

Stroke-survivors' perceived need for medicine-support: A web-based survey

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What was the problem

The long term impact of a stroke can be severe. Stroke survivors often live long term with disability. Disabilities, which may include memory problems or swallowing difficulties, can affect stroke survivors' ability to take their medicines.

The term adherence is used to describe the extent to which someone takes their medicines as instructed by their doctor.

Approximately 1 out of every 2 stroke survivors are not taking their stroke medicines according to the prescribers recommendations.

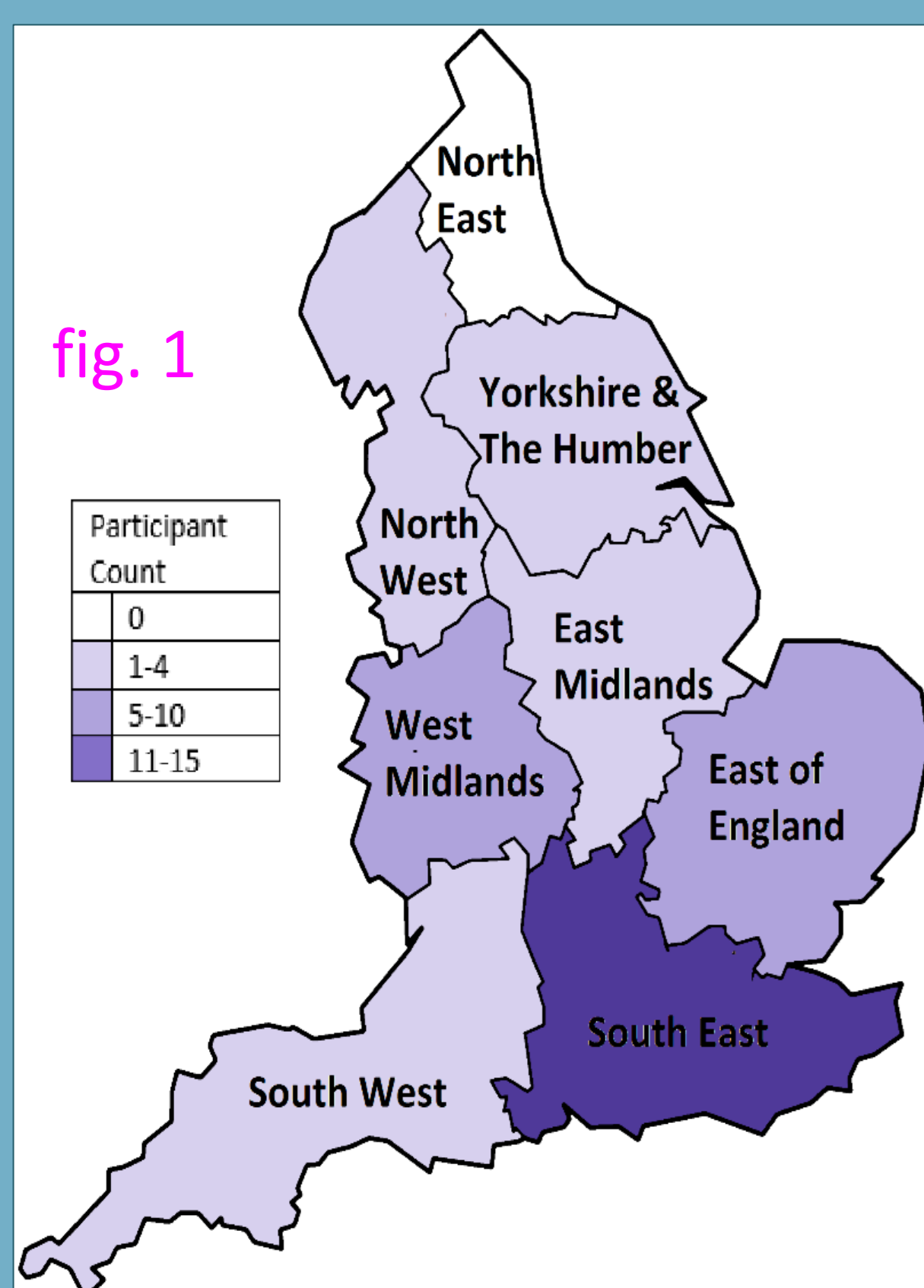
Aim

To determine stroke-survivors' adherence to medicines and their needs and preferences for medicine-support.

