

# Assessing How Much Inpatient Care Information Patients Retain After Hospitalization

When patients understand the medical care they receive, readmission rates go down and patient satisfaction goes up. And yet, the literature suggests that after discharge, patients often have poor retention of the large amount of care information they received despite numerous interventions implemented to facilitate understanding and retention.



A study featured in the February 2023 issue of *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety (JQPS)* aims to understand how well patients retain care information after hospital discharge and to assess patient perspectives on facilitators of this process, such as whiteboards and patient portals.



## The Study

Patients discharged from general medicine resident teaching services at a large, tertiary care, academic medical center were **interviewed via phone 24-48 hours after discharge** to assess their recall of **four key domains of care**:

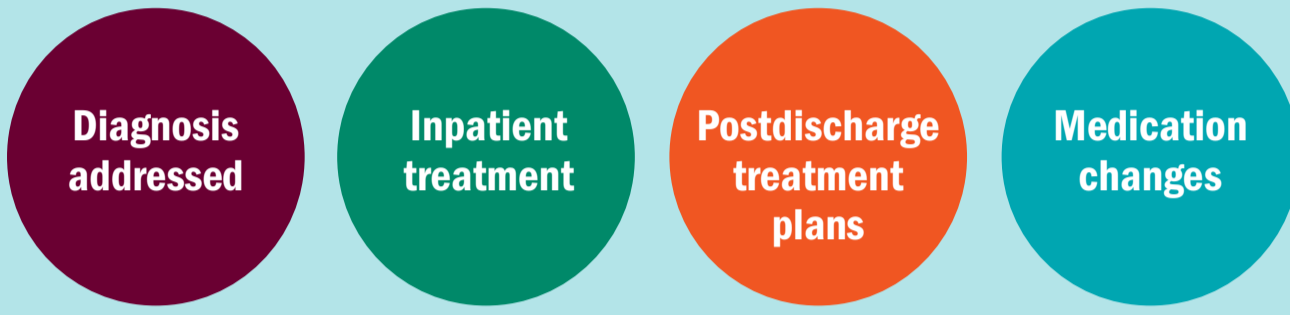


Chart review verified patient responses, which were then categorized by independent reviews as:

- Correct
- Partially correct
- Incorrect

## The Results

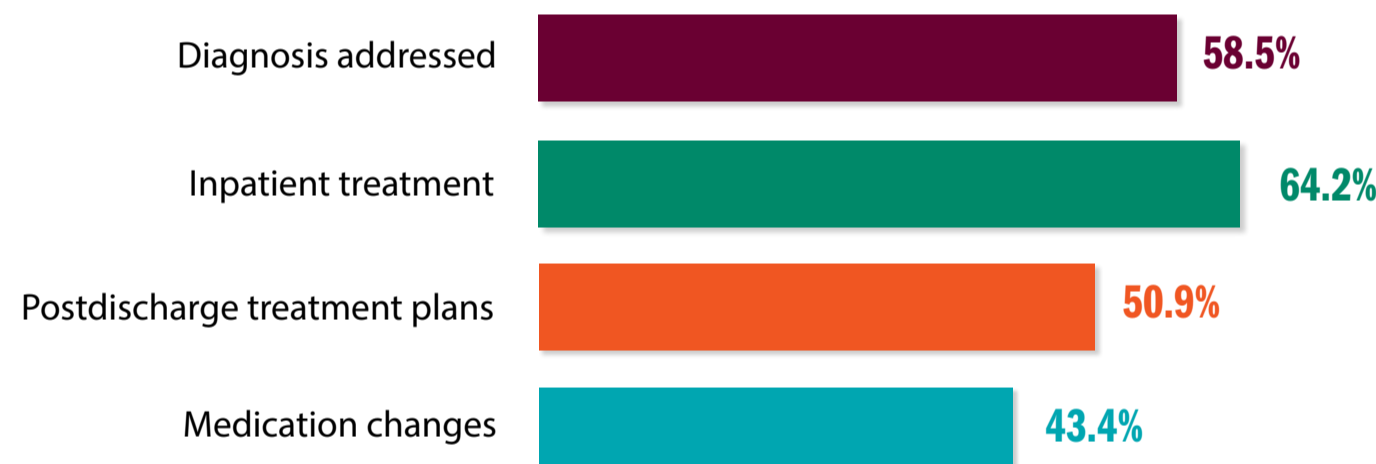
More than **90% of the 53 patient who participated were confident** in their knowledge, but review revealed **correct recall of respective domains were much lower**.

