

Physical activity in pregnancy: a cross-sectional survey

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Background

- Collaboration between Charlene Hyland and Louise Larkin – both Bump Room instructors in 2019 and both working in University of Limerick in 2019
- Ethical approval from Faculty of Education & Health Sciences Research Ethics committee (Ref. 2019_11_02_EHS)
- Survey developed and disseminated on the Qualtrics platform

Participant Demographics

Total respondents

- N=92

Age

- Range: 26-43
- Mean age: 34
- Median age: 34

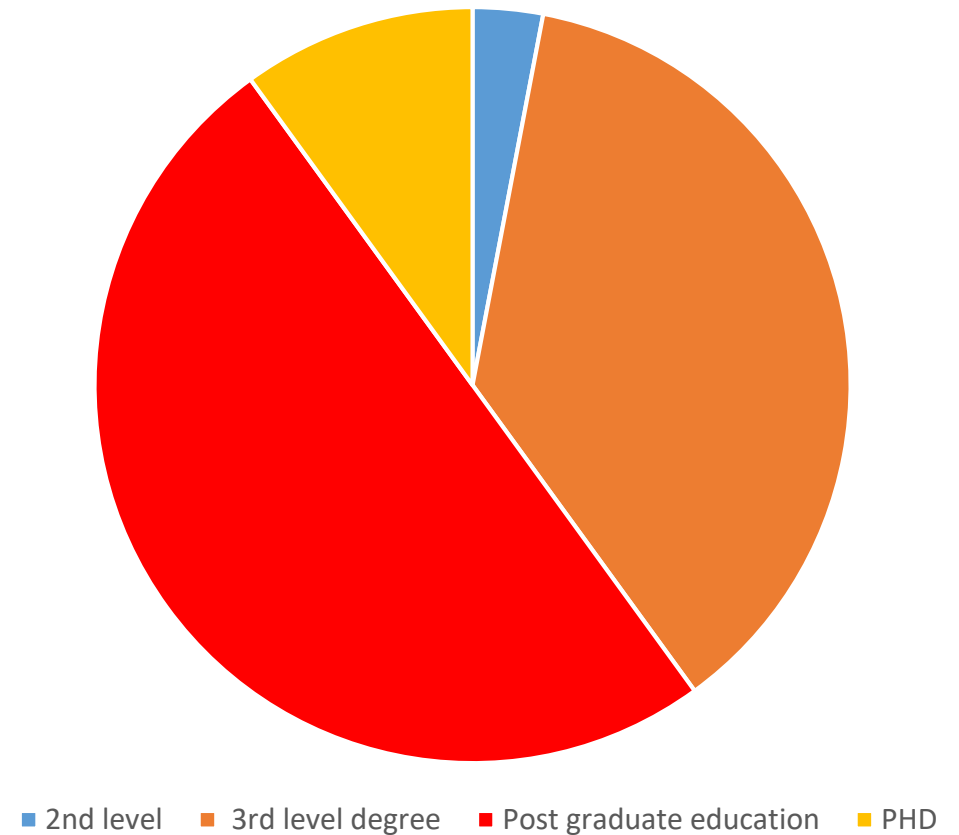
Employment

- 82%: Employed
- 8%: Self employed

Of total working;