What did we do

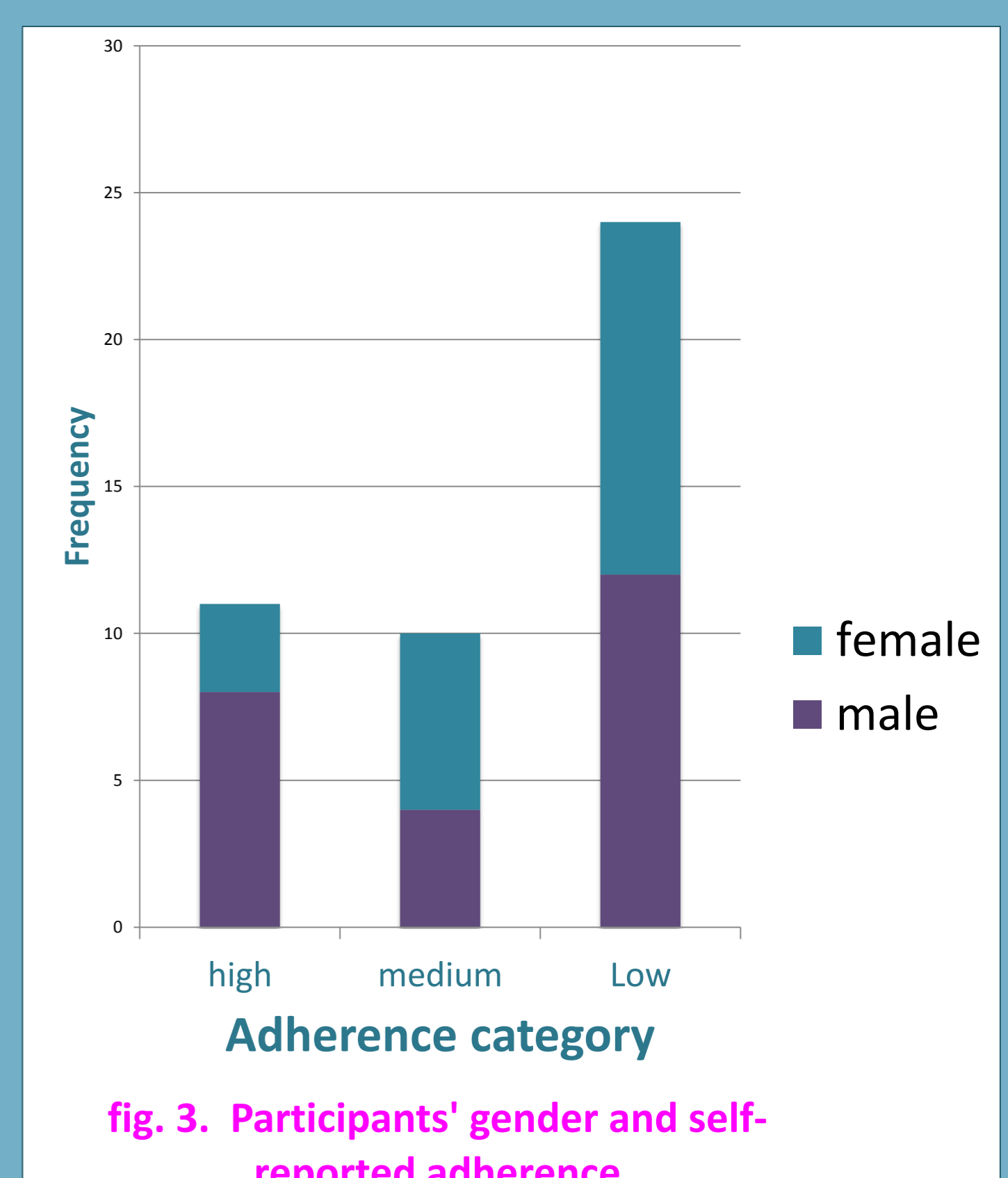
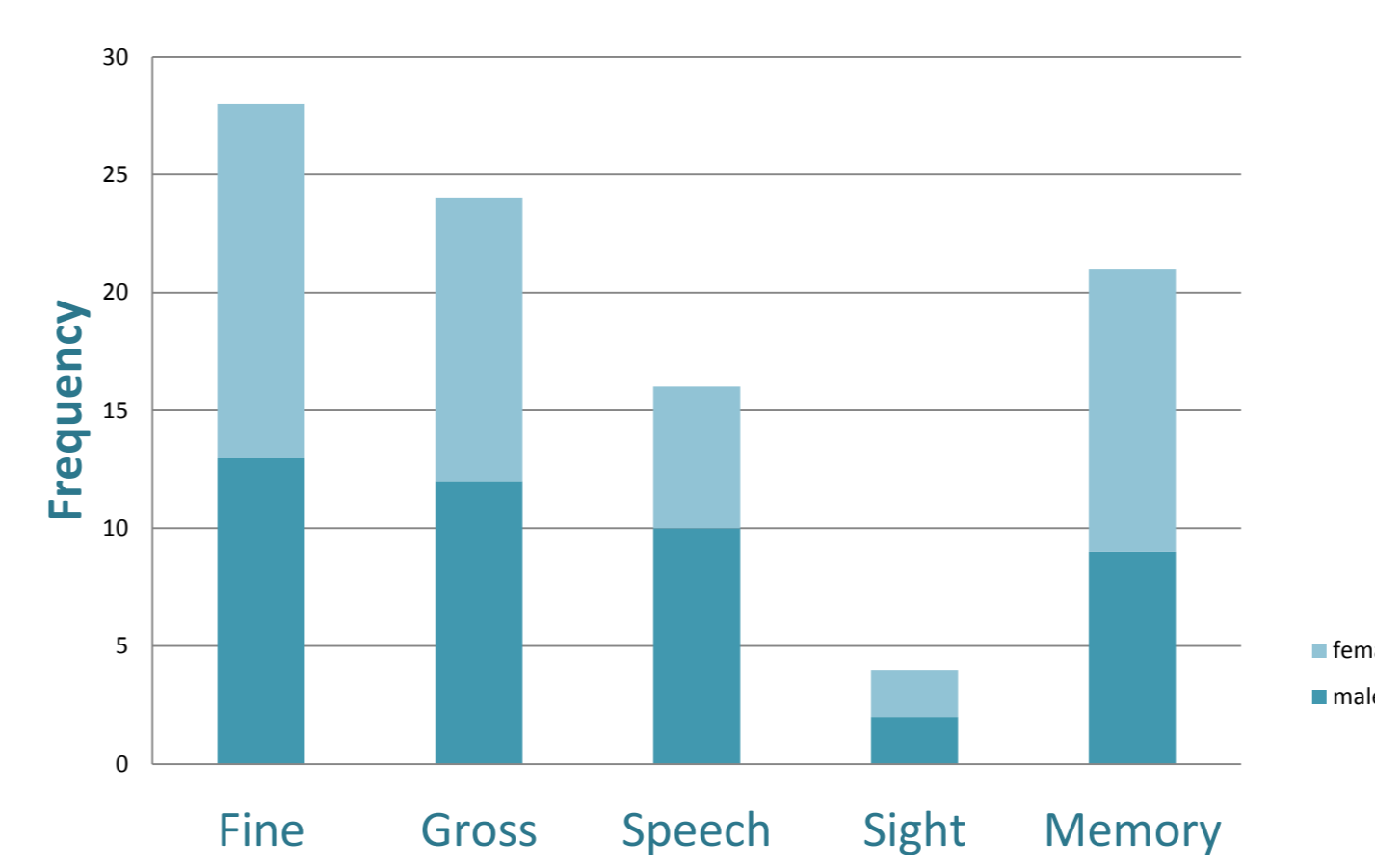
- We designed and then distributed an on online survey via social networks such as facebook and Twitter
- The questions we asked were based upon some of our previous work.
- We also asked about adherence to medicines using a standard questionnaire – this categorised participants as having low, medium or high adherence. Someone with high adherence takes their medicines exactly as they have been told to.
- The survey also asked stroke survivors about who helped them with their medicines.
- People who took part were stroke survivors, living in England who were taking regular prescription medicines.

