



CALIFORNIA
HEALTHCARE
FOUNDATION

SNAPSHOT

Gaps in the System:

Californians Struggle with Caring for Their Chronic Conditions

August 2009

Introduction

Many Californians are living with one or more chronic conditions. The California HealthCare Foundation, in conjunction with the National Council on Aging (NCOA), commissioned Lake Research Partners to conduct a survey of adults, ages 18 and older, who have at least one chronic illness. The research looked at these Californians' lives and experiences, including demographics, amount of impairment, quality of life, social factors, and interactions with the health care system. In particular, the survey focused on the types of support and help patients need to better manage their health conditions.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

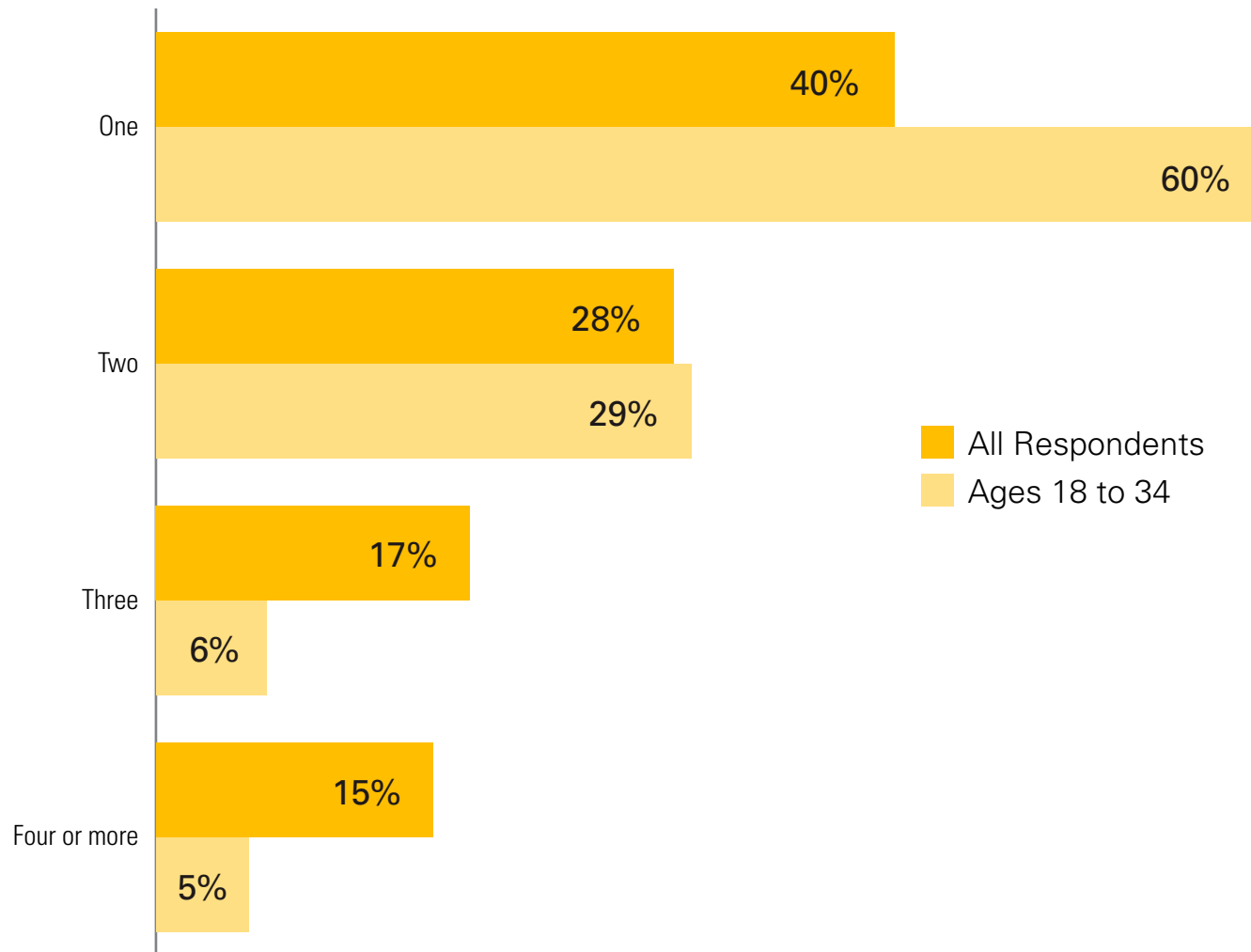
- One in three Californians with a chronic condition is always or frequently in physical pain. A similar proportion is always or frequently tired and lacking energy.
- Forty percent of responding adults 18 to 34 have two or more chronic conditions.
- One-third of respondents delayed care because of cost in the past year.
- Half of respondents say they frequently or occasionally wish their doctors had more time to spend talking with them.
- Many say their health care providers have rarely or never told them about local support services such as dietitians, educators, and classes.
- There is wide interest in obtaining information and support online and at community events.

Chronic Conditions

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Number of Chronic Conditions Among Adults, All Respondents vs. Ages 18 to 34, 2009

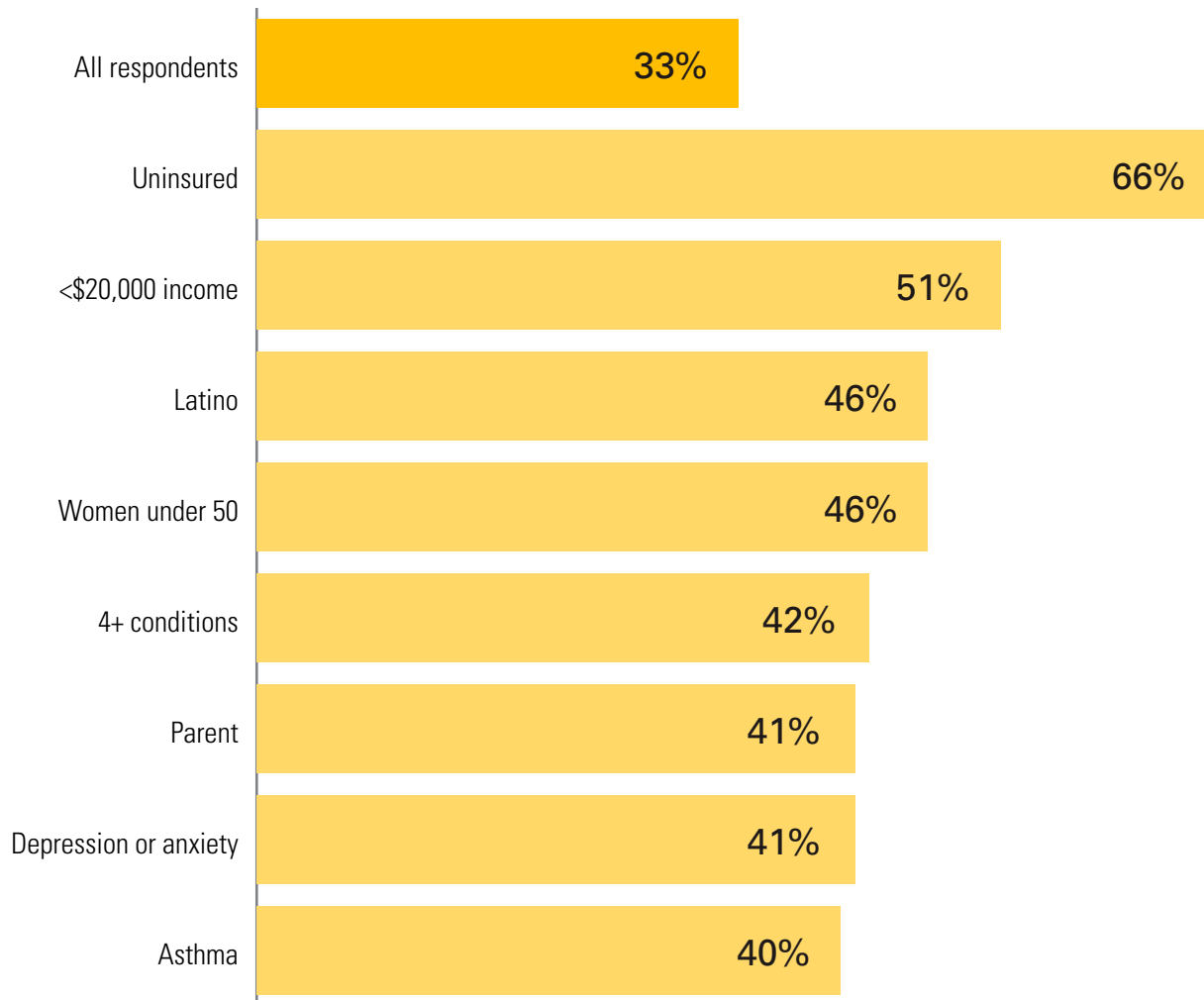


Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Overview

Sixty percent of responding 18 to 34 year olds have one chronic condition, and 40 percent have two or more. The most common conditions for this age group are depression and anxiety.

