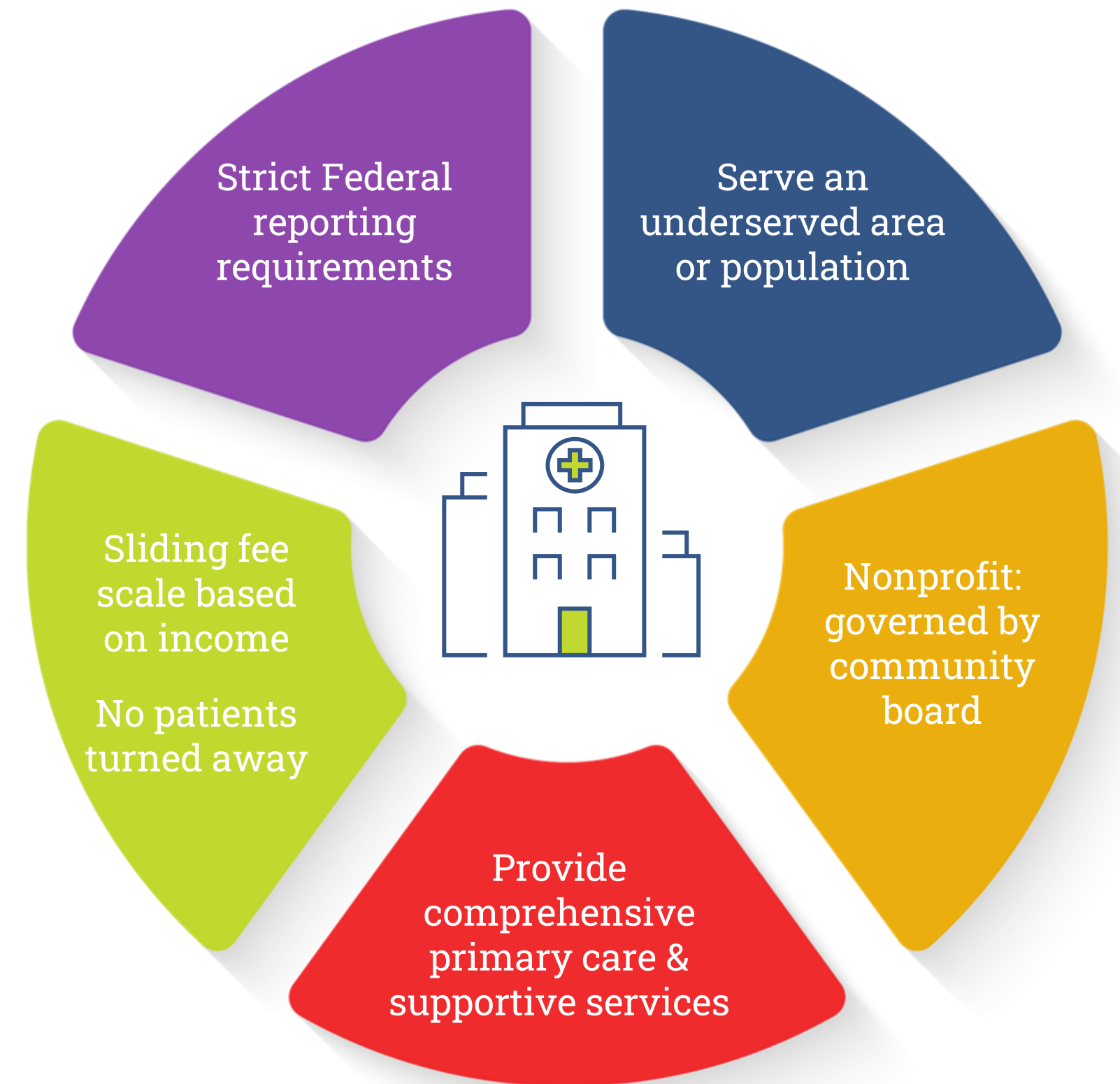# Community Health Centers (CHCs)

Jennifer J. Burns, Senior Director of Government & Media Relations

July 19, 2023

Arizona Telemedicine Council

What are CHCs?