- 91% : Full time
- 9%: Part time

Educational Qualifications

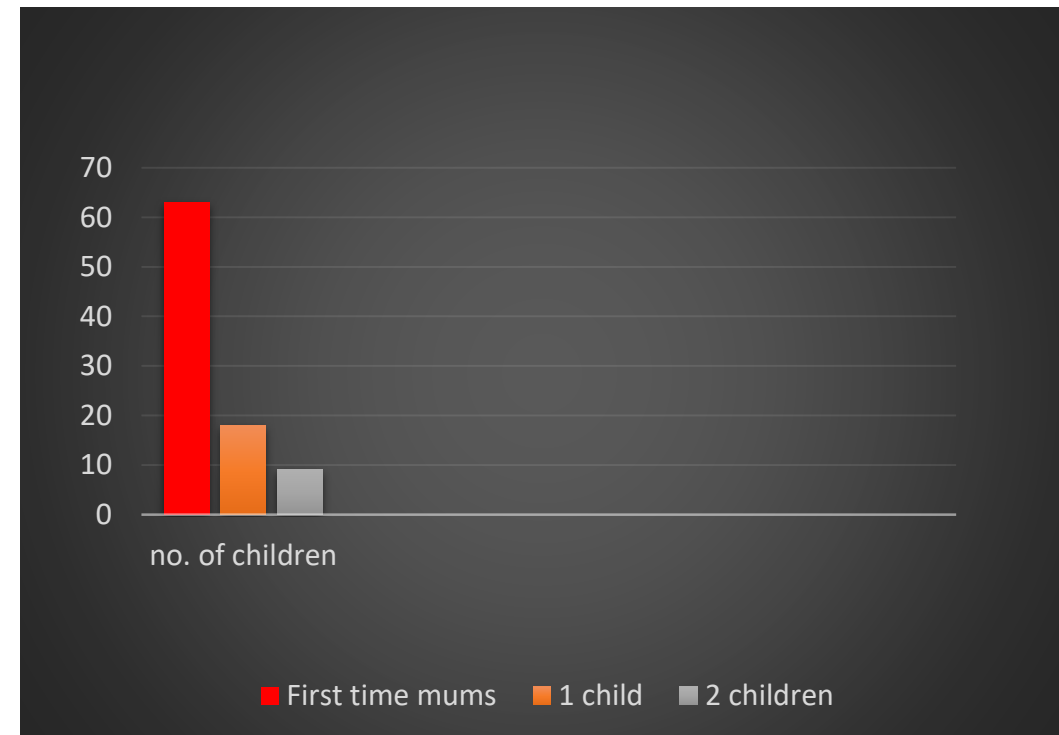


Pregnancy Data

Current Gestation

- Range: 15 to 40 weeks
- 44/90 : 2nd Trimester
- 46/90: 3rd Trimester

Current no. of Children



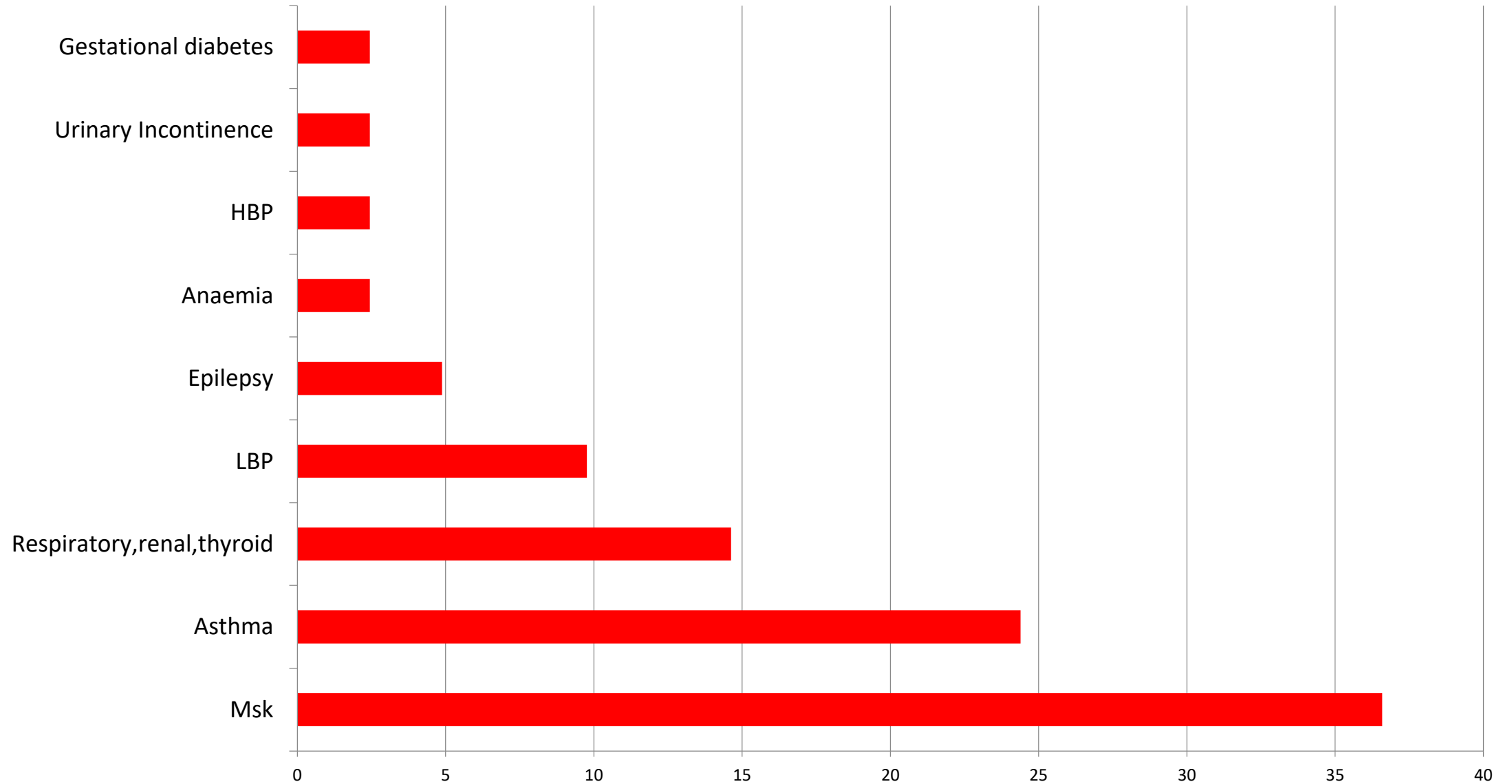
Pregnancy complications: miscarriage

- Pregnancy loss, also referred to as miscarriage or spontaneous abortion, is generally defined as a non viable intrauterine pregnancy up to 20 weeks gestation (Prager et al. 2020).
- Early pregnancy loss (EPL), which occurs in the first trimester, is the most common complication in early pregnancy. The incidence of EPL is as high as 31 percent, (Magnus et al.2019).

