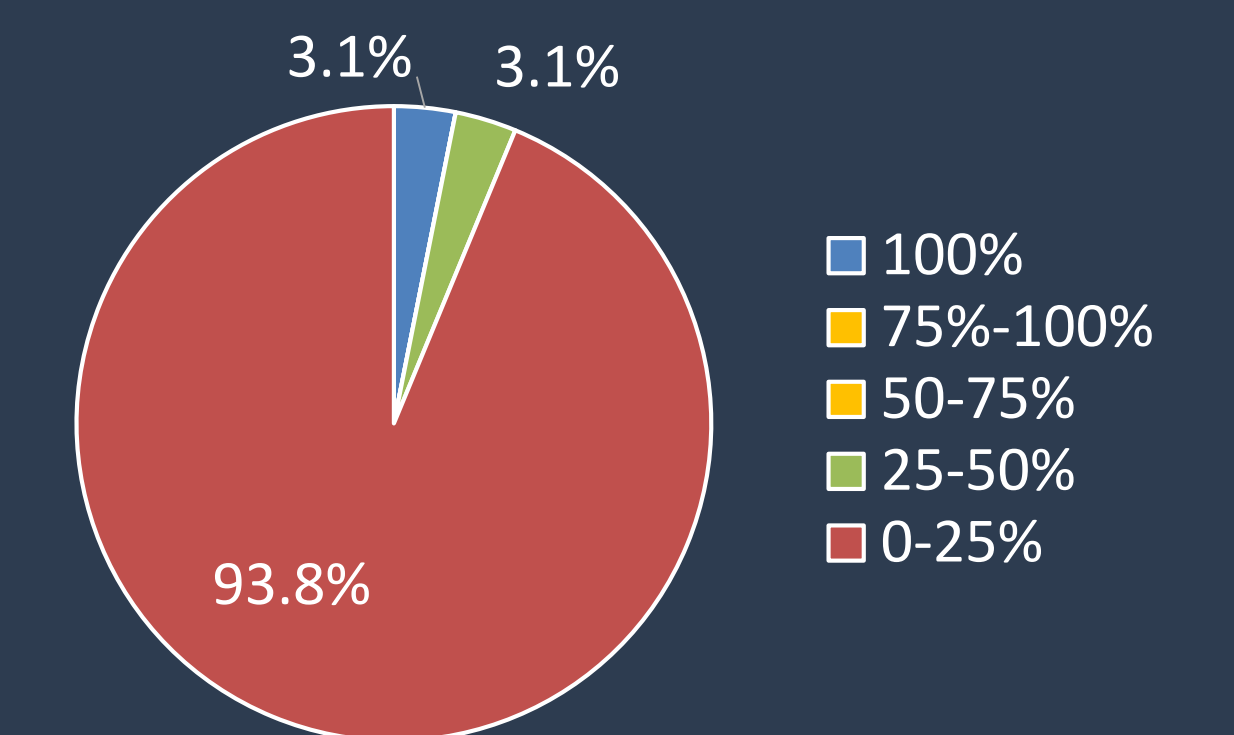


Results

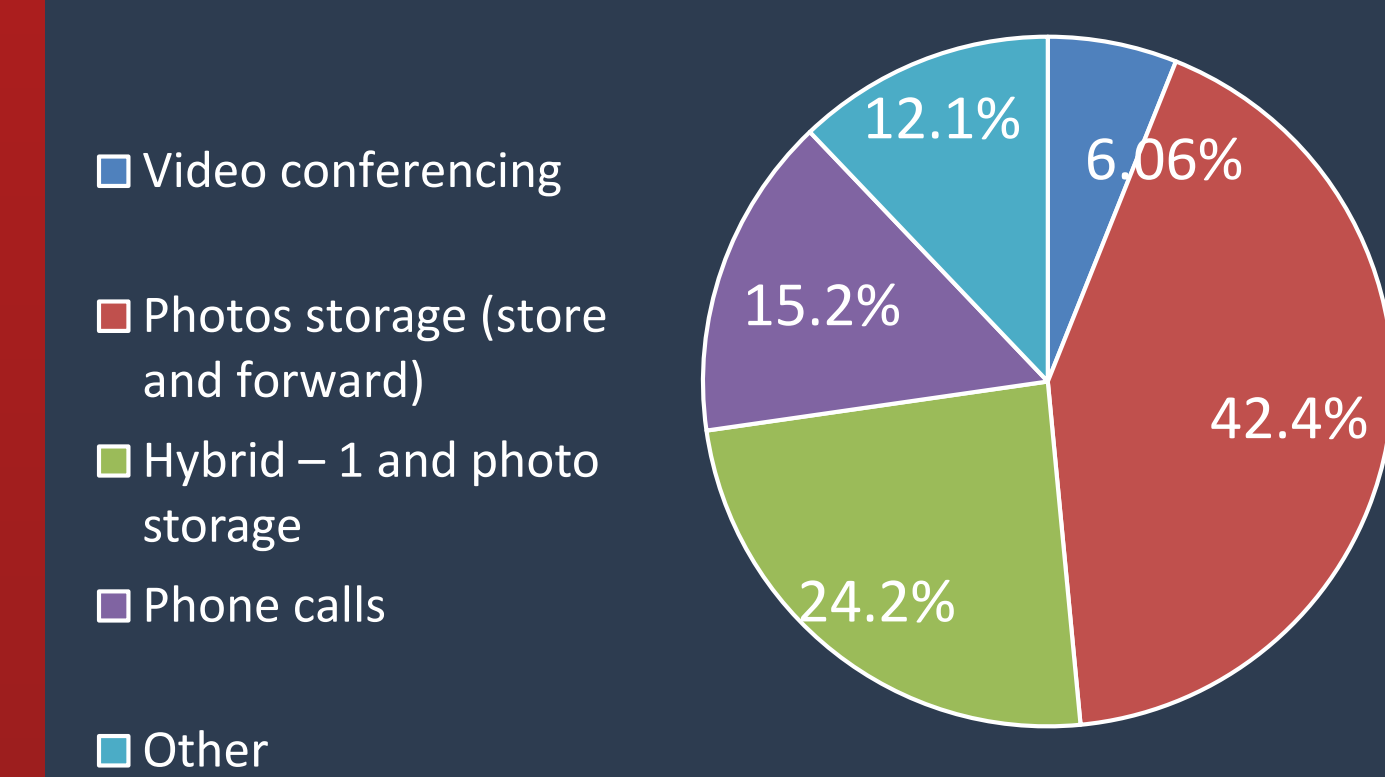
Do you use teledermatology as part of your practice?



How much do teledermatological consultations constitute of your practice?



Which teledermatological interaction model do you think is the most efficient?



Conclusions

- Most respondents started using teledermatology during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Respondents mainly used and preferred store-and-forward technology
- Respondents were overall neutral when considering whether teledermatology enhances efficiency of care and lowers healthcare costs
- Some advantages of teledermatology were reported to be improved healthcare access and health equity, while challenges were related to diagnostic accuracy and inability to perform physical exams
- Our results may be used to enhance future research and clinical applications of teledermatology