Adults Delaying Care Because of Cost, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009



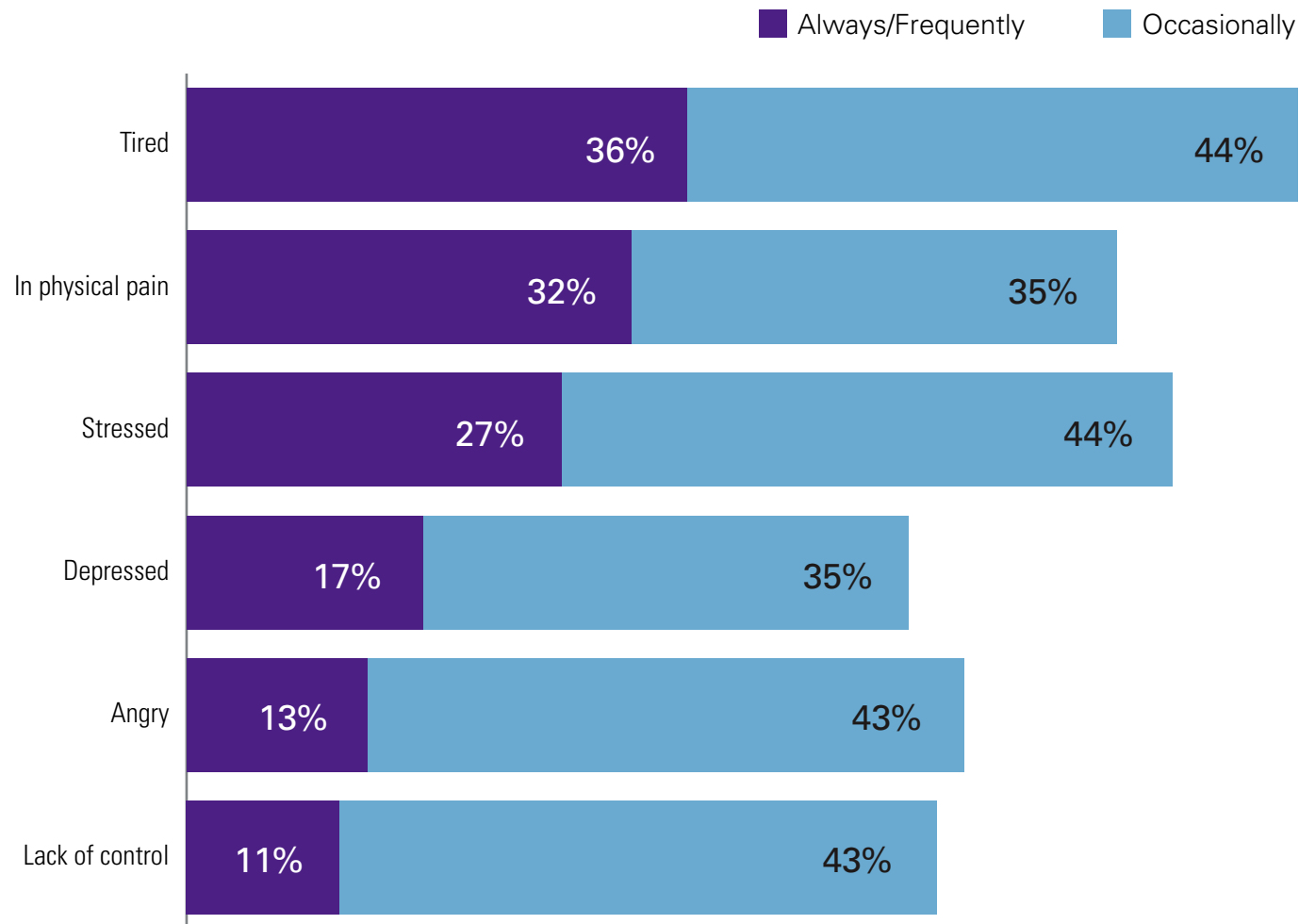
Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Overview

One-third of all respondents delayed care in the past year because of cost. Uninsured and low-income adults were most likely to delay care due to cost.

Physical, Emotional, and Mental Implications of Conditions Among Adults, 2009

AS A RESULT OF CONDITIONS, HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL...



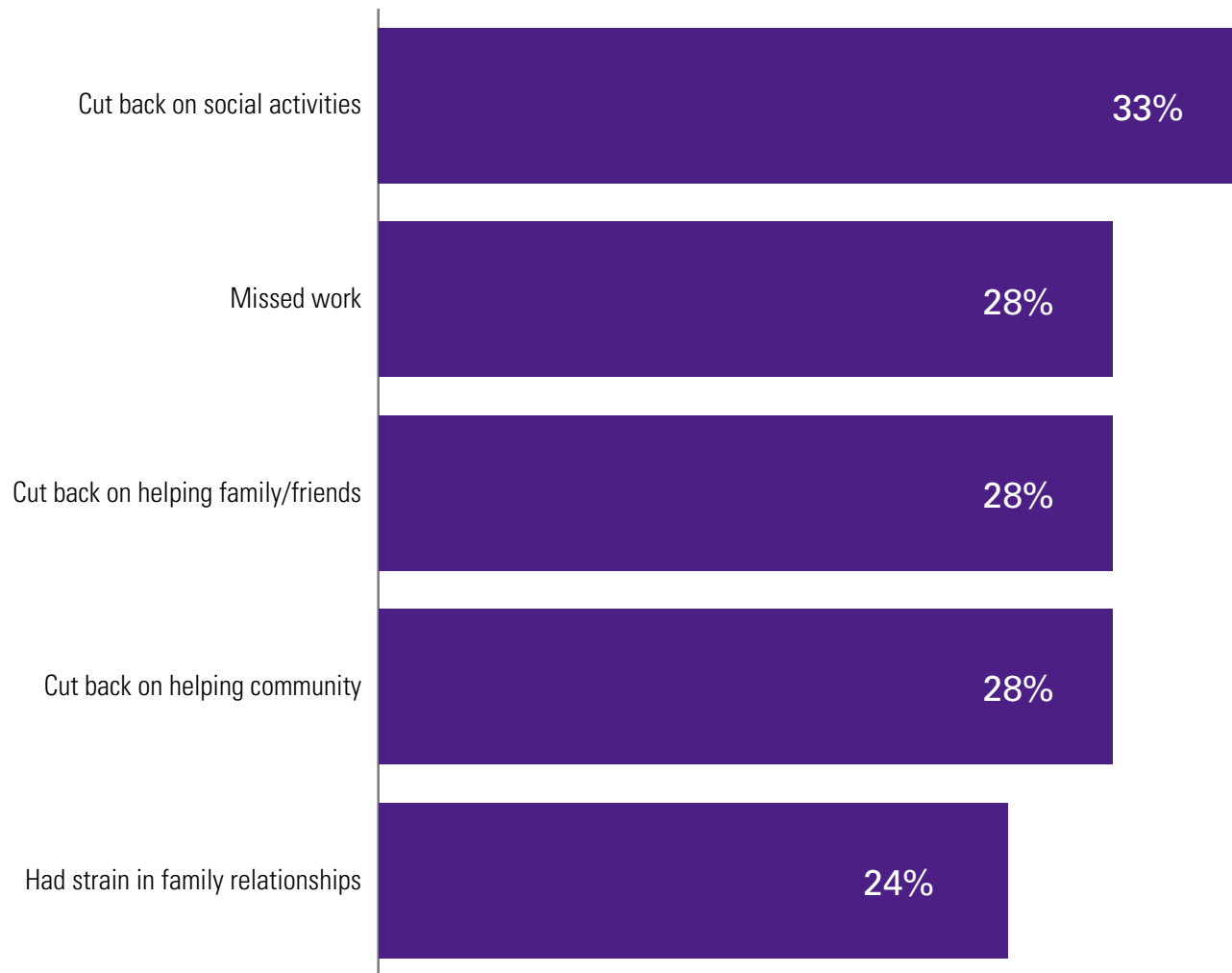
Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Impact

As a result of their chronic condition, about a third of adults always or frequently are stressed, in pain, or tired.

Impact of Conditions on Social, Family, and Work Lives Among Adults, 2009

IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, AS A RESULT OF HEALTH CONDITIONS, THE SURVEY PARTICIPANT...