- **Community-based patient-directed nonprofits**

- **Provide comprehensive, culturally competent, high-quality primary healthcare services**

- **Remove barriers to care**
  - Transportation
  - Language

- **Social Drivers of Health (SDOH)**
  - Food insecurity
  - Unemployment

Strict Federal reporting requirements

Serve an underserved area or population

Sliding fee scale based on income

No patients turned away

Nonprofit: governed by community board

Provide comprehensive primary care & supportive services

Who do CHCs serve?

- **Provide healthcare to anyone in underserved communities, with insurance & without**
  - No patient turned away
  - Sliding Fee Scale

- **Serve vulnerable individuals and families**
  - People experiencing homelessness
  - Agricultural workers
  - Residents of public housing
  - Veterans

- **Rural & medically underserved urban areas & populations**

In Arizona ...

Largest Primary Care Provider Network

About Our CHCs

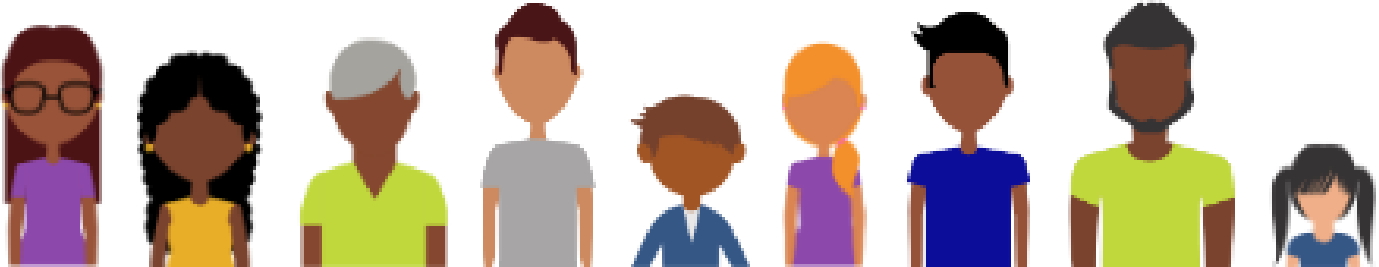**23** Health Center Program Grantees

~200 Sites Across Arizona

3,342,644 Patient Visits
