

Assessing Patient-Provider Relationships & Screening Behaviors Amongst Latinx LGBTQI+ Communities

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Introduction

There are over 1.6 million people in California who identify as LGBTQI+ and nearly one third of these individuals live in Los Angeles County.¹ Individuals who belong to minority groups such as these are more likely to engage in riskier behaviors, are at a higher risk for adverse health outcomes, and are more likely to experience reduced healthcare access and utilization. Specifically, these individuals are at higher risk for developing cancer and have higher cancer mortality rates than heterosexual individuals.²

LGBTQI+ individuals have specific healthcare needs based on their identity, but access to this type of care necessitates patient disclosure of identity. There are significant barriers to disclosing one's identity, including fear of provider discrimination, belief that health and identity are unrelated, internalized stigma or simply a lack of provider inquiry. Surveys have reported that over half of LGBTQI+ individuals have reported experiencing discrimination in care³ and one-third have not shared their identity with their healthcare providers.⁴

It is necessary to gain a greater understanding of the relationships between LGBTQI+ patients and their providers in order to develop appropriate and successful health intervention programs.

Purpose

In 2017 the Latinx Task Force of Los Angeles County restructured its taskforce to collect data tailored to the LGBTQI+ Latinx community in Southern California. After careful design and input from two focus groups, the first needs assessment was conducted in 2018. The purpose of the survey was to better understand the community's experience with cancer screening, prevention and risk reduction strategies, as well as their health seeking behaviors. This would help to guide our outreach and education efforts to best meet the needs of this often-underrepresented community. Additionally, this information can be shared with like-minded community partners and health care providers, in order to increase knowledge and breakdown structural barriers.