What did we find

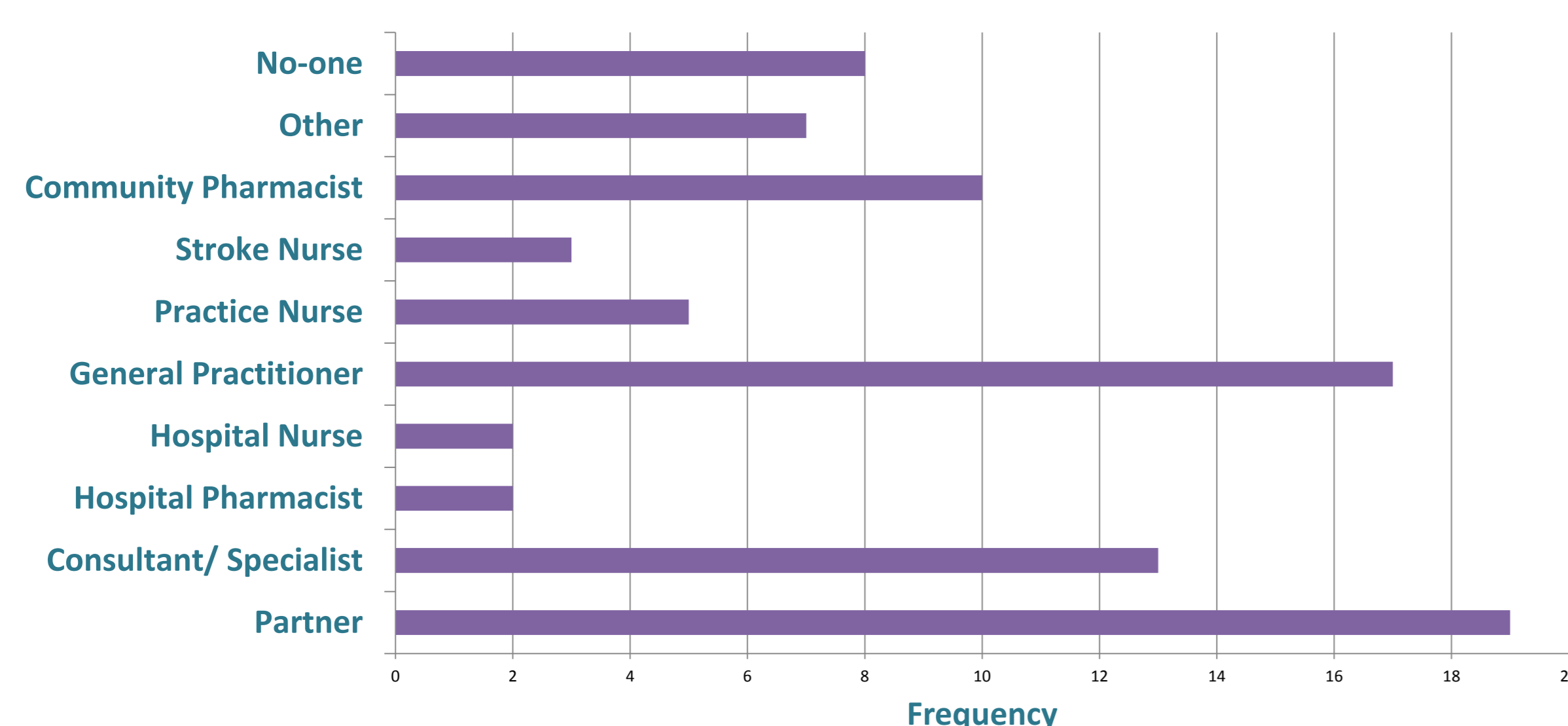


- 47 stroke-survivors (24 male) from all over England (fig. 1)
- Average age of 60 years
- The majority (34) had had a single stroke
- Most had some disability as a result of their stroke (fig.2)
- Stroke survivors on average had their stroke 4 years ago, but there was a wide range between participants (1-30 years).