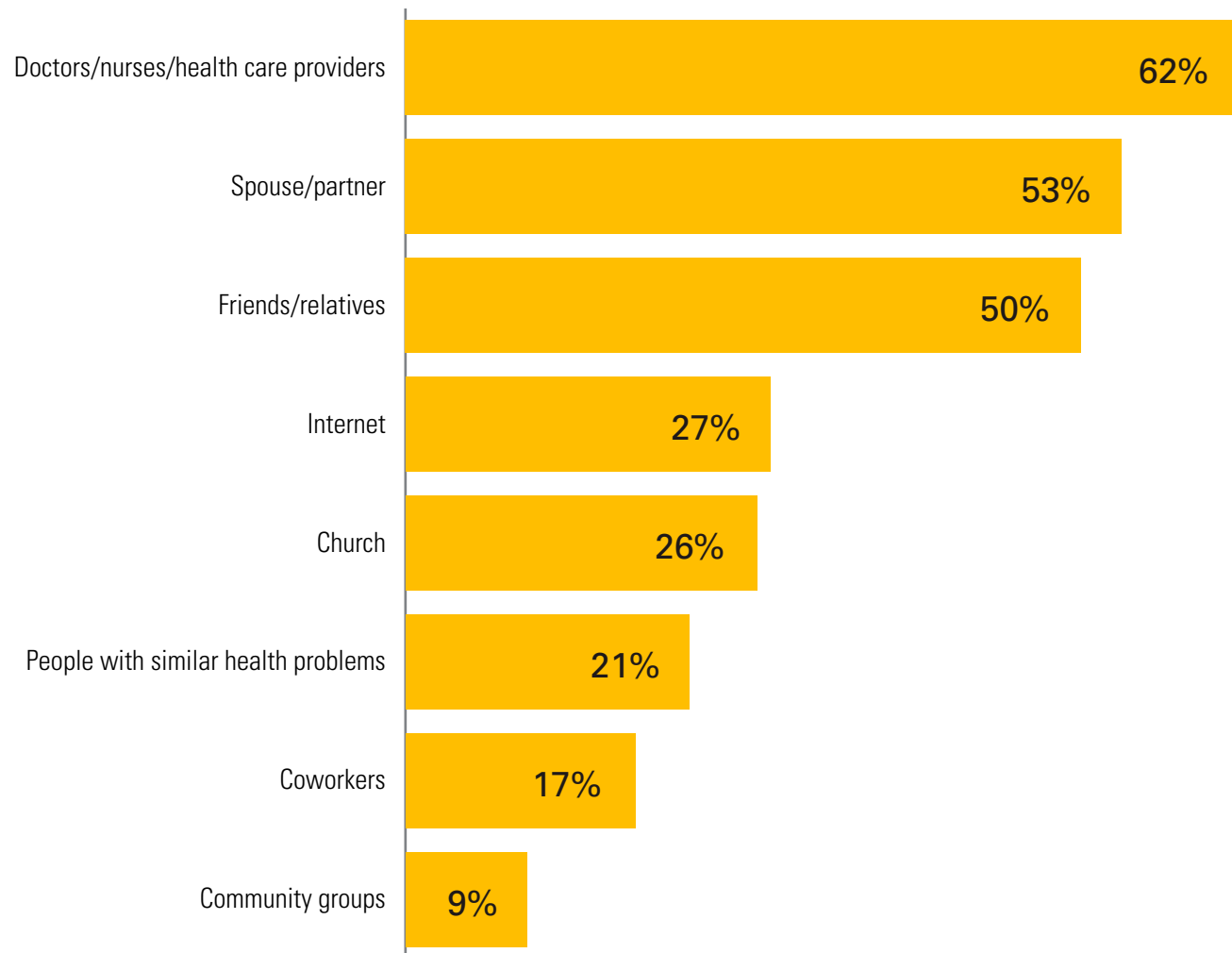
Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Impact

Chronic conditions have a negative effect on relationships and the ability to work. About a third of adults missed work or limited their social interactions as a result of their condition.

Relying on Doctors, Family, and Friends for Support, by Group, 2009

RELY "A LOT" OR "SOME" ON THIS GROUP FOR ONGOING HELP AND SUPPORT



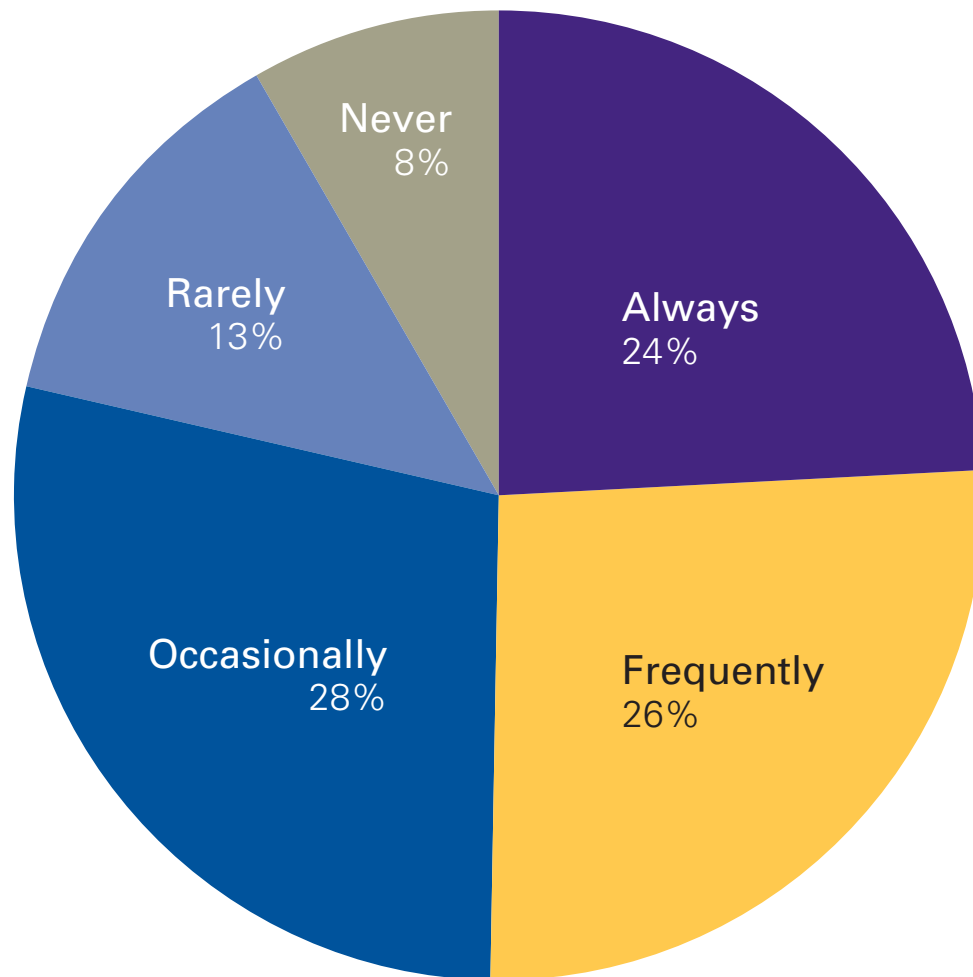
Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Support Systems

A majority of adults with chronic conditions rely heavily on their spouse or partner and friends and relatives for support.

Ability to Get Support to Manage Health Conditions, 2009

HOW OFTEN DO YOU GET THE HELP AND SUPPORT YOU NEED TO IMPROVE AND MANAGE HEALTH?



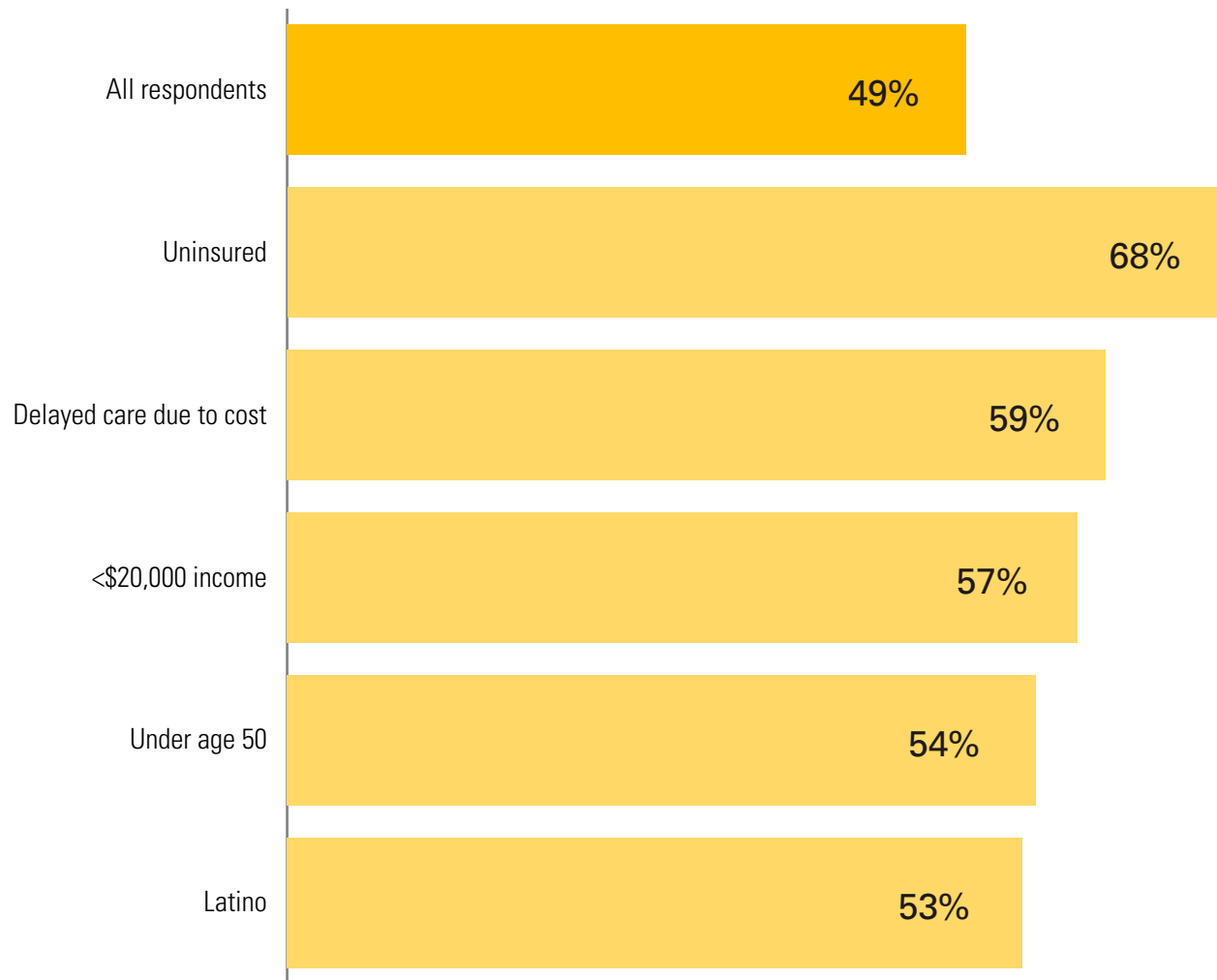
Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Support Systems