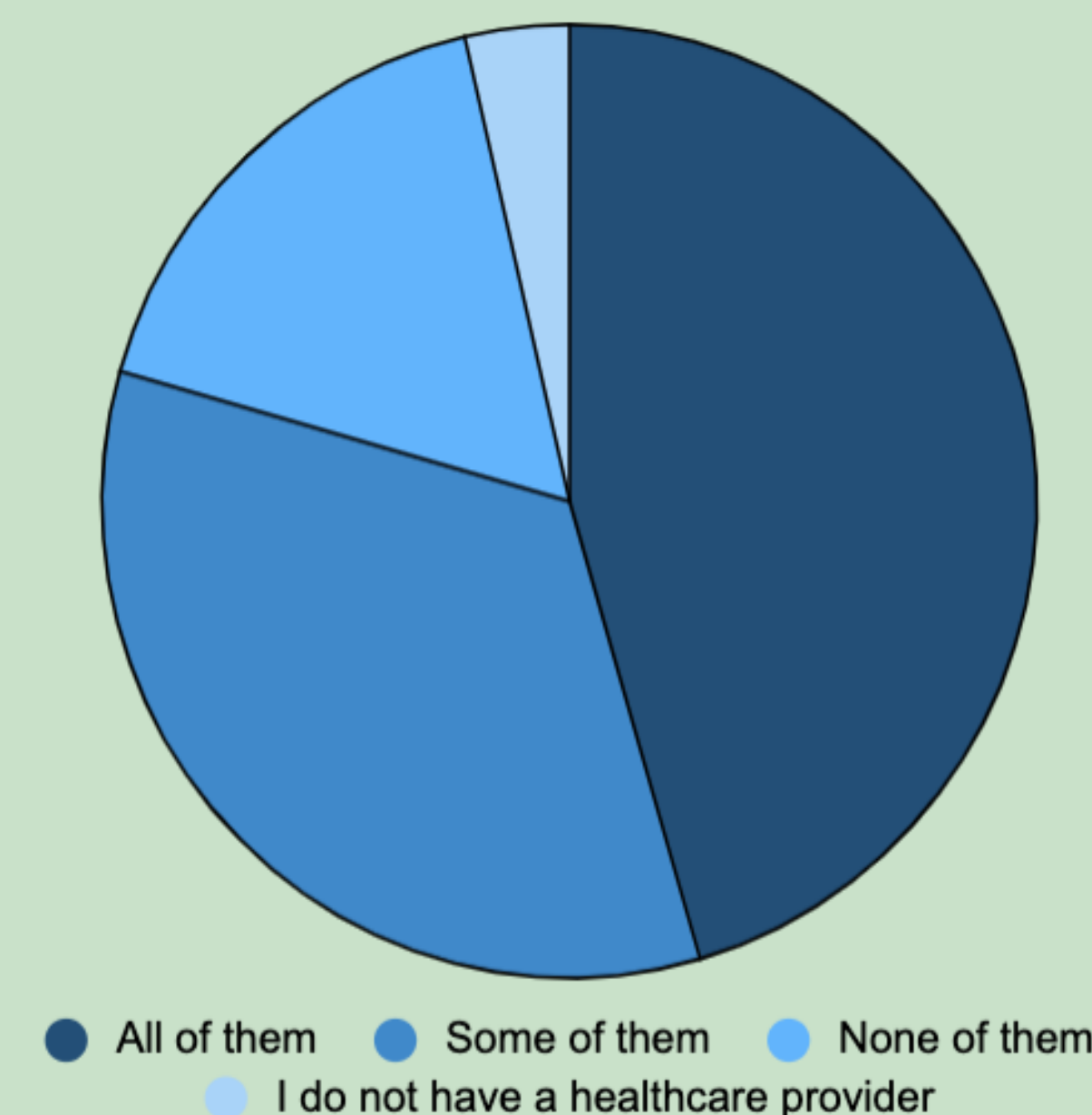
Methods

The 2018 online needs assessment survey was conducted using REDCap, a secure web-based application designed for research. Respondents were recruited via social media and at various outreach and education events throughout Southern California, with the direct help of partnering organizations who serve the Latinx LGBTQI+ Latinx community. Upon completion of the survey, respondents were entered to win a \$50 gift card.