Incidence of miscarriage reported from survey

- When we looked at the at the question “have you suffered miscarriage, vaginal bleeding/other complications” 32/92 (34.78%) answered yes.
- Of the 26 participants who had a previous miscarriage 19/26 (73%) reported having 1 miscarriage, with 7/26 (26.9%) reporting 2 or more miscarriages.
- All 26 miscarriages were reported in the first trimester.

Health Conditions



Health Conditions

Asthma

- Almost ¼ of participants have asthma.
- Little research on the effects of exercise on asthma in pregnancy.
- Treat asthma as usual during pregnancy.

Irish College of General Practitioners, 2020 Asthma: Diagnosis, Assessment and Management in General Practice

Gestational Diabetes

- 1 person reported having gestational diabetes (GD).
- 37.77% of the total participants were 35 and over, which is considered a geriatric pregnancy and potentially high risk for GD.
- Currently in the maternity services across Ireland GD is screened for in all pregnancies where the mother is 40 and over.

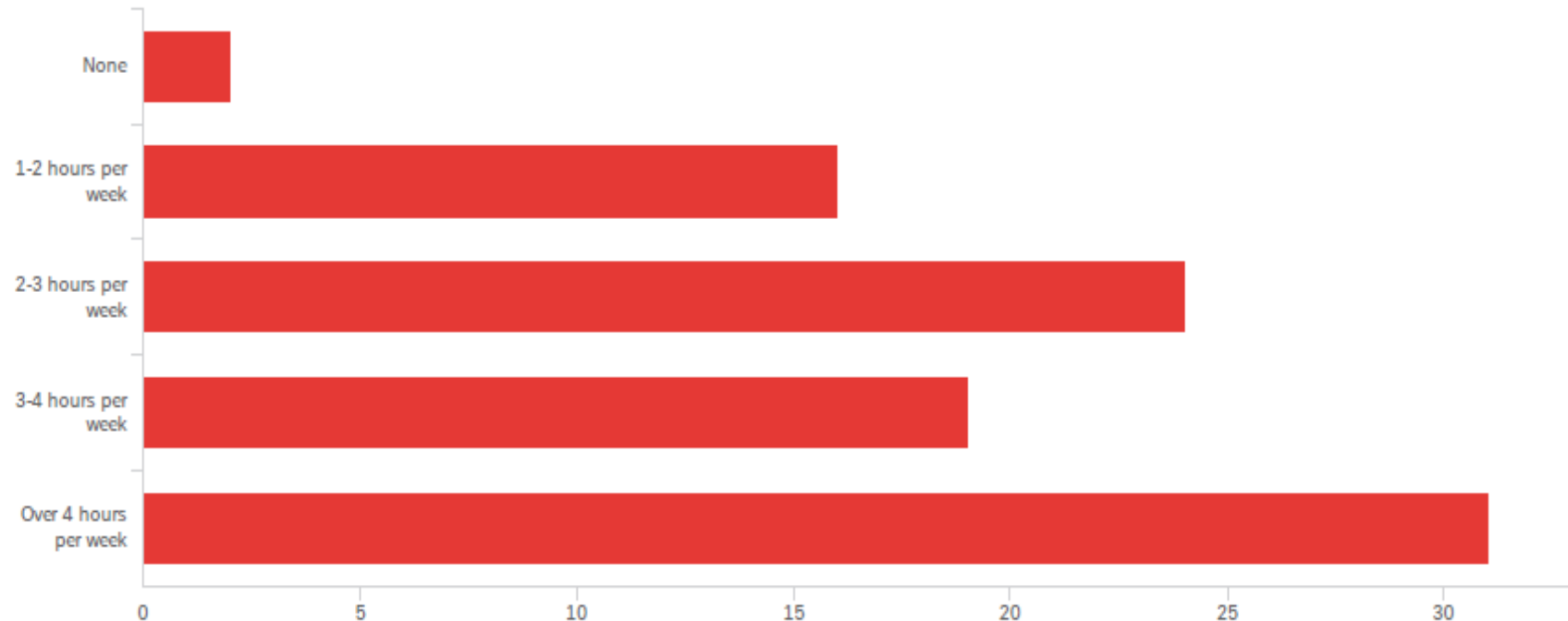
HSE, 2010 Guidelines for the management of pre-gestational and gestational diabetes mellitus from pre-conception to the postnatal period