Half of adults indicate that they only occasionally, rarely, or never get the help and support they need.

Adults Least Likely to Get Needed Help and Support, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009

OCCASIONALLY, RARELY, OR NEVER GET HELP AND SUPPORT YOU NEED



Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Support Systems

About half of respondents don't get adequate help and support for their chronic conditions. Uninsured persons are the least likely to get such help.

Adults Reporting Difficulty with Health Care, 2009

FREQUENTLY OR OCCASIONALLY...

Wish MD had more time to talk with you

53%

Tired of describing same conditions every time you go to MD/hospital

47%

Tired of feeling on your own to take care of health problems

46%

Feel MD doesn't realize what it's like at home trying to take care of problems

39%

Leave MD/hospital confused about what to do

36%

Wish friend/family member could go to MD with you

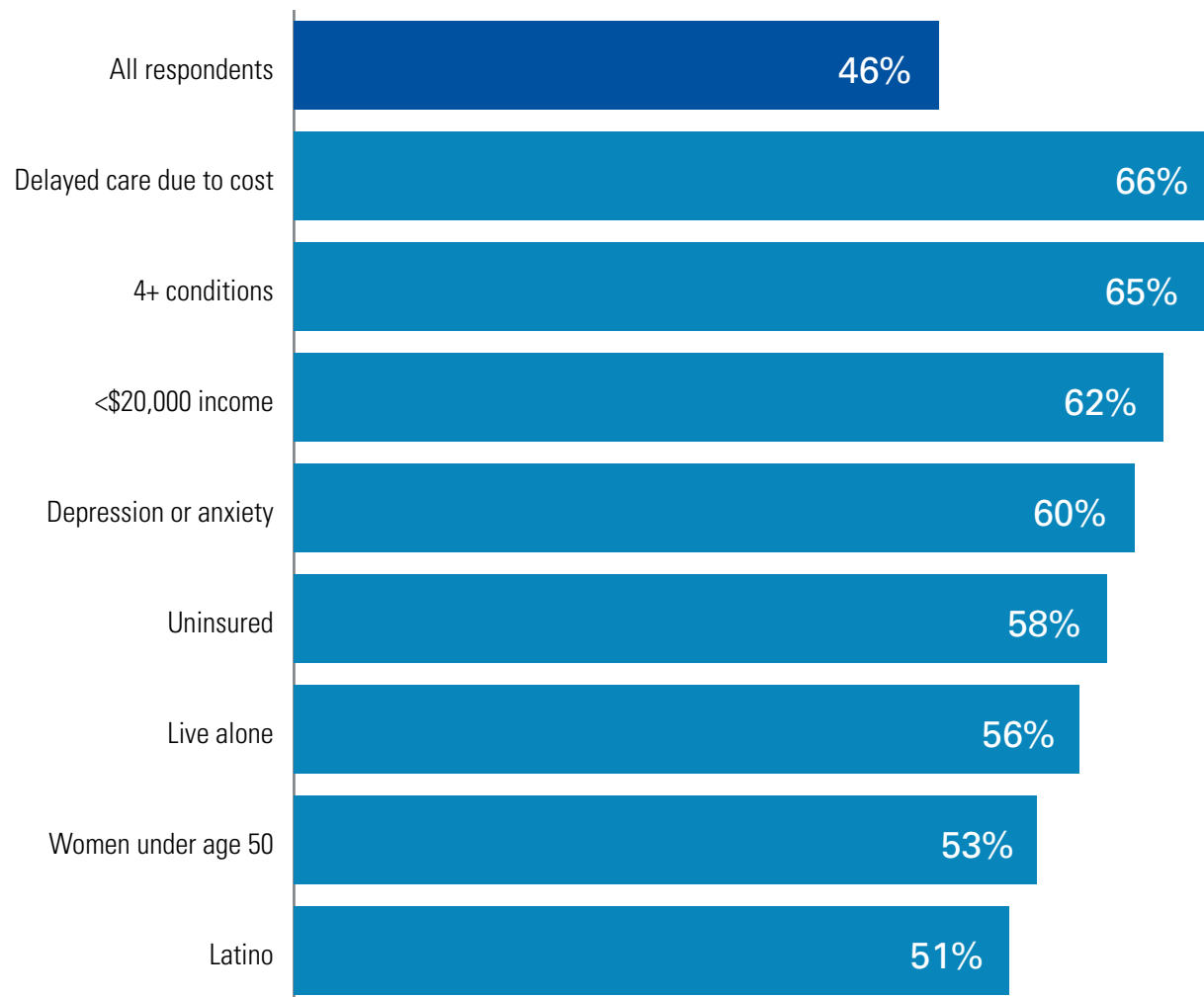
34%

Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Challenges

Over half of patients wish their doctor had more time to talk with them, and more than a third are confused about how to handle their conditions after leaving their doctor or hospital.

Most Likely to Be Tired of Feeling on Their Own to Take Care of Health, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009



Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Challenges

Those with multiple chronic conditions, financial difficulties, and/or depression or anxiety are among the most likely to be tired of feeling on their own in managing their health.

Health Care Providers' Engagement with Chronic Care Support, 2009

HOW OFTEN DO YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS...

■ Always/Frequently
 ■ Occasionally
 ■ Rarely/Never

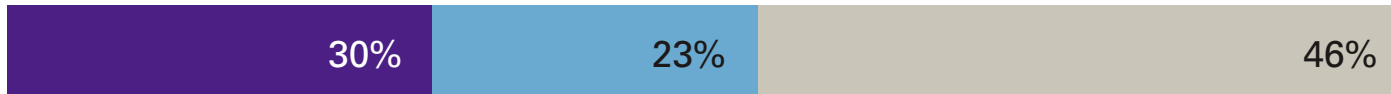
Ask if you understand your prescribed medications, such as how and when to take them, possible side effects, and drug interactions?



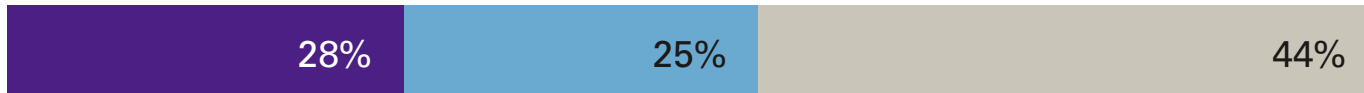
Help you get appointments that you need?



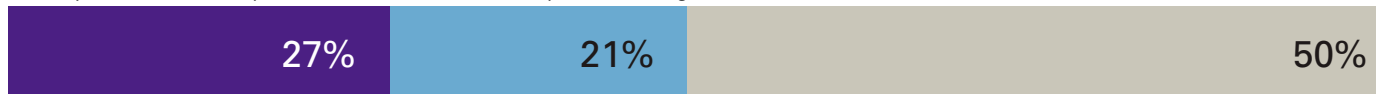
Ask for your ideas about how you can take care of your health problems?



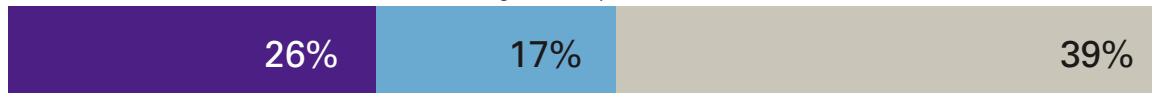
Tell you about other people who can help with your health problems, such as groups, classes, counselors, dieticians and educators?



Make plans to contact you after a visit to see how you are doing?



Talk to other doctors and nurses who are taking care of you?



Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Challenges

Only 28 percent of patients say their health care providers facilitate self-care always or frequently.

Most Frequently Cited Barriers to Self-Care, 2009

Need help learning how to take better care of my health in a way that works for me

49%

Don't have the money it takes to do things to improve health/condition

48%

I wish I could change, but I just don't think I can

44%

Multiple conditions make it difficult to take better care of myself

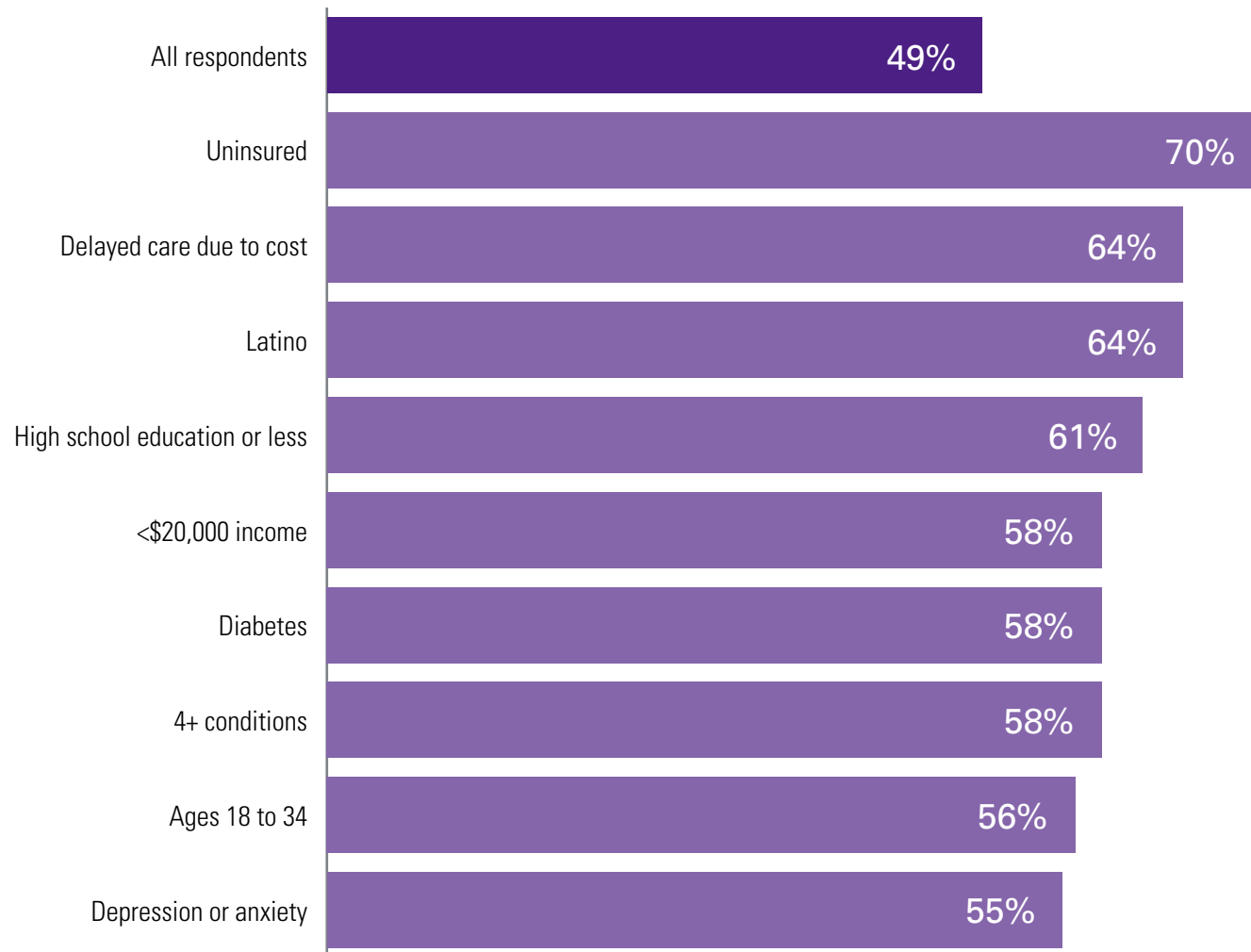
36%

Chronic Conditions Barriers to Self-Care

Half of respondents say they need help in learning how to take better care of their health.

Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Need Help Learning How to Take Better Care of Health, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009

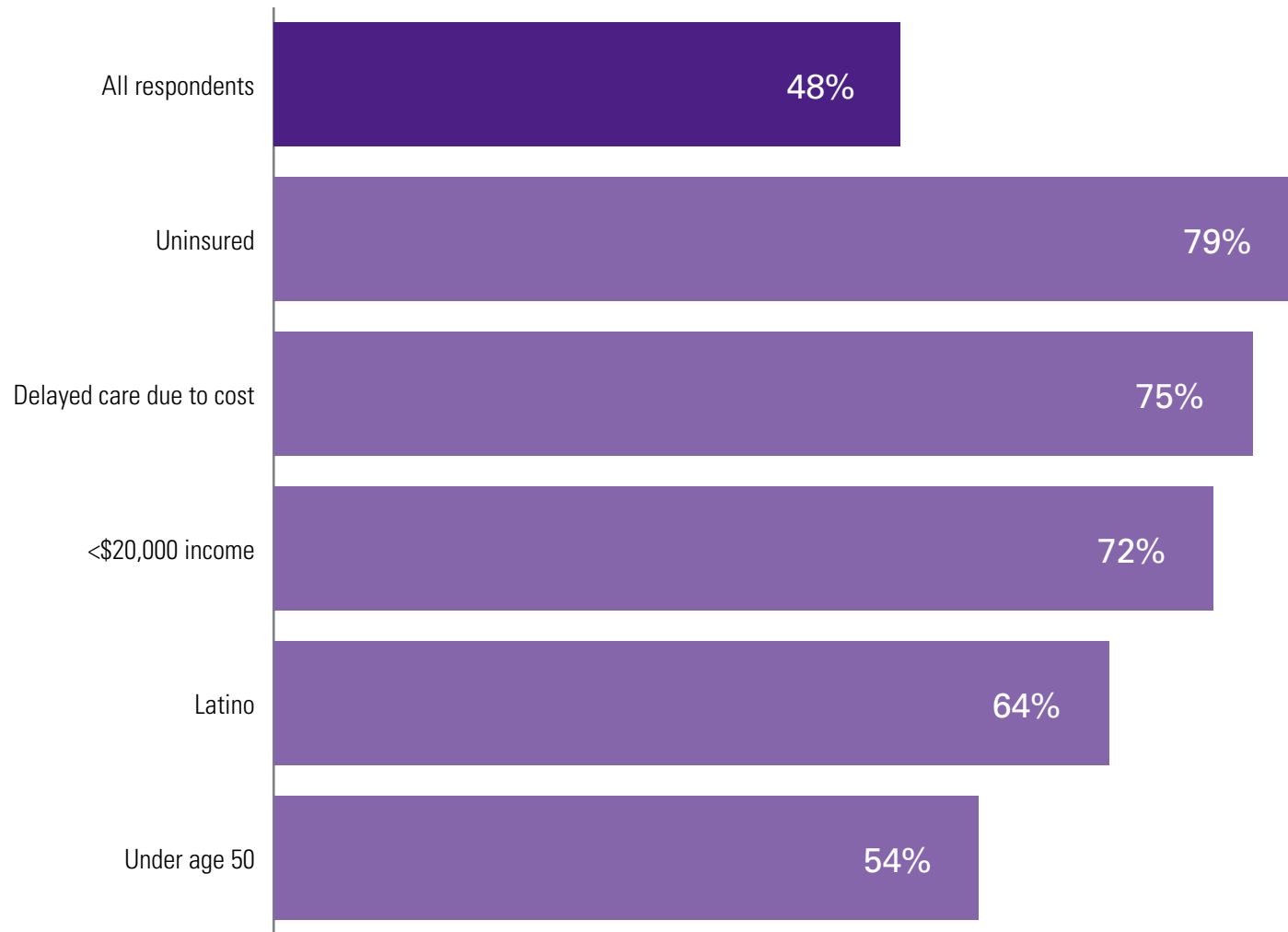


Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Barriers to Self-Care

Almost half of all respondents say they need help in learning to take better care of their health. Seventy percent of uninsured respondents need such help.

