

A survey to assess the importance of digital health and its growing relevance in the medical field and in medical publications

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Background

The US Food and Drug Administration¹ recognizes a broad definition of digital health technology, defined as the "computing platforms, connectivity, software, and sensors for healthcare and related uses." Uses for these technologies range from applications in general wellness to medical product development.

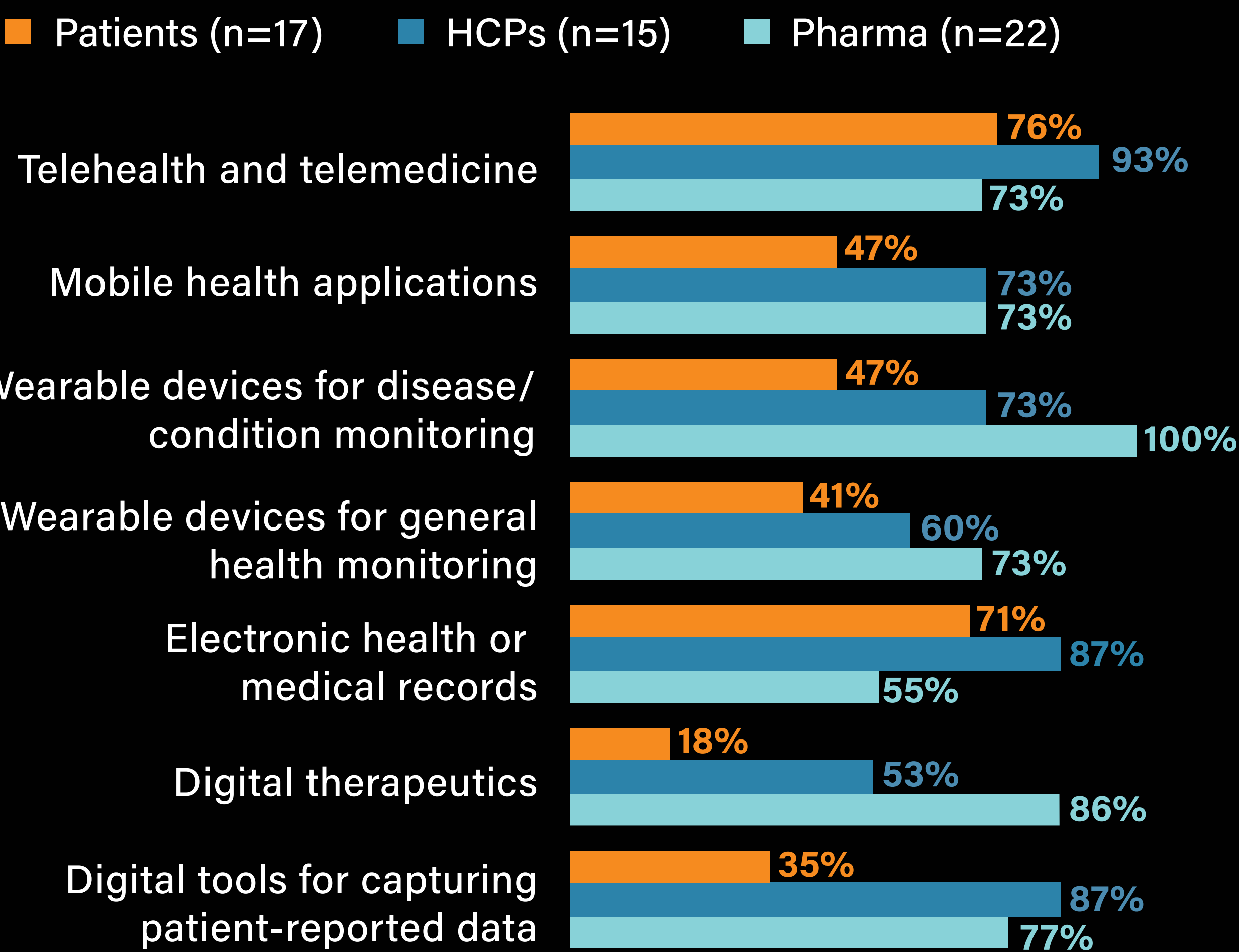
Objective

We sought to understand, from the perspectives of multiple key stakeholders, the importance of digital health, how it's defined, its perceived benefits, and its significance for medical publications.

Methodology

- Patients (n=17), healthcare professionals (HCPs; n=15), employees of pharmaceutical companies (pharma; n=22), and medical communications professionals (n=242) were surveyed
- Surveys were distributed through LinkedIn, email, and the distribution lists of 5 independent medical communications agencies
- Survey questions, additional methodology, and a full accounting of participants are available in the supplementary materials

We evaluated which of the following categories were considered by participants to be digital health.



The perception of what digital health is varied by participants, with pharma employees and HCPs including more categories in their definitions than patients.

