

## Introduction

- The aging population has increasing co-morbid medical illnesses
- Outcomes are often poor after cardiac arrest
- Many elderly patients state they would not want resuscitation if they were critically ill or experienced cardiac arrest
- The Ontario Ministry of Health (MOH) mandates that paramedics must be presented with a MOH 'Do Not Resuscitate' Confirmation Form to stop resuscitation (DNR-CF)
- To validate the form, it must be printed and signed by a registered health care provider such as a physician or a registered nurse

## Objective

- Primary objective is to determine the proportion of elderly patients who are aware of the MOH DNR-CF
- Secondary objective is to determine the barriers in accessing the MOH DNR-CF

## Methods

- Descriptive study of all patients  $\geq 70$  presenting to 2 academic tertiary care Emergency Departments
- Patient data collected by an interview with a Research Assistant who followed a scripted data collection tool
- Exclusion criteria: nursing home patients, non-English speaking, critically ill or requiring resuscitation, severe dementia without substitute decision maker present, or if deemed inappropriate for survey by the health care team

## Results

Table 1. Patients screened out due to exclusion criteria

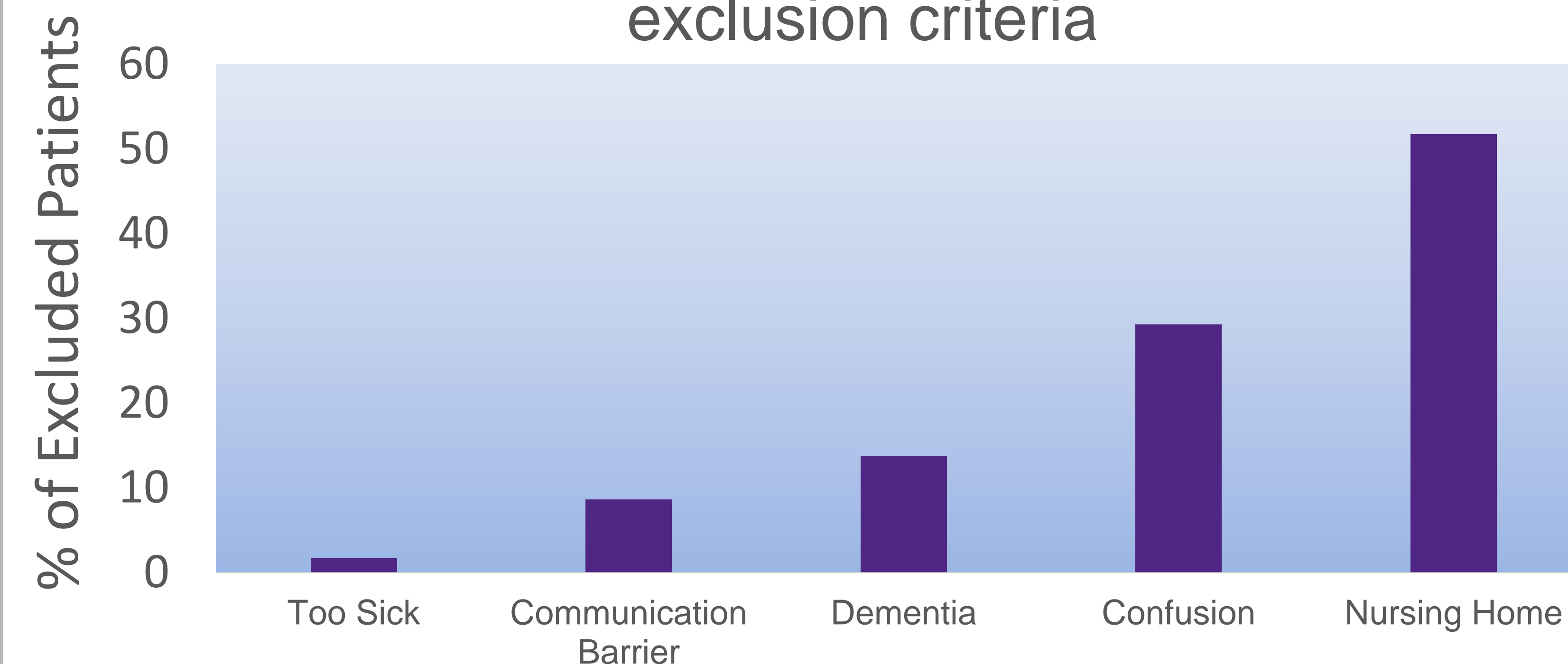


Table 2. Awareness of prehospital DNR-CF

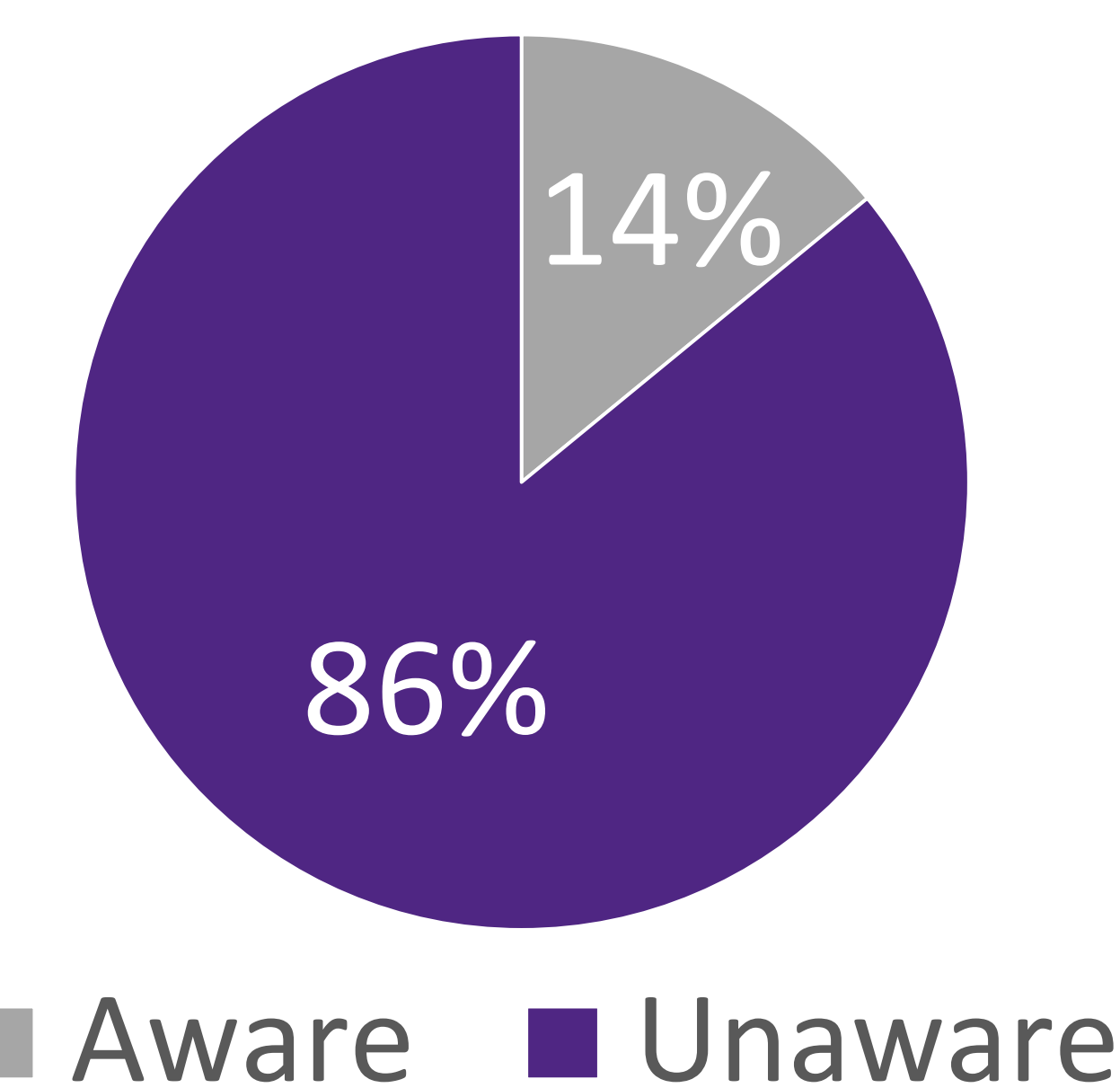
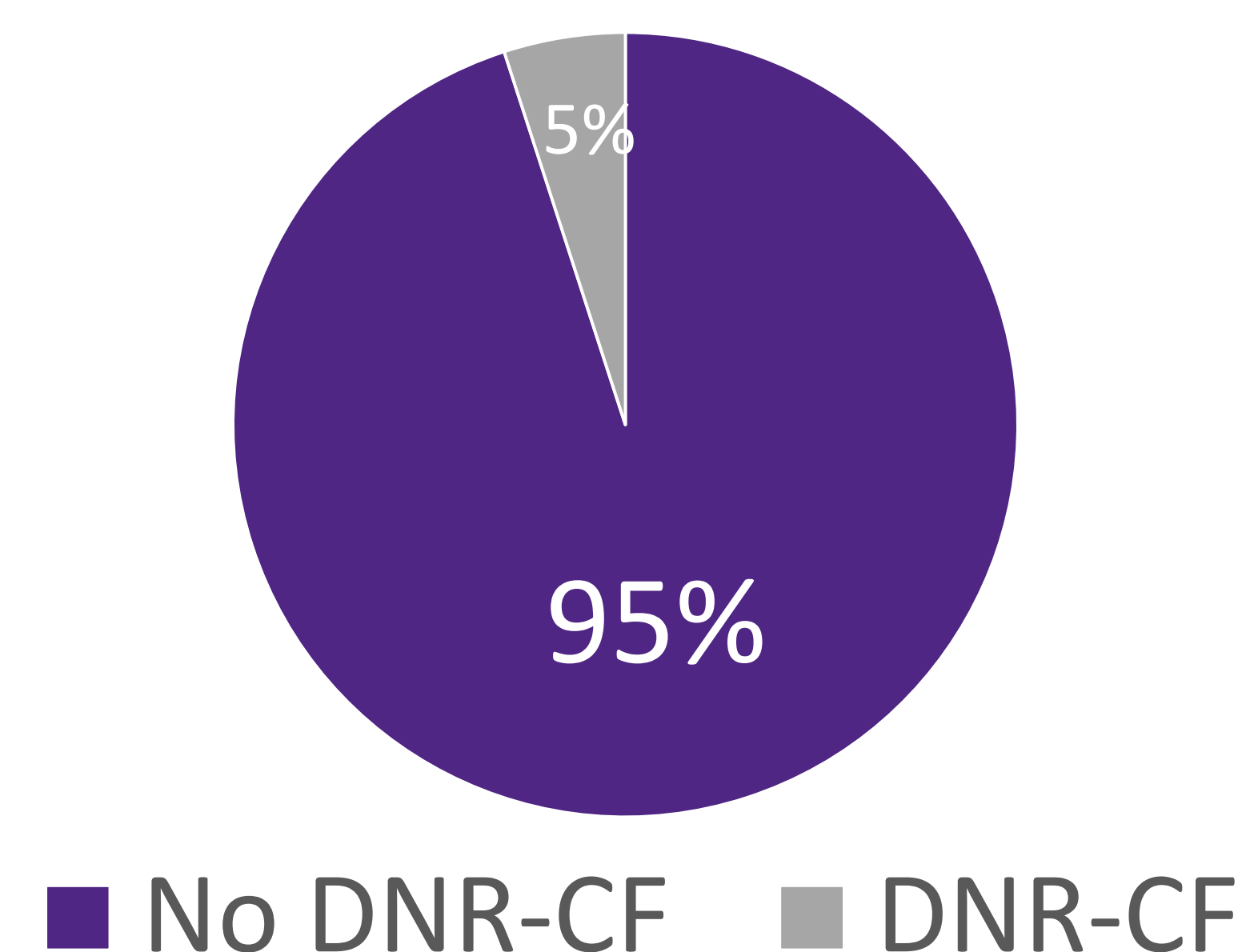


Table 3. DNR patients in possession of DNR-CF



- 183 total patients screened, 58 excluded from study (Table 1)
- 125 total patients included in the study
- Average age 81
- 64 (51.2%) had wishes to be DNR in the event of cardiac arrest
- Of 64 patients with wishes for a DNR, 13 (20.3%) did not have a power of attorney, living will, or advanced care directive
- Of 64 patients with wishes for DNR, 55 (86%) were unaware of the prehospital DNR-CF (Table 2)
- Of 9 patients aware of the form whom also had wishes to be DNR, only 3 completed the form
- Of the 6 patients who were aware of the form, 3 potential barriers were identified
  - Not knowing where to access the form (n=3)
  - Difficulty discussing topic with health care providers (n=1)
  - Not wanting paramedics to "give up" on them (n=1)

## Limitations

- Change in the process of acquiring the DNR-CF is being rolled out in the near future and may impact results
- Single centre study in Ontario

## Conclusion

- Most patients with DNR wishes are unaware of DNR-CF
- Those who are aware of the DNR-CF identify several barriers to its adoption
- Information presented to patients about the form may increase awareness of its existence