Money as a Barrier to Self-Care, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009

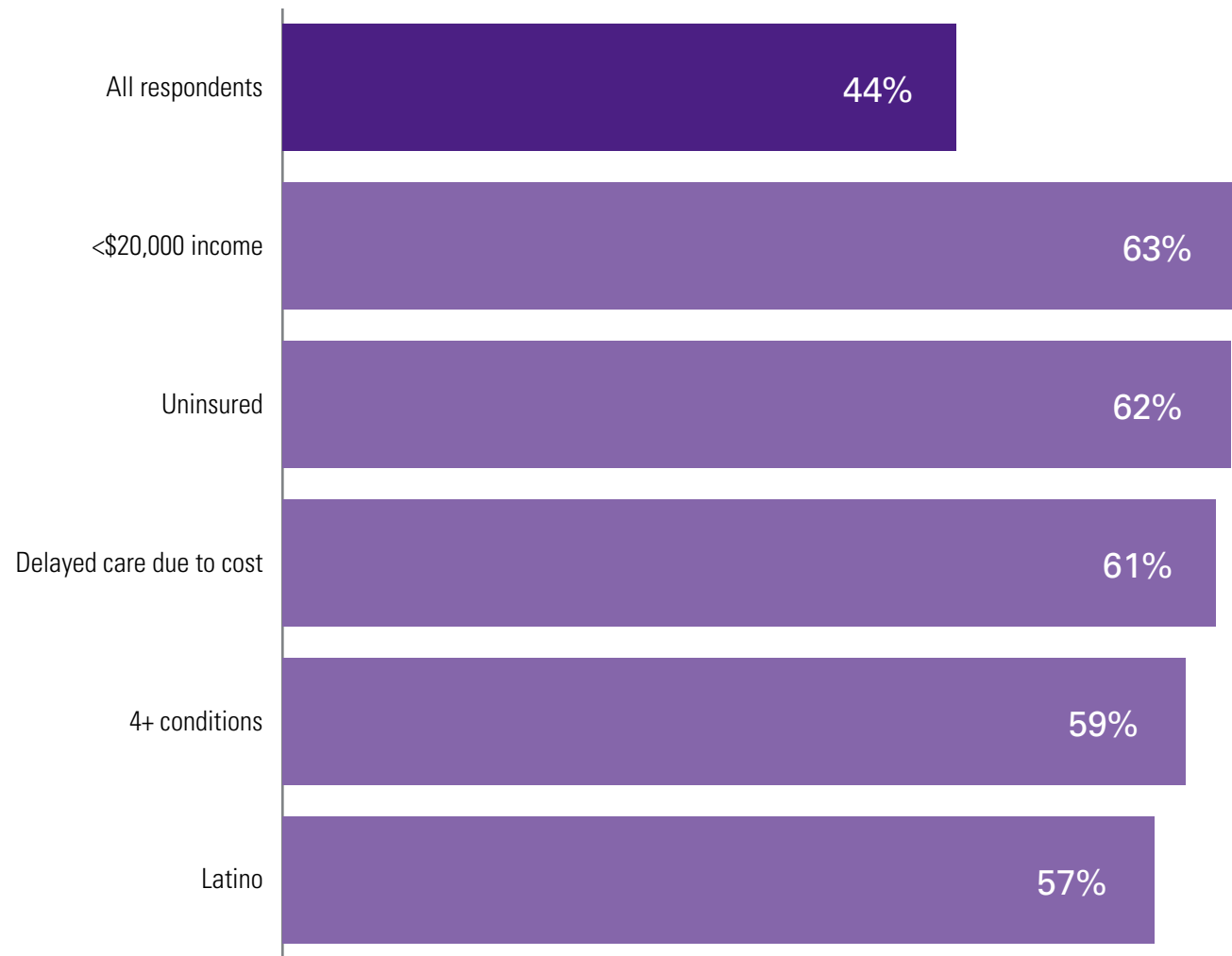


Chronic Conditions Barriers to Self-Care

Almost 80 percent of uninsured respondents say money is a barrier to self-care. Nearly two-thirds of Latinos say money is a barrier.

Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Those Who Don't Think They Can Change, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009

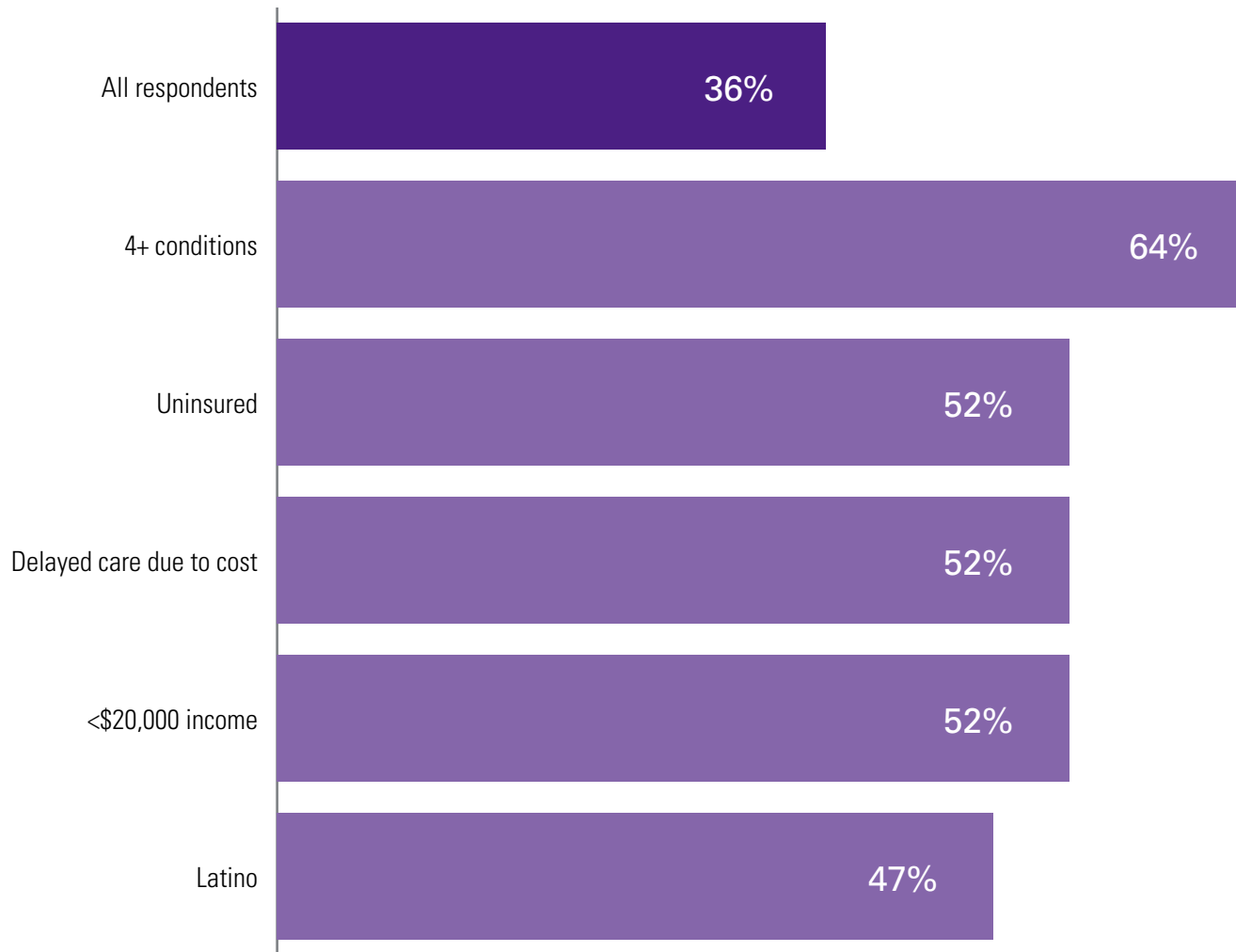


Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Barriers to Self-Care

People with low incomes, lack of insurance, or multiple conditions lack confidence in their ability to change their health behaviors.

Multiple Conditions as a Barrier to Self-Care, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009



Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Barriers to Self-Care

Thirty-six percent of patients say that having multiple conditions makes self-care more difficult.

Favored Ideas to Help Better Manage Care, 2009

Learn how to exercise or eat better in a way that is realistic and works with your limitations

75%

Get practical tips and advice from other people who have health problems similar to yours

71%

Learn how to manage work, family, and other responsibilities and still take care of your health

68%

Set goals and work together with other people who are trying to improve their health