Physical Activity Levels

Barriers & Facilitators to Exercise

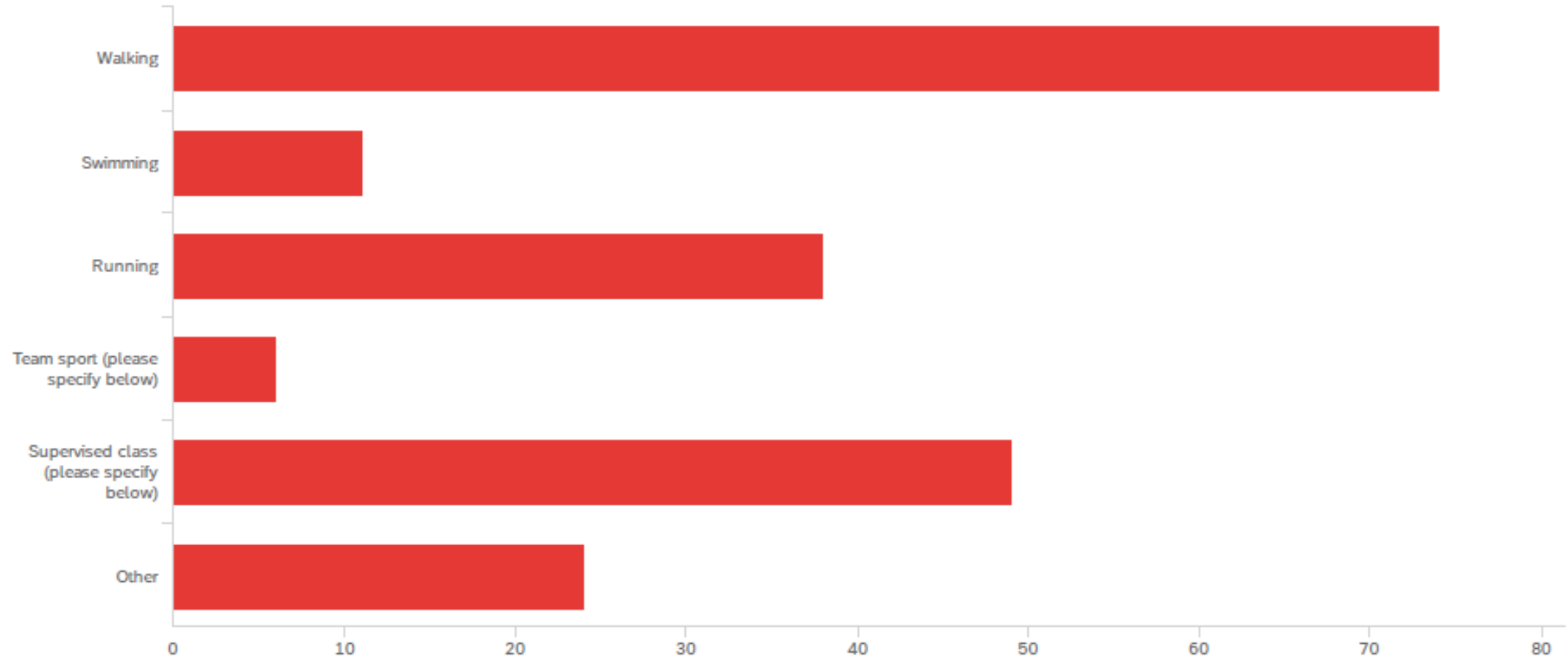
Previous PA levels

Q20 - Previous exercise levels



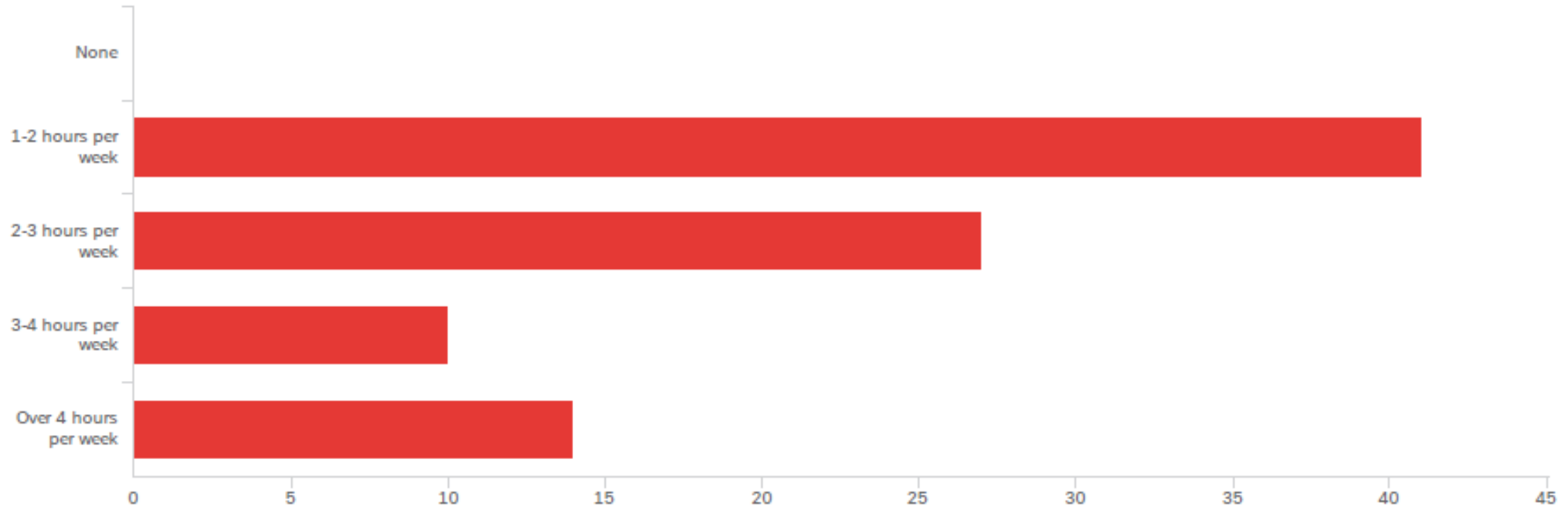
- 2% (N=2) none
- 17.39% (N=16) reported 1-2 hours exercise per week
- 26.09% (N=24) reported 2-3 hours of exercise per week
- 20.63% (N=19) reported 3-4 hours of exercise per week
- 33.70% (N=31) participating in over 4 hours of exercise per week.