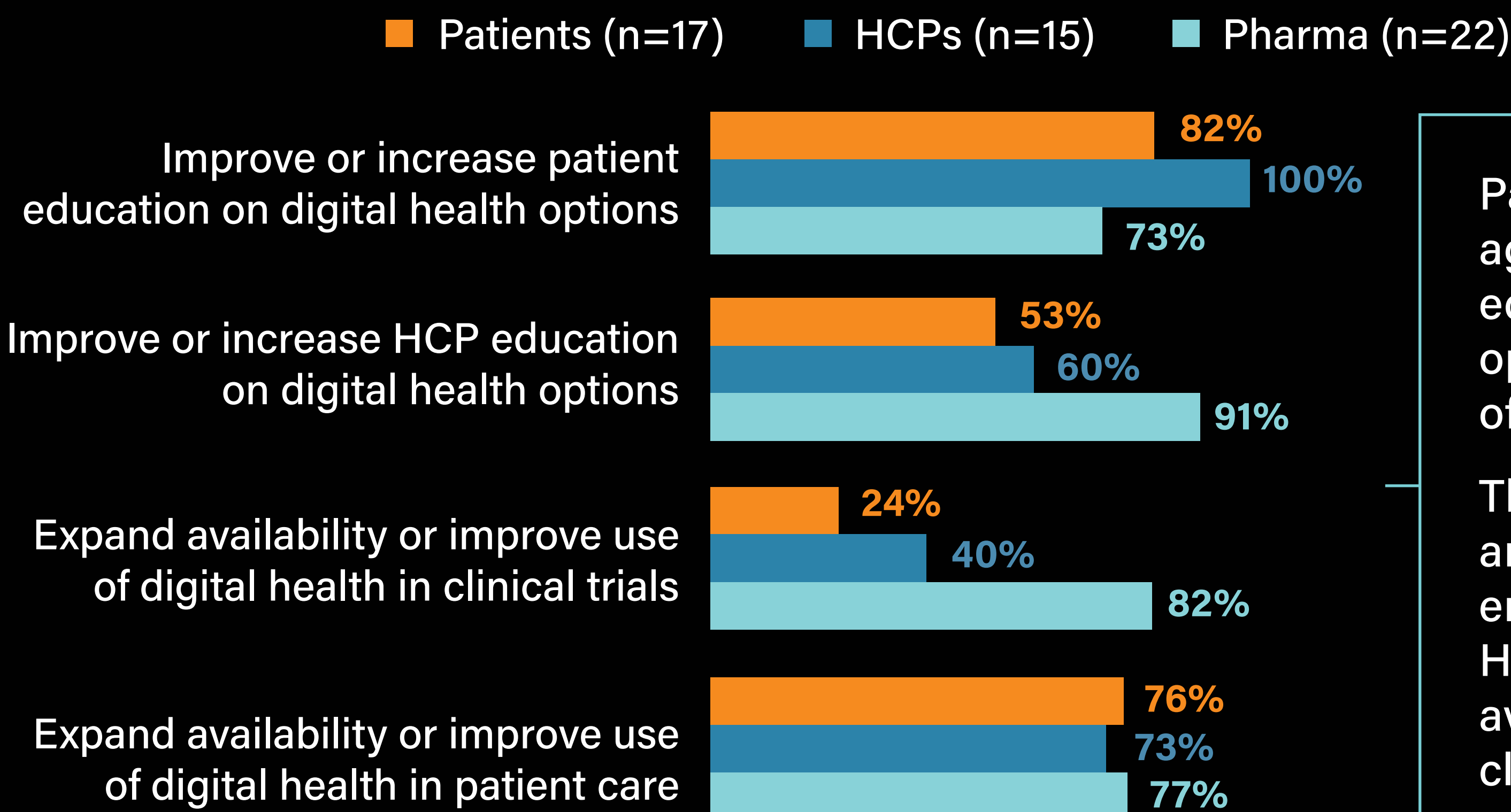


Scan the QR code for full data and supplementary materials

We would like to thank all respondents for their time in completing this survey. We thank Beiyu Tang for her conceptual review of this work. We would also like to thank Karen Francisco for her help in the design/layout of this poster and supplementary content.

Reference: 1. US Food and Drug Administration. What is Digital Health. Available at <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/digital-health-center-excellence/what-digital-health>. (Accessed April 2023).