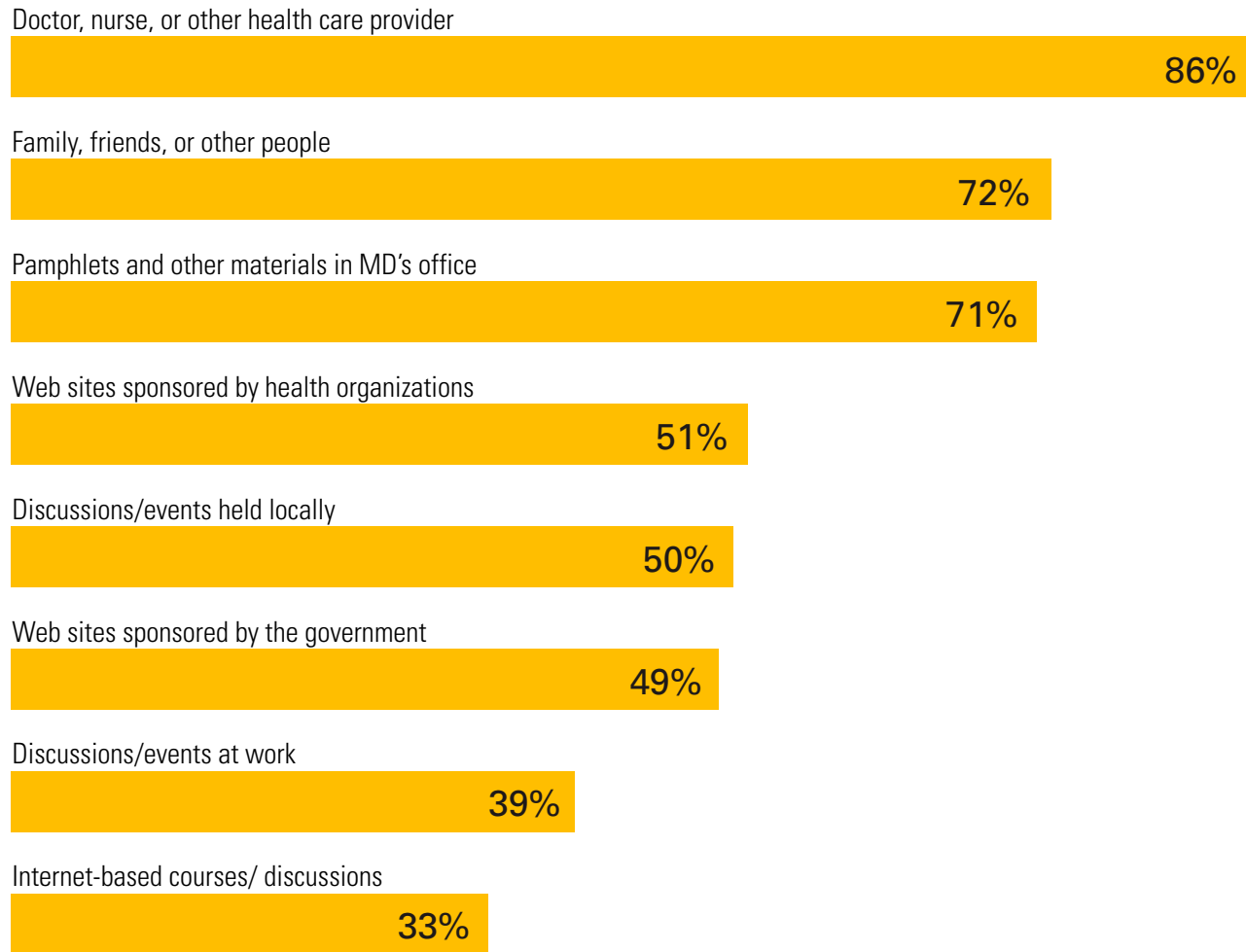
67%

Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Help Resources

Three-quarters of respondents say they want to learn how to exercise or eat better to help manage their care.

Interest in Sources of Help and Information, 2009

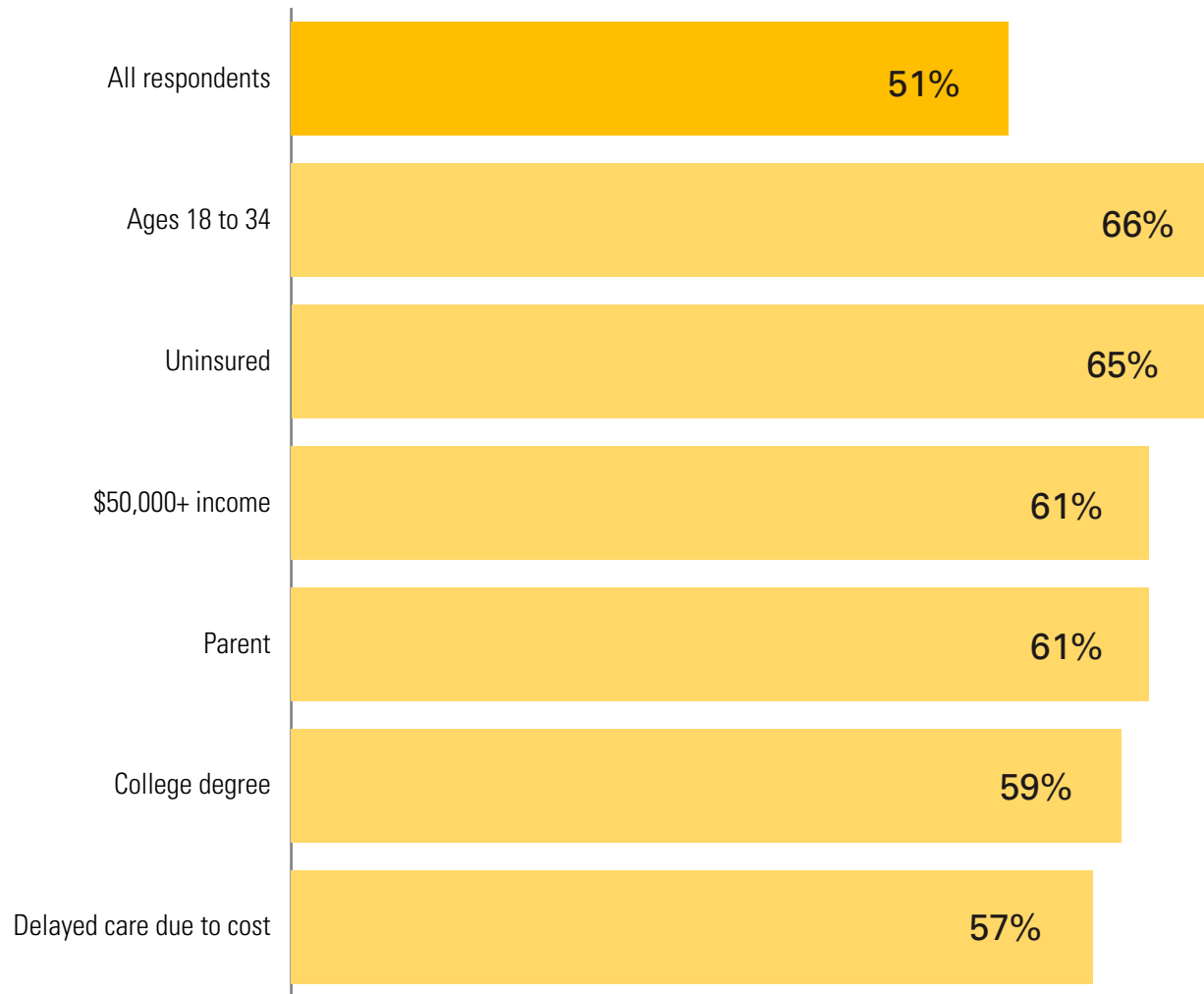


Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Help Resources

A large majority of respondents are interested in getting help and information from a health care provider.

Most Interested in Online Help from Organizations, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009

