

IMPACT OF OPEN RESULTS ON PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS

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OBJECTIVE

Recognize how patients access immediately released results through the patient portal and understand their preferences towards receiving these results in the future

INTRODUCTION

The information blocking portion of the 21st Century Cures Act mandates the immediate electronic release of all test results upon request. Many institutions already released a subset of health information prior to the Cures Act, but results that were sensitive or risked misinterpretation were often suppressed or delayed so that clinicians could review and provide context and counsel. Improved access to health information helps patients take greater control of their health care and supports coordination efforts, but benefits to immediate release of test results may be overshadowed by unintended consequences to patient wellbeing.

METHODS

Evaluate results reviewed first by patients

- Extracted all health results released to the patient portal between January 1, 2020 and April 16, 2021
- Measured percentage of tests reviewed first by patients stratified by historic release category

Patient attitudes toward receiving immediately released results

- Survey of patient portal users across four geographically distributed sites
- Survey remained open for 33 days; participants were sent two follow-up reminders
- Conducted federated analysis to evaluate responses

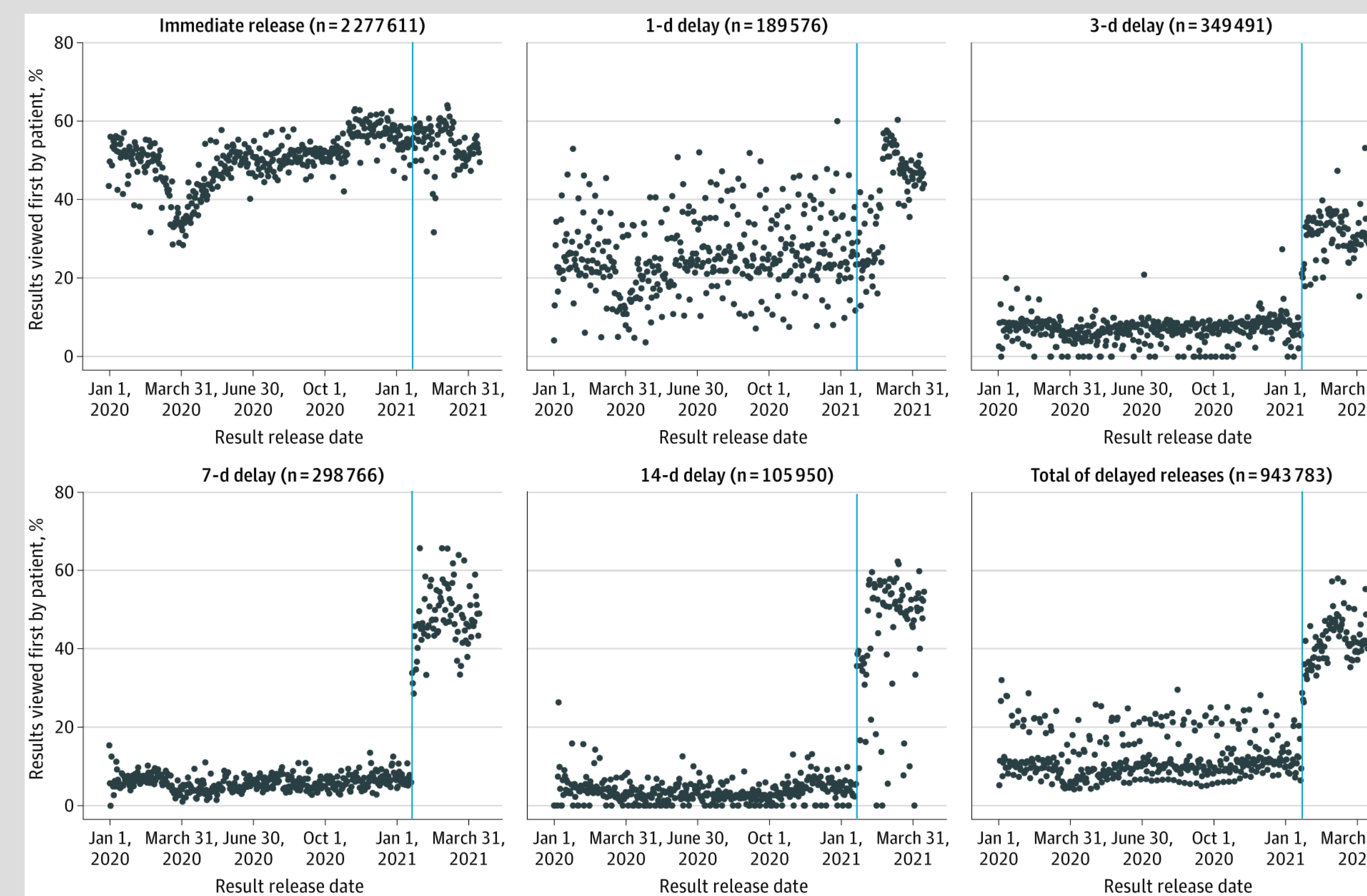


Figure 1. Results Reviewed First by Patients Stratified by Release Category

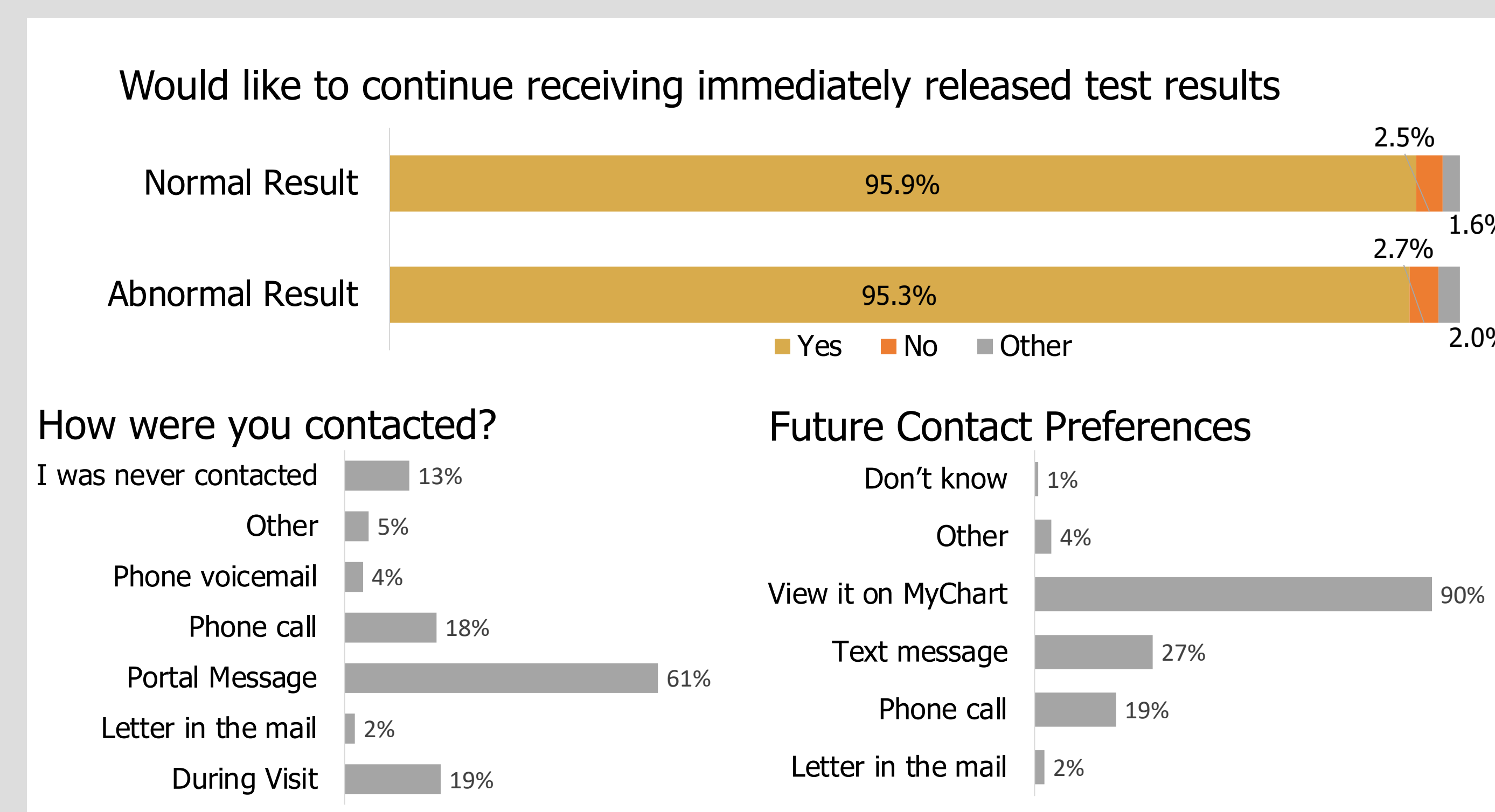


Figure 2. Respondent Result Release Preferences

RESULTS

Among tests categorized for release after a delay before Cures compliance, patients viewed 10.4% of results before clinicians compared to 40.3% of the same result after immediate release.

Nearly all respondents in our survey wanted to continue to receive immediately released results through the patient portal, even though most individuals reviewed their test result before they were contacted by a healthcare provider. (Figure 2)

A small proportion of patients worried more after reviewing an abnormal test result. Pre-counseling prior to ordering a test was associated with decreased worry.