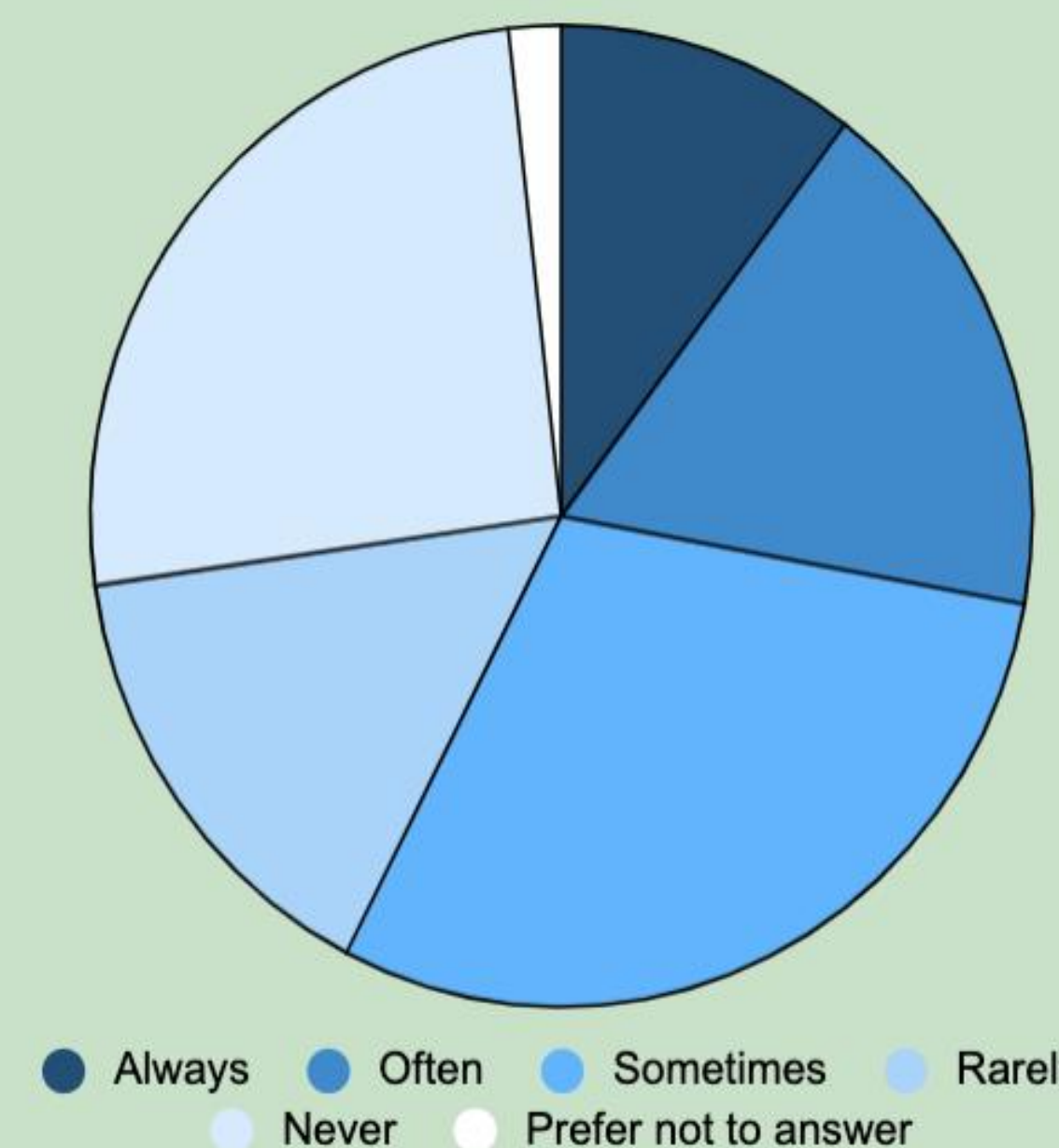
Results

- A total of 176 participants completed the survey. A majority of participants identified as Latinx (72.7%), cisgender (83.6%), and gay (40.6%).
- **1/3** of participants are overdue for their routine Pap test, **1/2** are overdue for mammograms and nearly **1/3** are overdue for colonoscopy exams.
- Compared to gay individuals, **bisexual individuals** ($p < 0.001$) and **pansexual individuals** ($p = 0.004$) were less likely to share their gender identity and/or sexual orientation with their healthcare providers. Bisexual individuals ($p = 0.005$) were also less likely to share this information when compared to queer individuals.
- **Only 14.5%** stated that their healthcare providers were extremely knowledgeable about LGBTQI+ health. **Lesbian** (0.042, $p = 0.028$, 95%CI) and **pansexual** (0.016, $p = 0.019$, 95%CI) individuals had lower odds of having their providers know about LGBTQI+ health when compared to gay individuals.
- **72.8%** of participants reported that they have ever been **afraid to share** their gender identity and/or sexual orientation with their healthcare providers.
- **52.7%** reported that their healthcare providers had a neutral reaction when they shared their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.
- **71.5%** prefer to receive healthcare from LGBTQI+ trained healthcare providers.
- **90.9%** of participants have **never** received LGBTQI+ tailored healthcare information. For those who had, a majority (**63.6%**) received the information from community-based organizations.
- **82.4%** stated that they would be open to receiving LGBTQI+ tailored cancer information in a one-on-one with their **healthcare providers** and **72.7%** reported they would prefer to receive this information in person.

