



2018 Membership Survey



Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
Conducted in partnership with The Portage Group (TPG)
October 2018



Methodology

- The Membership Survey was sent to 44,017 Royal College Fellows in September 2018. Four thousand and sixty-six (4,066) responses had been received by the cut-off date for an overall response rate of 9%. A number of respondents “dropped out” of the survey at various points. A total of 3,617 completed the full survey. To be considered “usable”, a respondent must have at least completed the evaluation of the Royal College.
- The survey was structured to split respondents into three ‘survey streams’. Each respondent was asked a core set of questions and a subset of questions specific to their survey stream. The membership was randomly divided into three roughly equal sized groups and assigned to one of three survey streams. The survey components were as follows:
 - **Core Questions (asked to all):** These questions covered satisfaction with the Royal College, engagement expectations, Royal College roles, reasons for membership and demographics.
 - **Stream A – Continuing Professional Development:** In addition to the core questions, these respondents answered questions about their CPD usage and preferences.
 - **Stream B – Communications:** In addition to the core questions, these respondents answered questions about Royal College communications and their communication preferences.
 - **Stream C – Needs and Perceptions:** In addition to the core questions, these respondents answered questions about their perceptions of the Royal College, the importance of services and their actual engagement in the organization.
- The results have been weighted by region and gender to more accurately reflect the true distribution of the Royal College membership. Separate weights were calculated for each survey stream and the core questions. Weighting the results removes much of the sampling bias, thereby making the results truly representative of the full membership.
- Results from the sample of 4,066 are considered to be accurate to within $\pm 1.5\%$ nineteen times out of twenty (95% confidence interval). More details on the margin of error can be found in *Appendix I*. The sample sizes, response rates and margin of error for each survey stream are presented in the following table.

SURVEY STREAM	SAMPLE SIZE (N)	RESPONSE RATE	MARGIN OF ERROR
Core	4,066	9%	$\pm 1.5\%$
Stream A: CPD	1,209	8%	$\pm 2.8\%$
Stream B: Communications	1,266	9%	$\pm 2.7\%$
Stream C: Needs and Perceptions	1,142	8%	$\pm 2.9\%$