- Over half had 'low medicine adherence (fig.3)
- 11% lived alone

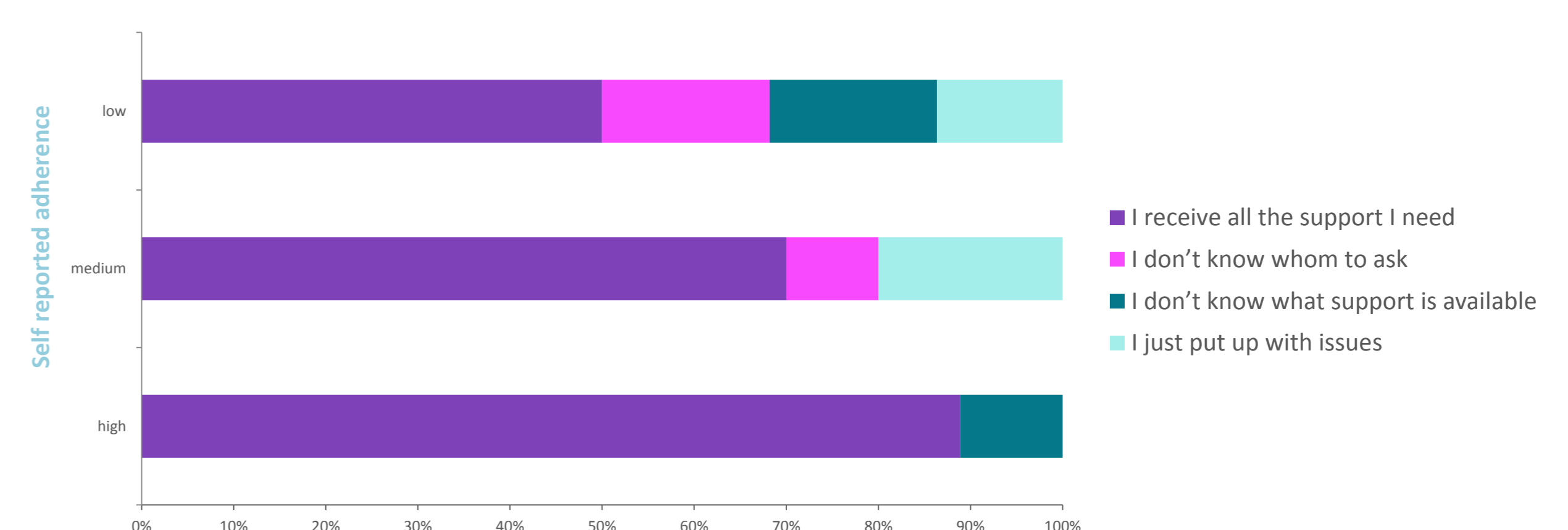


Who provides medicine support? (fig. 4)



Medicine support was most commonly provided by their partner (40%, n=19), general practitioner (36%, n=17), consultant specialist (28%, n=13) or community pharmacist (21%, n=10)

Are stroke survivors getting the support they need? (fig. 5)



- 55% believed they were receiving the support they needed
- 13% put up with issues
- 11% didn't know whom to ask for support
- 11% didn't know what support was available

What does this mean?

Stroke-survivors appear to lack insight into their need for medicine-support. High adherence seems to be related to getting enough support. Pharmacists should be more proactive in supporting this patient group, because many have poor adherence which is placing them at high risk of a further stroke.

Acknowledgements

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