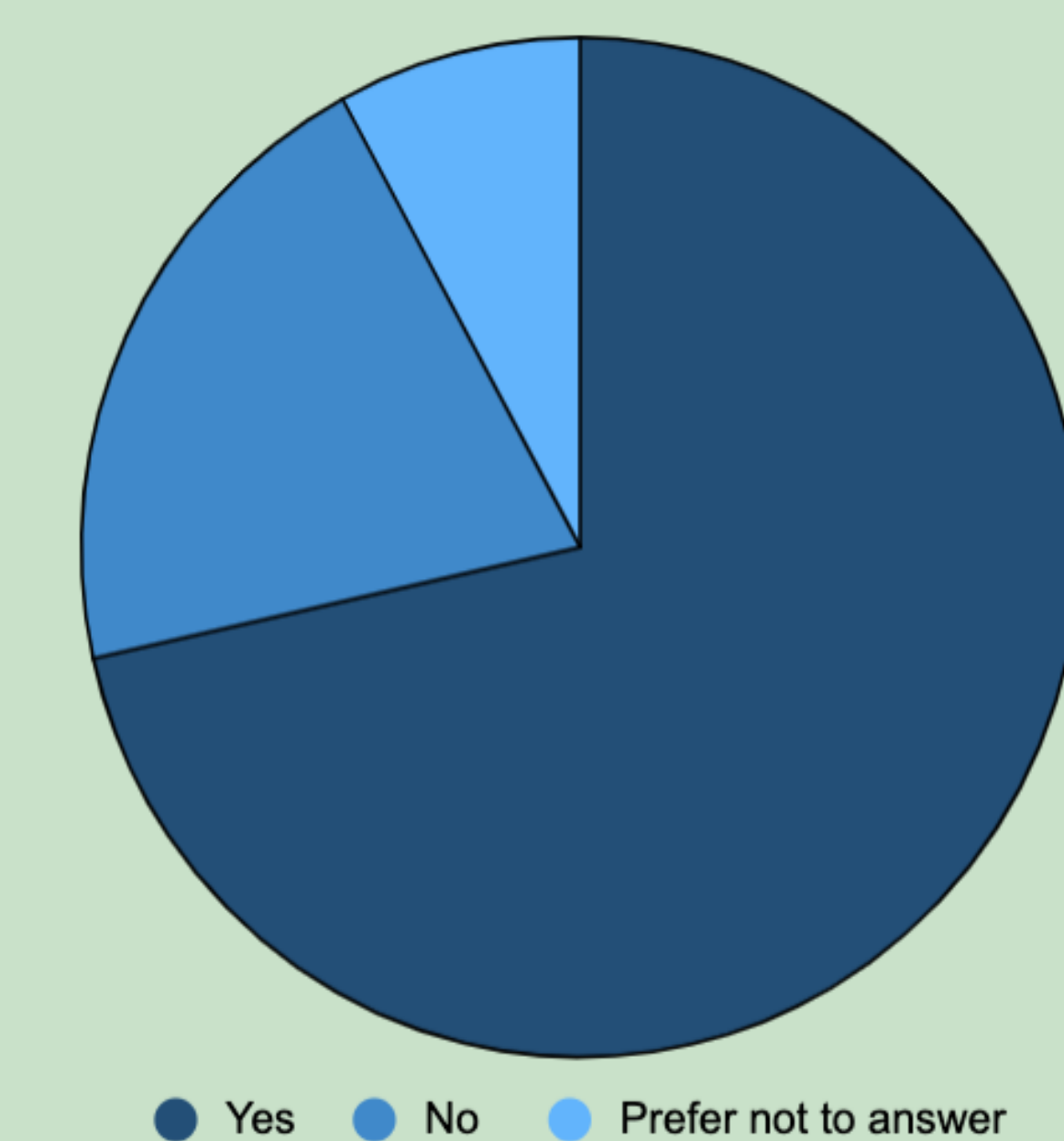
Have you shared your gender identity and/or sexual orientation with your doctors/healthcare providers?