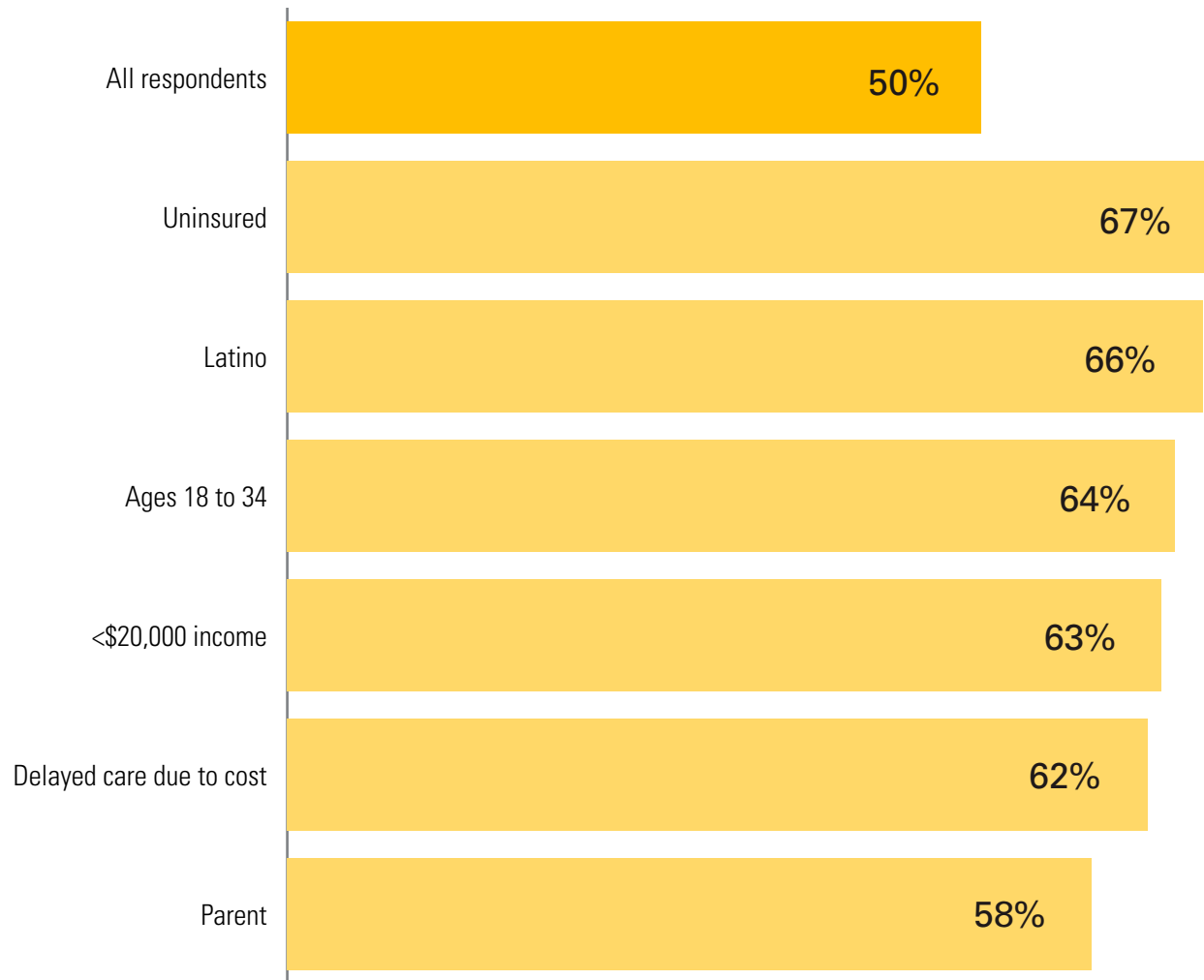


Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Help Resources

Younger and uninsured respondents are most likely to express interest in getting online help.

Most Interested in Help at Community Events, All Respondents vs. Demographic Group, 2009

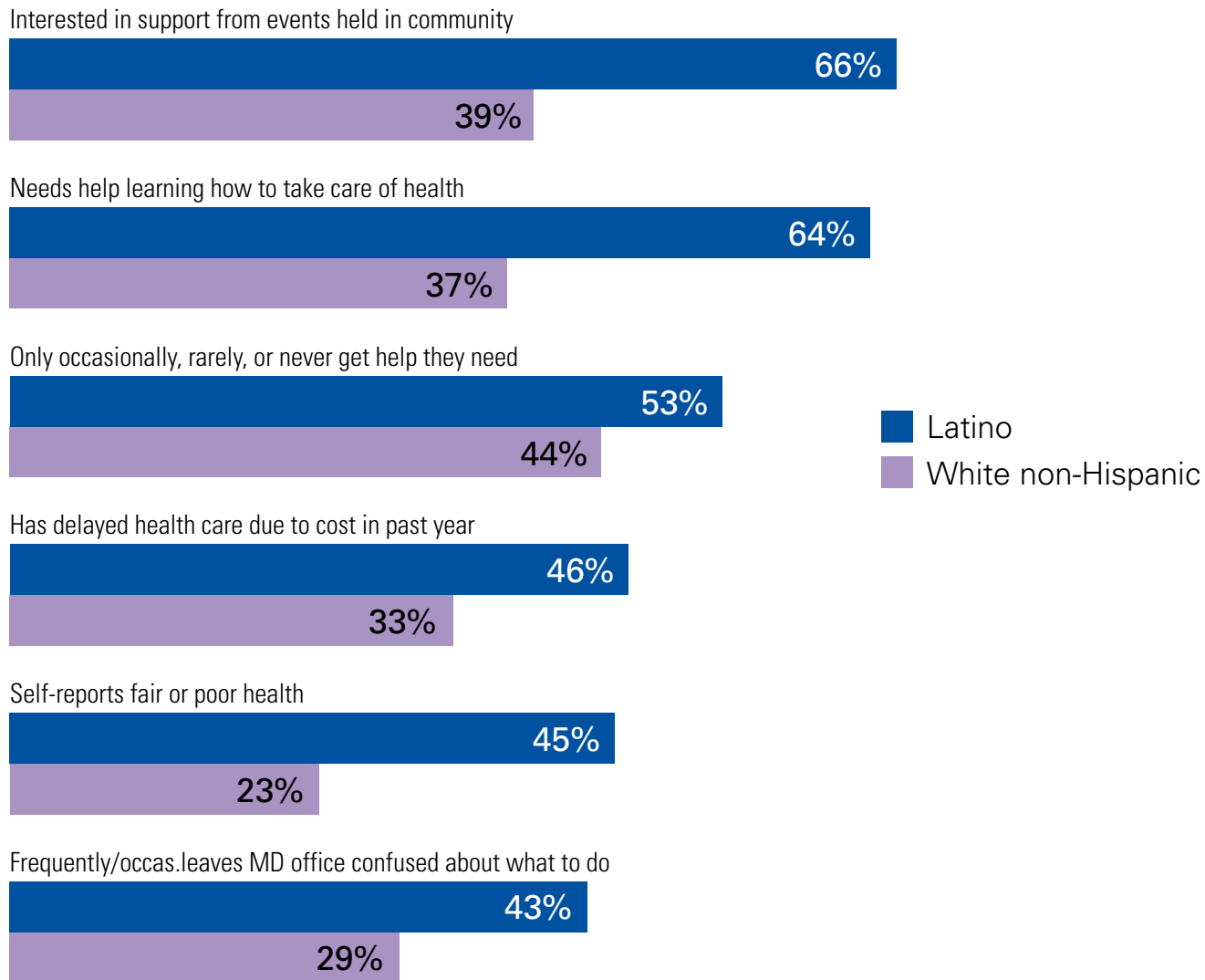


Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Help Resources

Sixty-six percent of Latinos are interested in getting information about self-care through attendance at community events.

Experiences with Chronic Care, by Ethnicity, 2009



Source: Telephone survey of 855 Californians, ages 18 and older, with one or more chronic conditions.

Chronic Conditions Ethnic Breakdown

Latinos are much more likely to face challenges in caring for their chronic conditions than non-Hispanic whites, but are also more interested in seeking out help. Twice as many Latinos as whites say they are in fair or poor health.

Summary of Additional Findings

Ages 18 to 34

- Forty percent have two or more chronic conditions.
- Most common conditions are depression or anxiety (34 percent), hypertension or high blood pressure (29 percent), asthma (27 percent), and diabetes or high blood sugar (20 percent).
- More likely than others to rely on the Internet for ongoing help and support (45 percent vs. 26 percent of those ages 35 to 43, and 23 percent of those ages 44 and older).
- Six in ten (59 percent) have read about someone's experiences with health problems like theirs online (vs. 47 percent of those ages 35 to 43, and 38 percent of those ages 44 and older).
- More likely than those 44 and older to need help learning how to take better care of their health (56 percent vs. 46 percent).
- More interested in setting goals and working with others to improve health (77 percent vs. 69 percent of those ages 35 to 43, and 66 percent of those ages 44 and older).
- More interested in learning how to manage work, family, and other responsibilities while taking care of health (82 percent vs. 76 percent of those 35 to 43, and 63 percent of those 44 and older).
- More interested in getting information and help at community events (64 percent vs. 49 percent of those ages 35 to 43, and 47 percent of those ages 44 and older).
- More interested in getting information and help online from health organizations (66 percent vs. 55 percent of those ages 35 to 43, and 46 percent of those ages 44 and older).

Summary of Additional Findings

Women

- Slightly more likely than men to have delayed health care due to cost (36 percent vs. 29 percent), especially those under age 50 (46 percent) vs. men under age 50 (38 percent).
- More likely than men to always or frequently be tired (40 percent vs. 30 percent) and stressed (32 percent vs. 21 percent) as a result of their health conditions.
- Those ages 50 and older more likely than men of the same age group to:
 - Always or frequently be in physical pain (40 percent vs. 30 percent).
 - Say money is a barrier to self-care (49 percent vs. 36 percent).
- More likely than men to say:
 - They leave the doctor's office or hospital confused about what they should do (41 percent vs. 28 percent).
- Those ages 50 and older less likely than men in this age group to say their health care providers have asked if they have help at home (39 percent vs. 49 percent).

Methodology

This random digit dialing telephone survey was fielded among 855 Californians 18 and older with one or more chronic conditions. The survey included an oversample of 102 Latinos, for a total of 364 Latinos statewide. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish, January 14–30, 2009. Margin of sampling error is +/-3.4 percentage points.

Respondents were screened for chronic condition(s) using the following question:

“Q. Have you ever been told by a doctor, nurse, or other health professional that you have ____: [diabetes or high blood sugar, arthritis, asthma, chronic bronchitis or emphysema, hypertension or high blood pressure, heart disease, cancer, depression or an anxiety disorder, had a stroke, any other serious or chronic health condition.]” Only respondents who reported “yes” to at least one of these items were included in the survey.

About the Author

Tresa Udem is vice president of Lake Research Partners, a public opinion and policy research firm with offices in Washington, D.C., Berkeley, CA, and New York, NY. The firm provides research services to foundations, government agencies, issue advocacy organizations, and others.

Chronic Conditions

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CALIFORNIA
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California HealthCare Foundation
1438 Webster Street, Suite 400
Oakland, CA 94612
510.238.1040
www.chcf.org