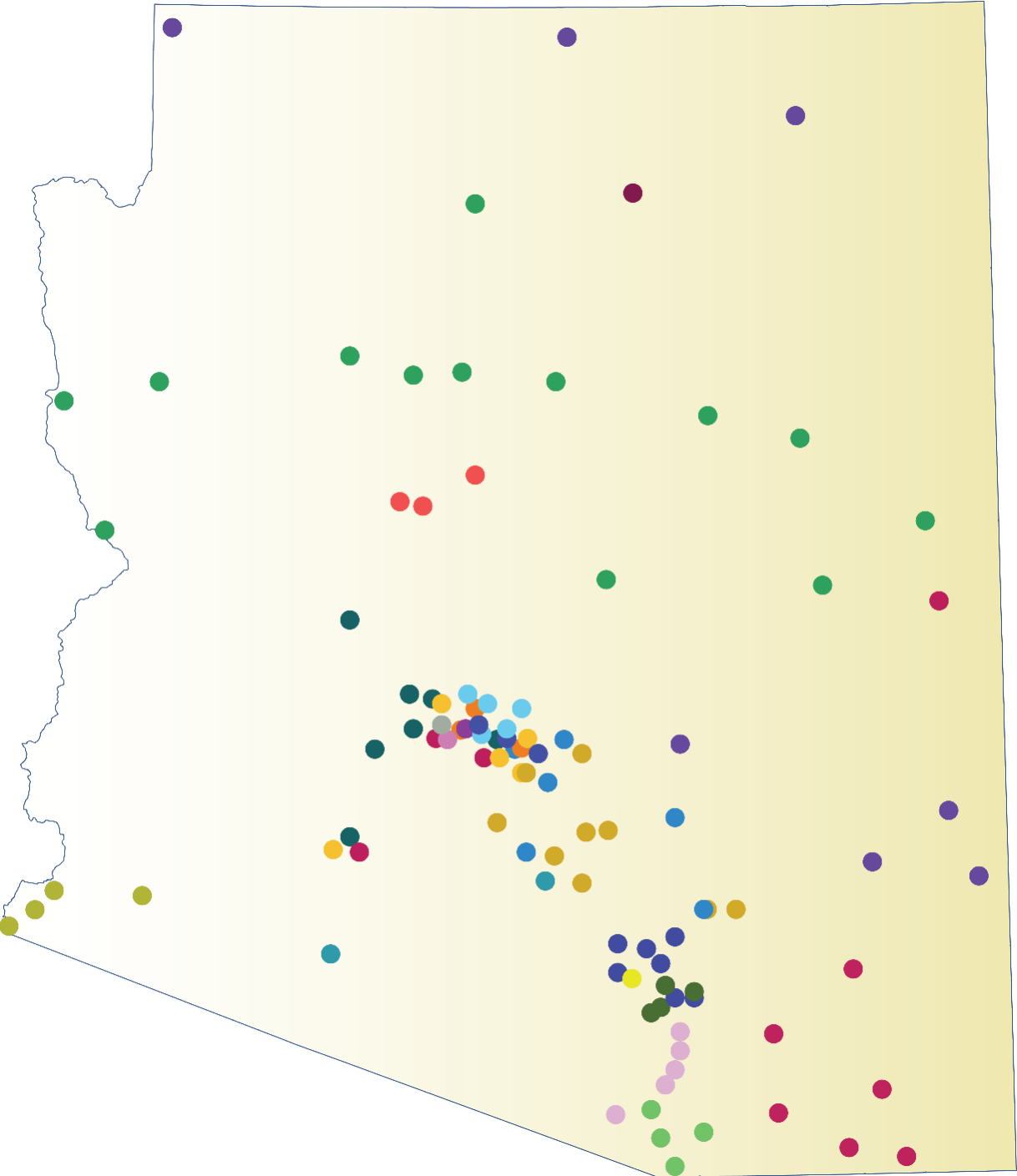
7,879 Employees (Full Time Equivalent)

About Our Patients

800,024 Total Patients Served

~1 in 9 Arizonans is served by a CHC

GENDER

60% Female   40% Male

AGE

26% Under 18

57% 18 to 64

8% 65 and older

Numbers reflect 2021 Uniform Data System data

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CHC Services

PHYSICAL THERAPY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
RADIOLOGY
COMMUNITY GARDEN
TRANSPORTATION
INTERNAL MEDICINE
FAMILY PRACTICE
LAB SERVICES
MOBILE CLINICS
DENTAL
PEDIATRICS
ELIGIBILITY
SPECIALTY CARE
EYES AND VISION
NUTRITION COUNSELING
LEGAL SERVICES
OB/GYN
PODIATRY
DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE INTERVENTION
IMMUNIZATIONS
WOMEN, INFANT AND CHILDREN
WELLNESS CLASSES
PHARMACY
INTERPRETATION

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Operational Systems

Telehealth Platform Used for Primary Care and Behavioral Health

Telehealth Platform

- EHR
- Zoom
- Doximity
- OTTO
- Doxy.me
- WebEx
- Iron Bow
- JoinCareTeam
- Liberty/Telepharm (Pharmacy software)
- Teams
- Updox
- Visuwell