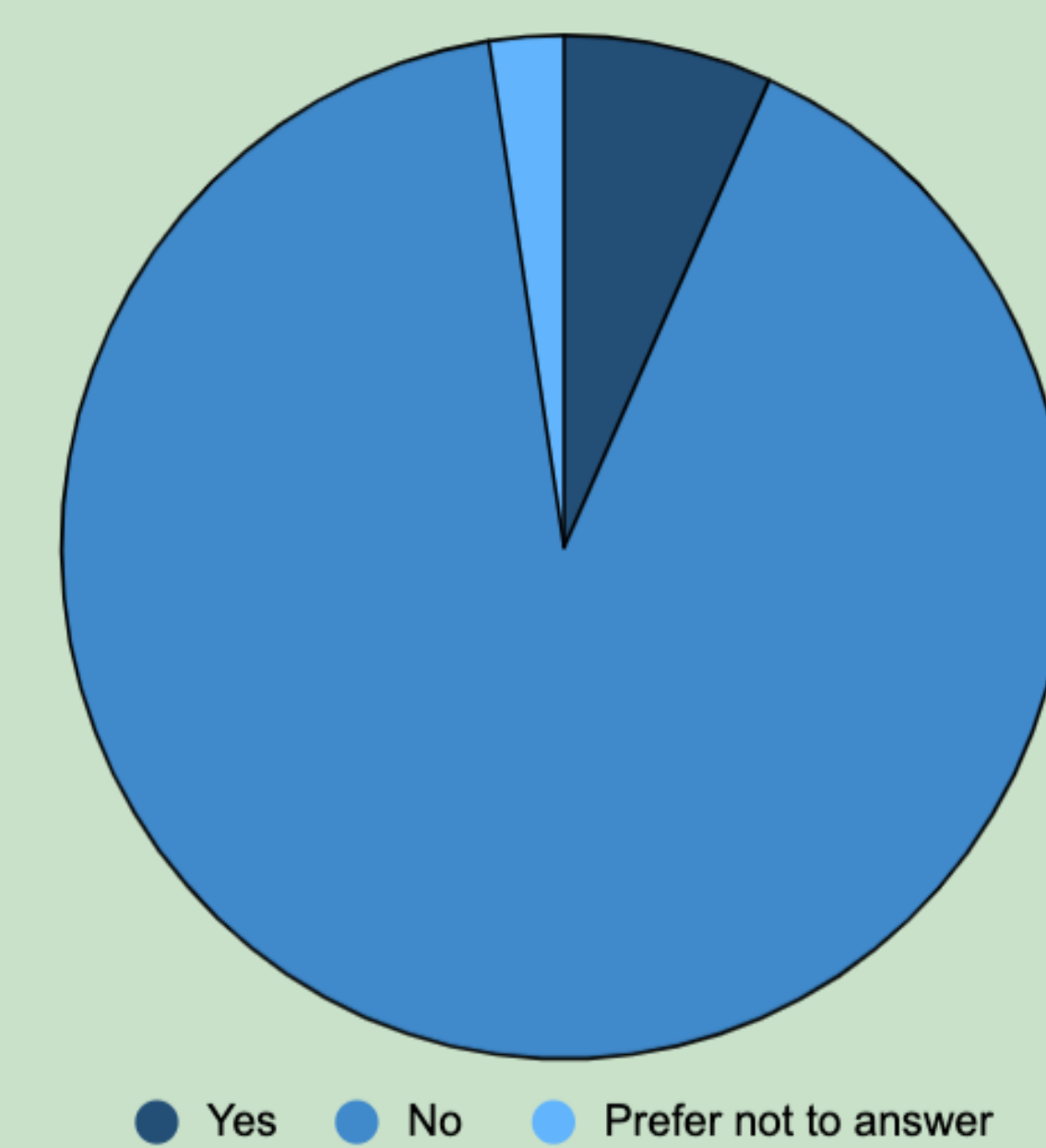
Have you ever been afraid to share your gender identity and/or sexual orientation with your healthcare provider?



When you receive healthcare do you prefer to go to LGBTQI+ trained health providers?



Have you ever received LGBTQI+ tailored cancer information?



Discussion

The findings from the 2018 needs assessment survey demonstrate that there is a critical need to improve patient-provider relationships within the LGBTQI+ Latinx community. Results suggest that there may be fear associated with disclosing one's gender identity and/or sexual orientation to a healthcare provider. It is imperative that providers be equipped with the information required to support their LGBTQI+ patients by providing tailored healthcare information.

As a result of these findings, we have developed a pronoun training entitled "Pronouns Matter". This workshop is intended to create a more inclusive environment among providers and community-based organizations by providing vital gender identity and pronoun education. Thus far, this training has been shared with patient navigators, community-based organizations and there are plans to administer this training to healthcare providers.

Future studies are needed to further address the needs of sexual and gender minorities. We plan to expand our needs assessment to the broader LGBTQI+ community.

Acknowledgements

The Latinx Task Force is a volunteer-driven coalition united in a common cause, working to promote community-wide health and wellness. We're comprised of professionals with diverse backgrounds, representing community and faith-based organizations, foundations, government, hospitals, universities and community clinics. Currently we represent the following agencies: ALAS para tu Salud/PALS for Health, Alinea Medical Imaging, American Cancer Society, California Health Collaborative, Cancer Legal Resource Center, Cedars Sinai, City of Hope, Planned Parenthood Pasadena and San Gabriel Valley, Promotoras y Promotores Foundation, University of California Los Angeles, University of Southern California, U/.S. Food & Drug Administration and the Wall Las Memorias Project.

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