Previous types of exercise



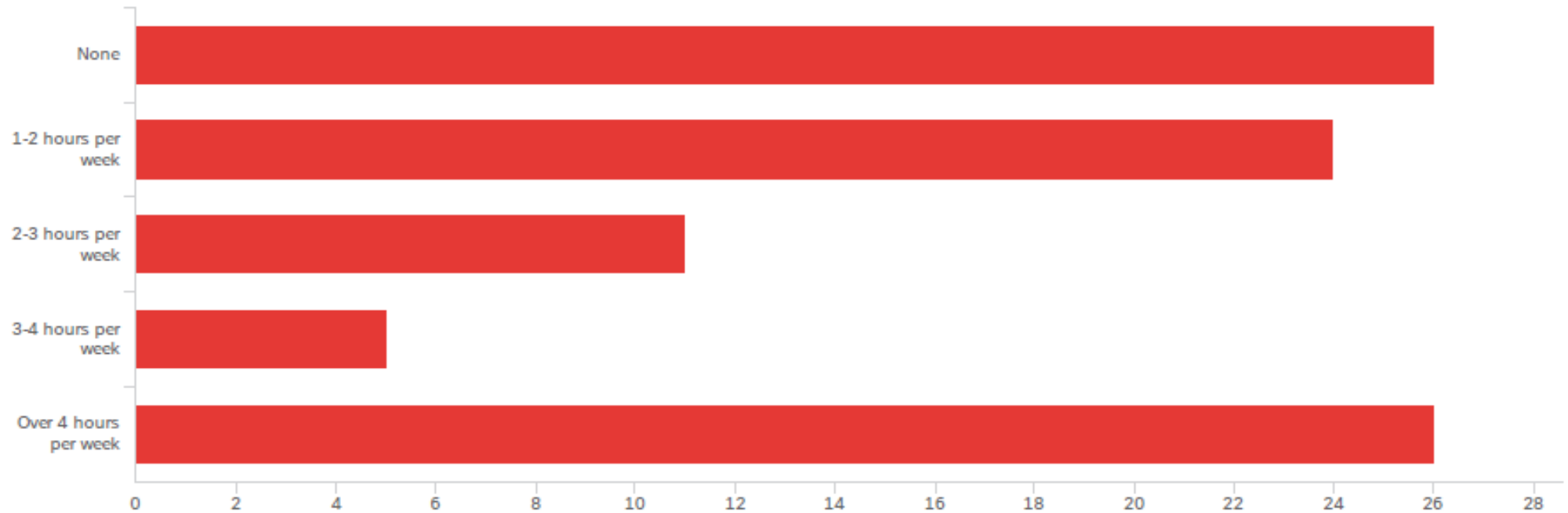
General Physical Activity

Q22 - Time spent doing housework



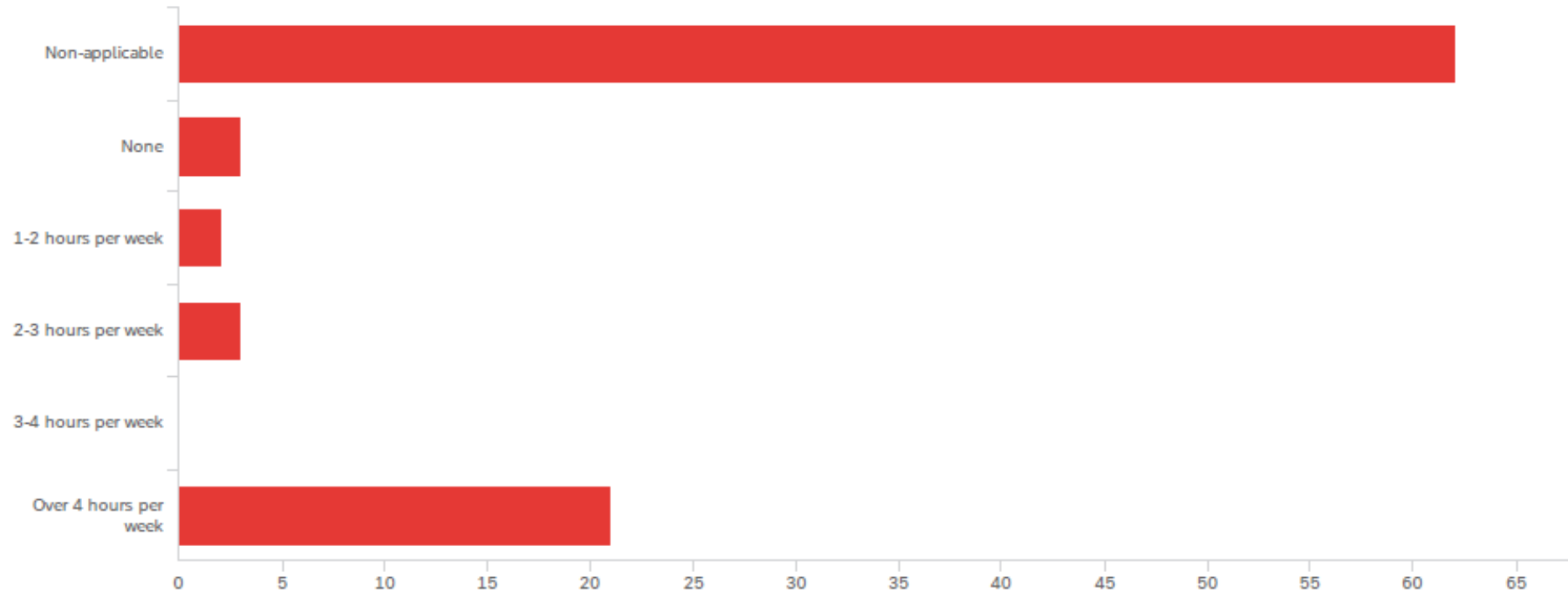
General physical activity

Q23 - How much physical work do you do in your job (e.g. walking, stairs, lifting)?