16.67%
16.67%
12.5%
12.5%
8.33%
8.33%
4.17%
4.17%
4.17%
4.17%
4.17%
4.17%

Arizona Alliance
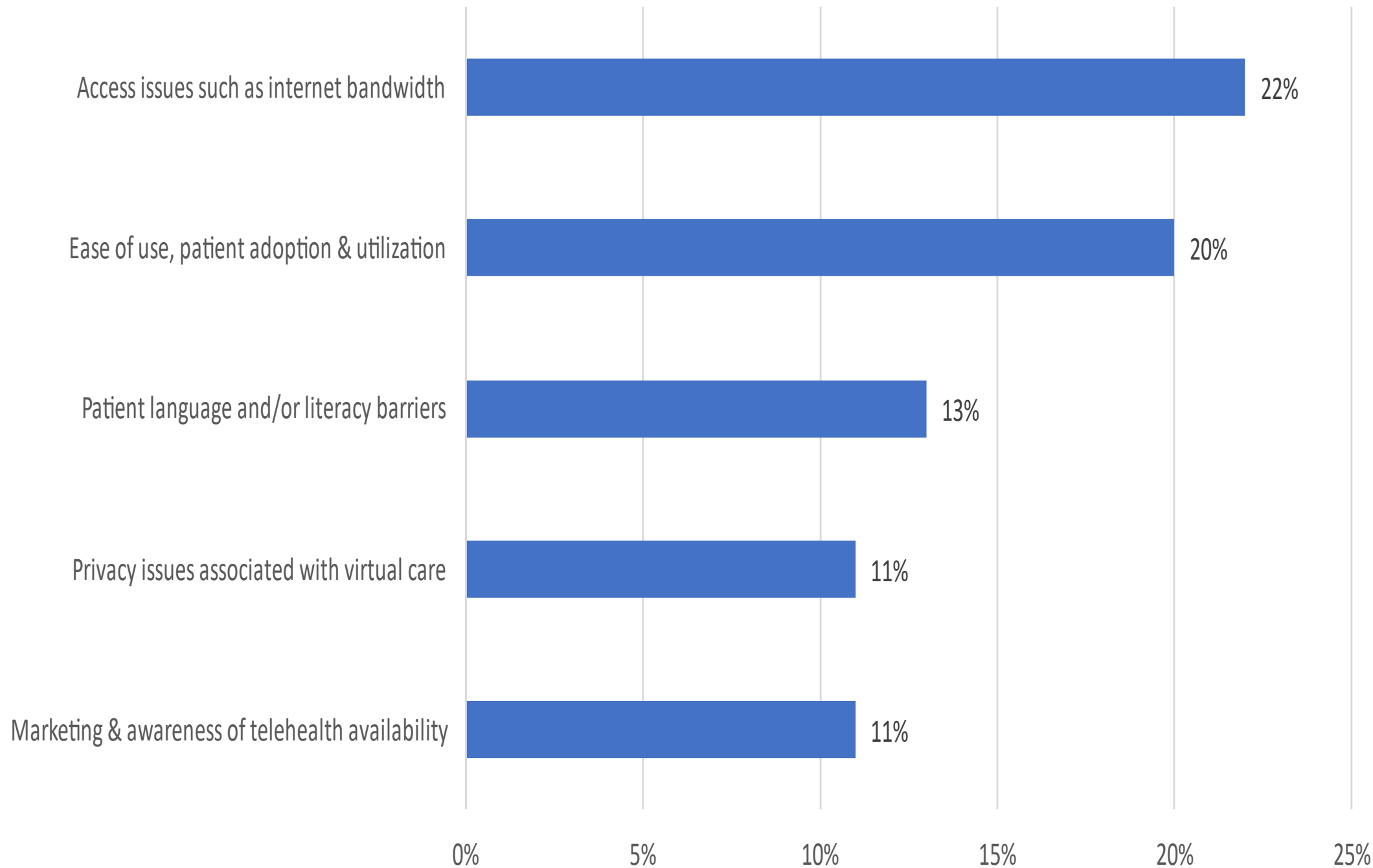FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
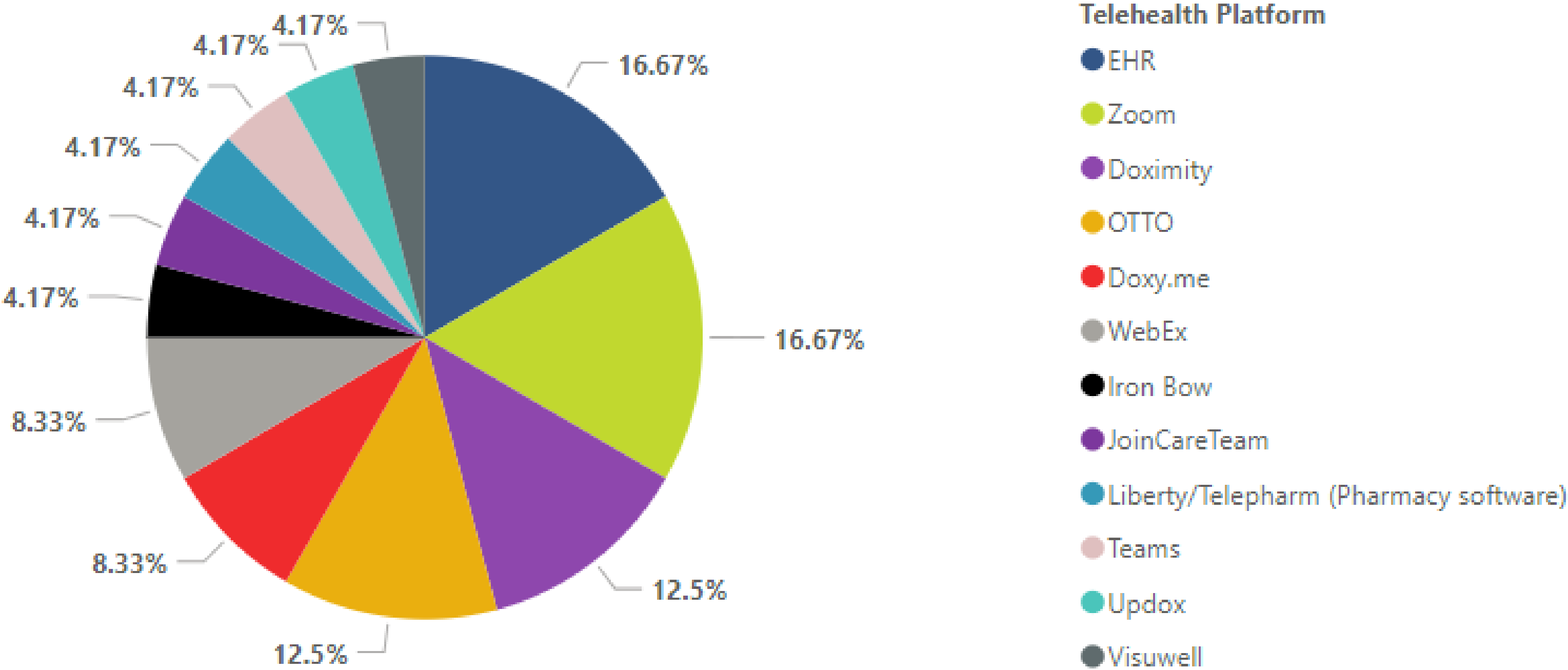
Telehealth CHC Advancements