### Most patients had confidence in their knowledge...



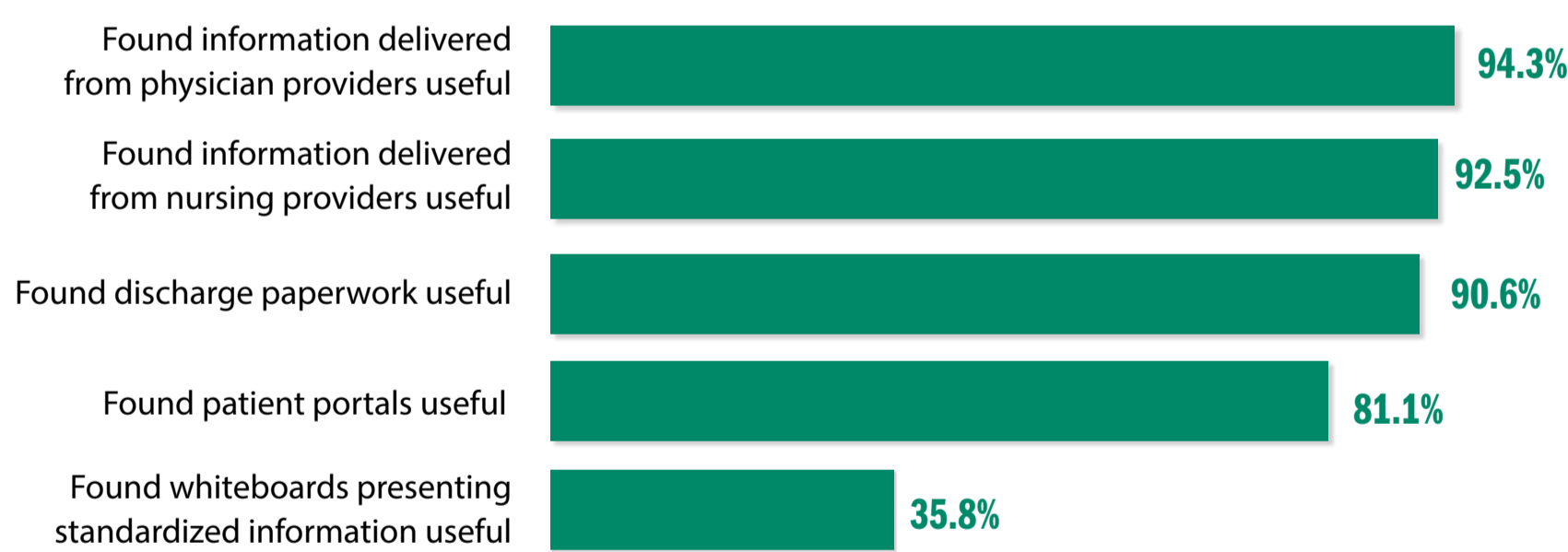
### Yet fewer actually recalled correctly.

#### Percentage correctly recalled by domain:



### Usefulness of Facilitators

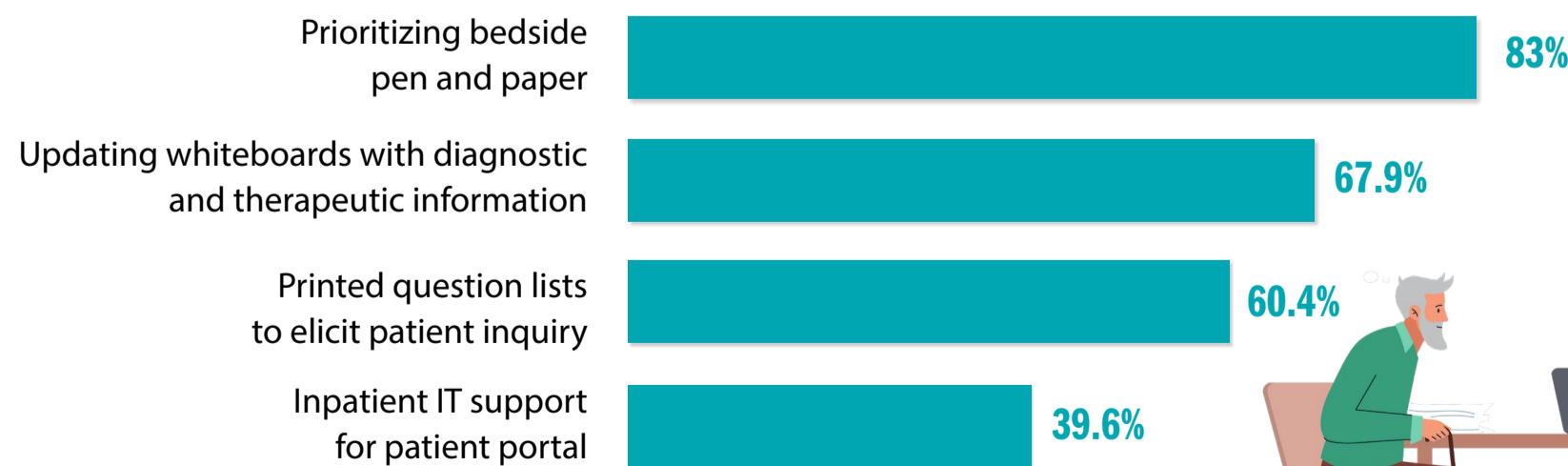
Patients were asked to evaluate the usefulness of facilitators used during their hospitalization on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very unhelpful; 5 = very helpful).



## Suggestions for Improvement

Patients identified opportunities for improvements to aid understanding and retention, including **better patient-provider communication, more patient-friendly charting, and increased hospital-family communication**.

### Patients agreed these suggested improvements would be useful:



The study found that patient recall of their inpatient care after discharge, despite modern facilitators, remains poor. Further efforts are needed to enhance or implement facilitators based on patient feedback.

To learn more about this study, visit:

[https://www.jointcommissionjournal.com/article/S1553-7250\(22\)00267-7/fulltext](https://www.jointcommissionjournal.com/article/S1553-7250(22)00267-7/fulltext)