3 What can be done to increase patient uptake of digital health technology?



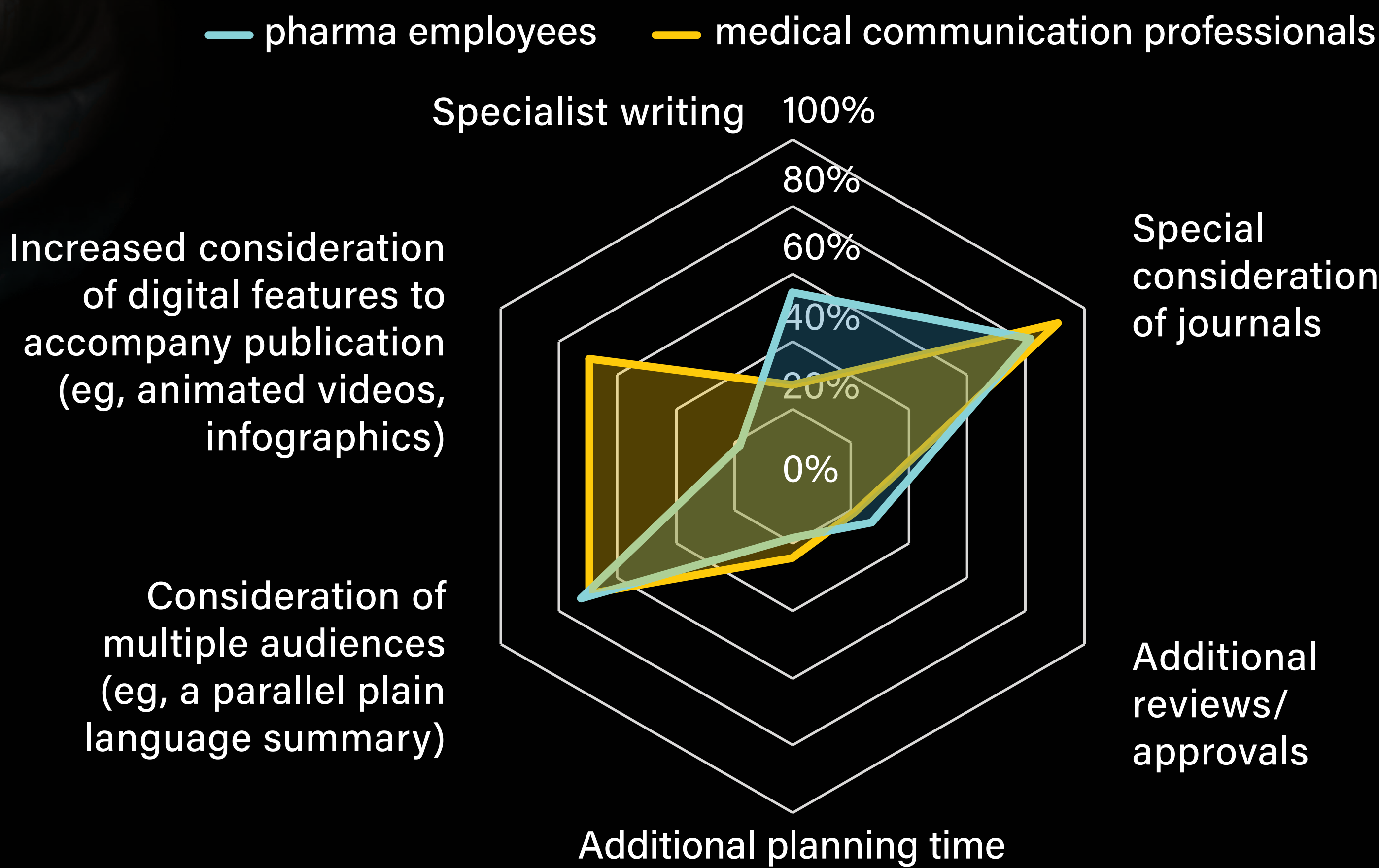
Patients, HCPs, and pharma employees agreed that increasing patient education with respect to digital health options could increase patient uptake of digital health technology.

There was a discrepancy between the answers of HCPs/patients and pharma employees with respect to increasing HCP education and expanding the availability/use of digital health in clinical trials.

4 Among professionals with experience in digital health publications

63% of pharma employees and 36% of medical communications professionals said digital health publications differ from traditional medical publications

Publication processes affected by digital health publications



When asked about the level of importance of digital health to each respective stakeholder, the most common answer was "very important."

Participants also believed that digital health provides discrete benefits to patients

The most common benefits cited by surveyed patients (n=17) were:

- medicine/therapies tailored to patient needs
- better/faster diagnosis and treatment

HCPs and agencies generally agreed with patients but also commonly cited the following as benefits:

- patient empowerment
- lower cost of/improved access to healthcare services

Conclusions

- Participants considered digital health to be a very important topic for the medical field
- The integration of digital health into the healthcare system provides substantial benefits to patients
- The nuances of digital health publications should be considered

Key Takeaway

The use of digital health technologies is expected to grow substantially and HCPs and patients believe this uptake will be driven by patients; medical communications agencies can help drive uptake by understanding unique aspects of digital health publications.