- Primary Care clinics highly benefited from telehealth visits

- Increased patient engagement

- Additional clinical services were offered via telehealth such as:
  – Dental, Chronic Disease Monitoring, Nutrition, SUD/MAT, Tele-psychiatry, Eligibility and WIC (not exhaustive list)

- Increasing interest among CHCs to offer telehealth group services & telehealth palliative care service

- Integrating interpreter services in telehealth workflows
  – Gaining traction to bolster health equity

Patient Telehealth Barriers

Q8 Please rank the followings in terms of greatest challenges with your patients in adopting virtual care within your site/organization.

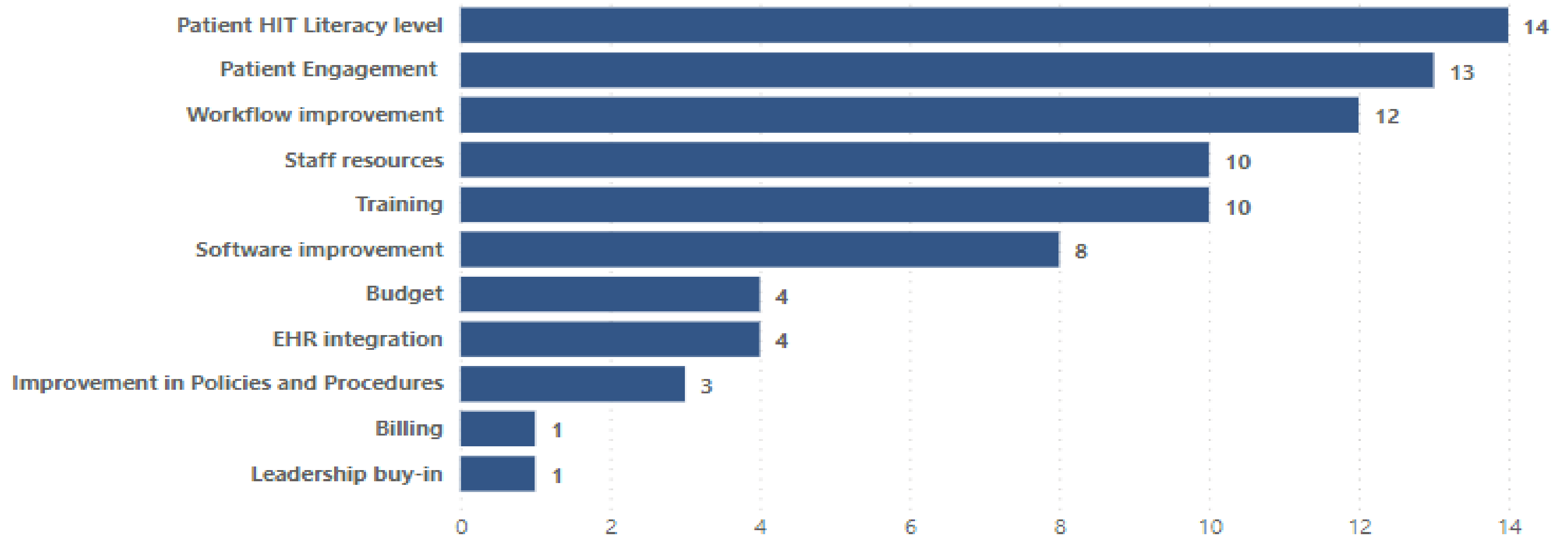| Barrier	Percentage
Access issues such as internet bandwidth	22%
Ease of use, patient adoption & utilization	20%
Patient language and/or literacy barriers	13%
Privacy issues associated with virtual care	11%
Marketing & awareness of telehealth availability	11%

- Biggest challenge for patients accessing telehealth:
  - Internet bandwidth issues
  - Patients adjusting to the telehealth environment

- Preferred broadband service vendor for CHCs in rural areas:
  - Starlink (as of 2022)

- CHCs need access to audio visits since it is easier for patients to adopt and due to connection issues, especially in rural areas

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CHC Telehealth Challenges

Greatest Challenges with Sustaining Virtual Care Visits within Your Health Centers (select all that apply)

Challenge	Value
Patient HIT Literacy level	14
Patient Engagement	13
Workflow improvement	12
Staff resources	10
Training	10
Software improvement	8
Budget	4
EHR integration	4
Improvement in Policies and Procedures	3
Billing	1
Leadership buy-in	1

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Health Center Experiences

- CHC #1:
  - Added a Staffing Strategy to their telehealth plan for provider retention
    - Offer four 10-hour shifts to providers, including 1 exclusive telehealth only day
  - No concerns with provider and team productivity
  - Integrated Health Services team have staffing that is full-time telehealth
  - iPads are used by patients for telehealth appointments when in-person and integrated provider is not available
  - QR codes placed on marketing materials within exam room and on Medical Assistant badges for patients to scan for increased access to patient education resources

Health Center Experiences

- CHC #2:
  - Added wall mounted iPads in exam rooms to provide virtual Behavioral Health (BH) services in clinics where there are no BH providers

  - iPads increased access to BH services that patients may have previously been turned away due to lack of availability

  - Translation services also included with the iPads

- CHC #3:
  - Low HIV screening follow-ups prior to the inclusion of telehealth services

  - Once added, saw huge increase in the # of patient visits for HIV screening follow-ups

  - Demonstrates telehealth access improves patient engagement

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Thank you!

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