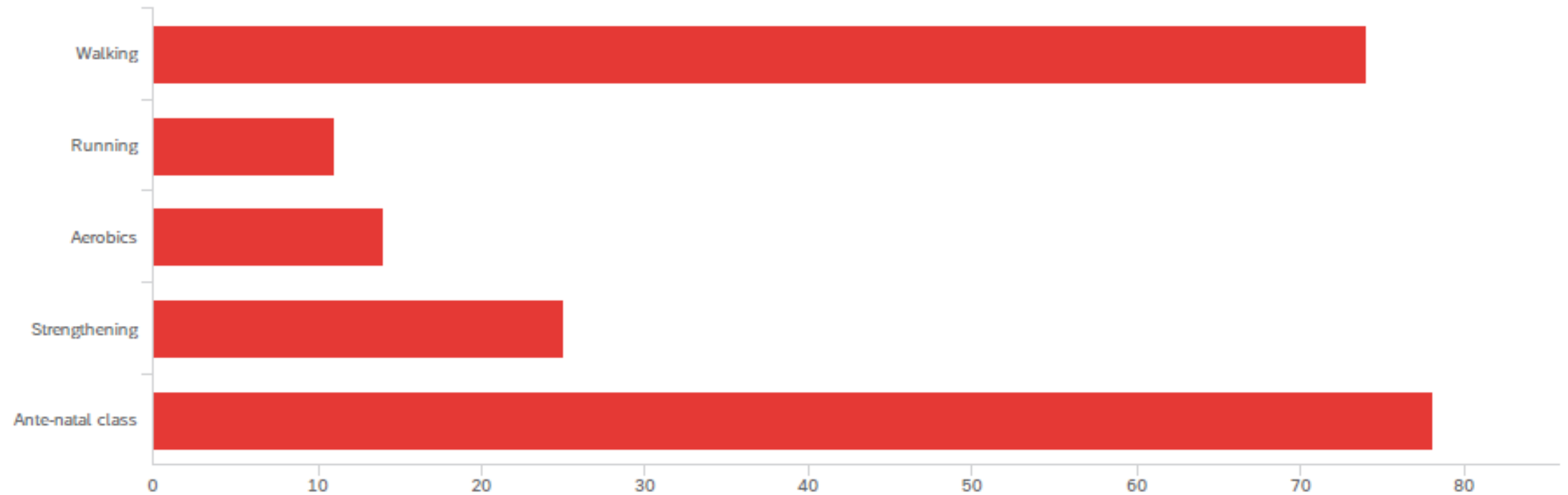
General physical activity

Q24 - Playing, feeding, washing, bathing and carrying your children



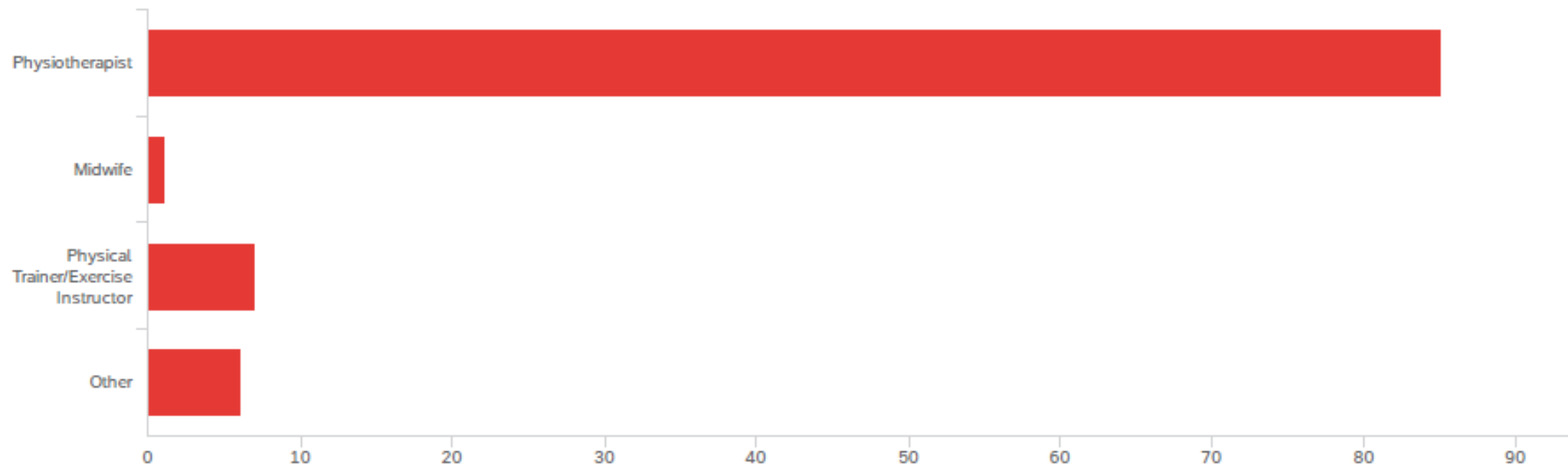
Current exercise levels

Q28 - How much exercise do you participate in per week (in minutes)?



Current Exercise

Q29 - If you are attending an antenatal exercise class, who is teaching the class?



Barriers to exercise

Selected as top barrier (selected as a top 5 barrier)

- Fatigue N=31 (N=59 overall)
- Fear of exercising N=9 (N=30 overall)
- Limited amount of ante-natal classes available N=9 (N=29 overall)
- Childcare N=8 (N=18 overall)
- Cost N=1 (N=22 overall)

Facilitators of exercise

Selected as top facilitator (selected as a top 5 facilitator)

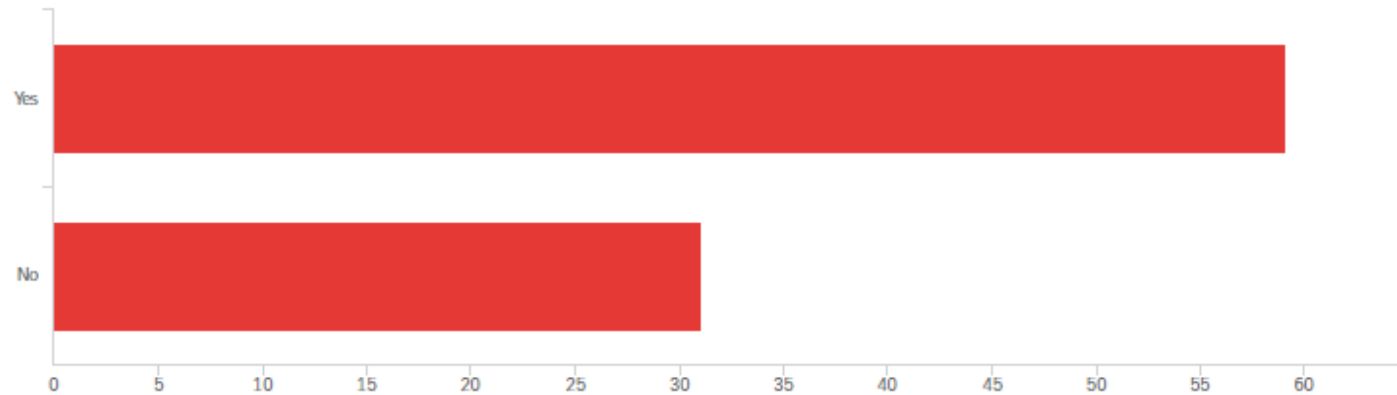
- Time N=25 (N=54 overall)
- Accessible N=24 (N=53 overall)
- Support from family/friends N=11 (N=33 overall)

Benefits of exercise



Education

Q36 - Have you been provided with ante-natal education on the importance of physical activity during pregnancy?



Opinions on exercise in pregnancy

I think it is so important to remain physically active during pregnancy! I feel better mentally and physically after exercise

Very important as labour required a level of fitness I wasn't expecting and because I had stayed active throughout pregnancy I felt I was more equipped to deal with labour

Extremely important, needs to be promoted more in pregnancy. I find a lot of people feel they are entitled to sit down and do nothing once pregnant

Extremely important. Being fit and active made my first pregnancy safe and enjoyable.

Hugely important mentally and physically and has massive benefits for mother and baby

Very important have completed bump room classes with all 3 pregnancies! Staying active helps with labour and recovery

In my opinion giving birth is a big event and you wouldn't sign up for a marathon and not train for it!

Where to next?

- Comparison with public maternity service population
- Project dissemination

Thank you!

- For circulating the survey
- For listening to our presentation 😊

Questions?