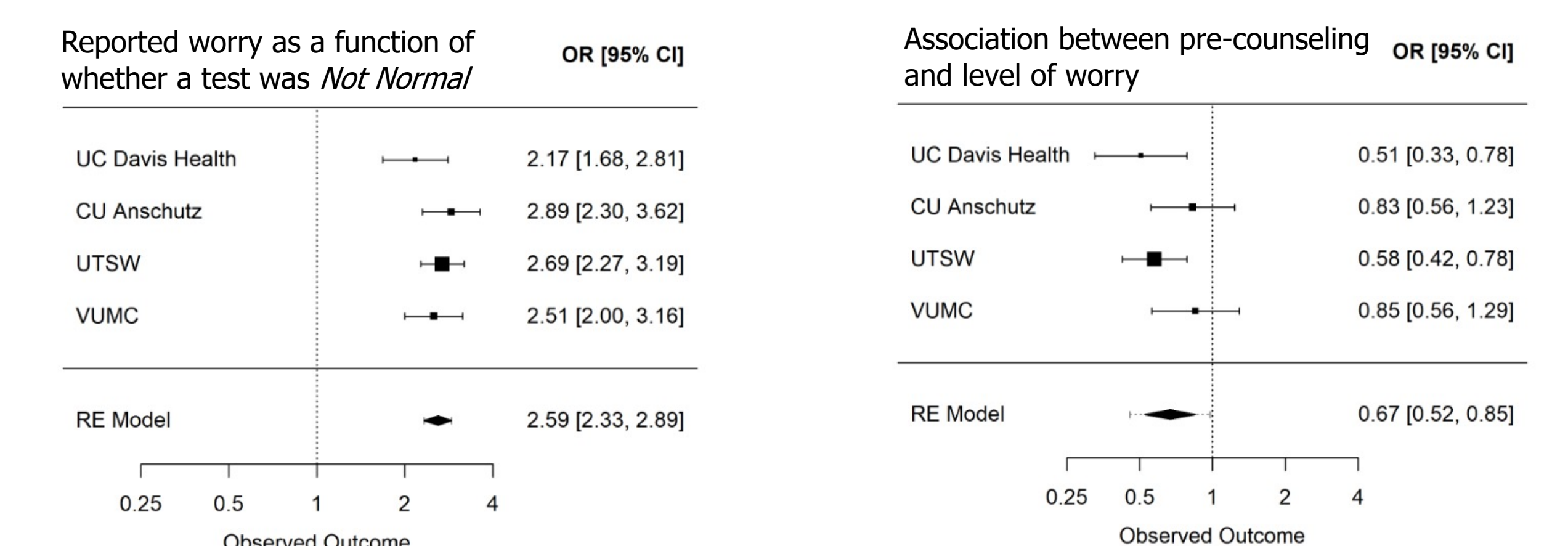
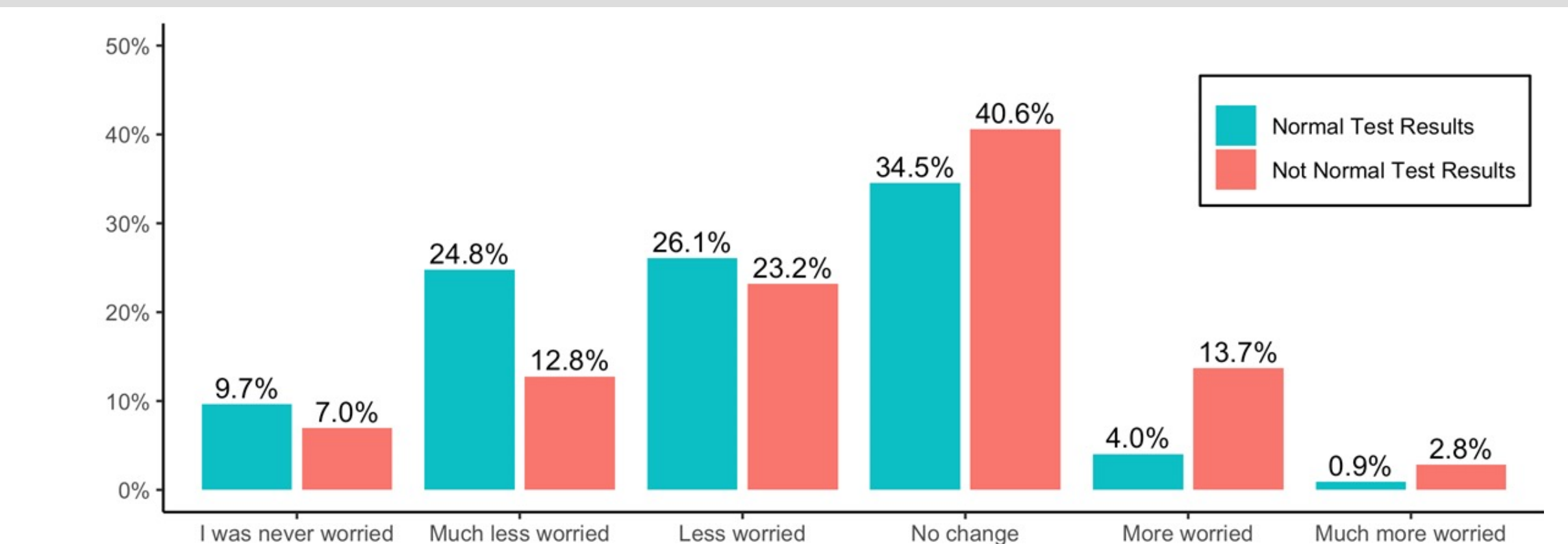


Figure 3. Patient Worry from Receiving Immediately Released Results

CONCLUSIONS

Improved access to health information represents a marked transformation for patients to take ownership of their health care. Despite many patients reviewing test results before their provider, patients overwhelmingly wanted to continue receiving immediately released results through the portal. We found that there were a subset of patients who experienced additional worry after reviewing non-normal results, but pre-counseling may be a helpful strategy to mitigate worry