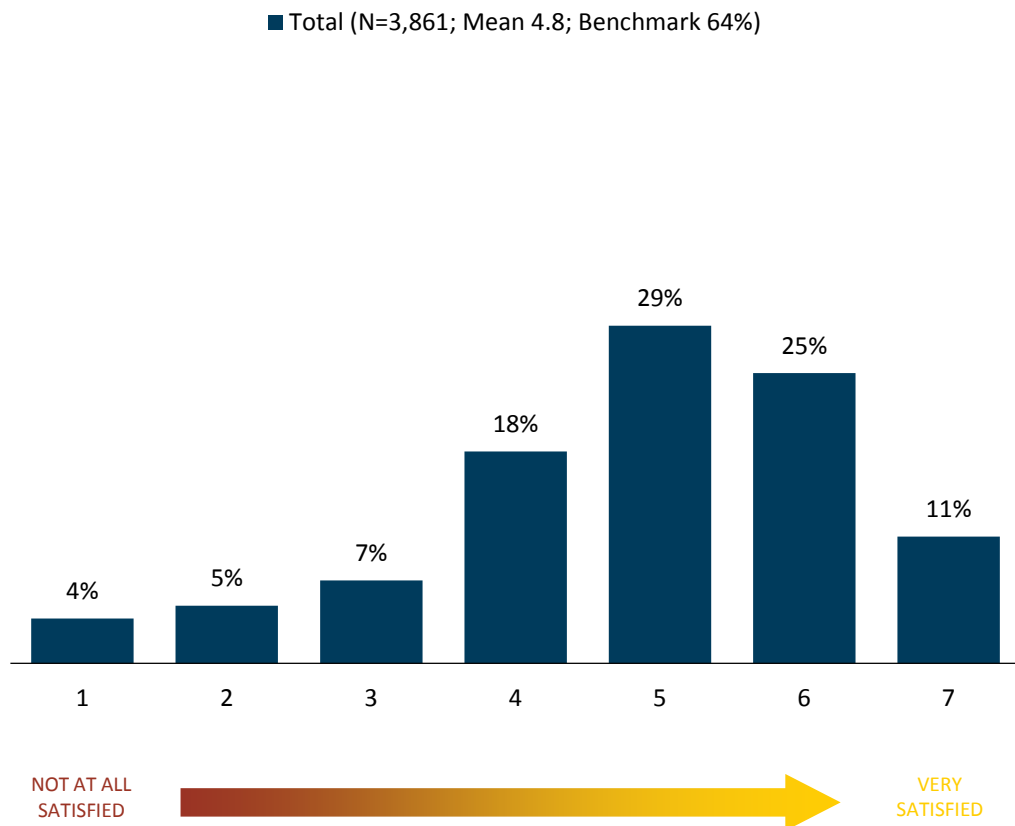


Satisfaction Levels





Overall Satisfaction With the Royal College

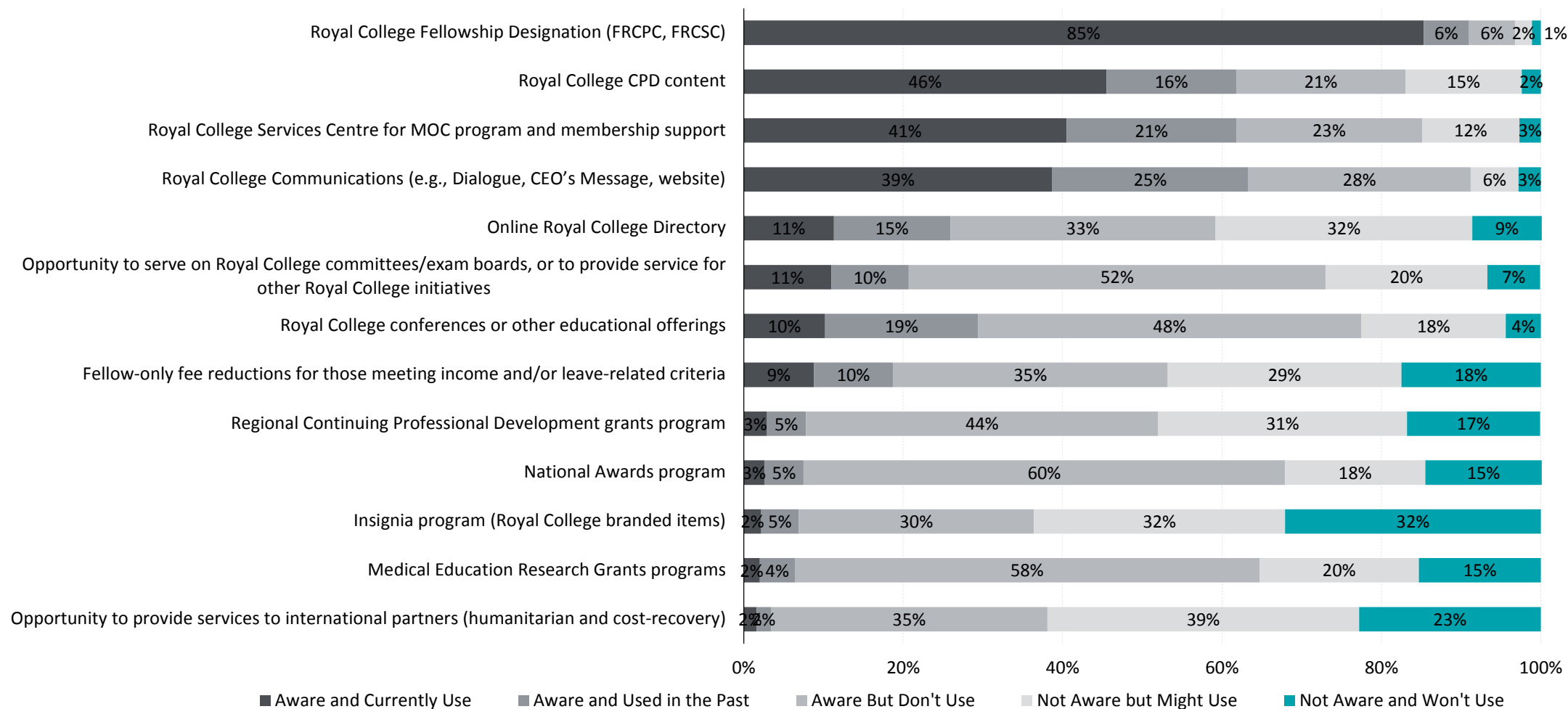


- When asked how satisfied they are with the Royal College, over half (54%) of Royal College members rated the organization at 5 or 6 on a 1 to 7 scale. A further 11% awarded full marks of 7 out of 7.
- The mean rating of 4.8 out of 7 translates into a benchmark satisfaction score of 64%. While members feel the Royal College is doing an acceptable job, they also believe there is considerable room for improvement.
- Overall satisfaction with the Royal College is on par with the average for professional associations that TPG has worked with. The average rating in 47 studies with professional associations is 63%.





Use of Royal College Services by Members



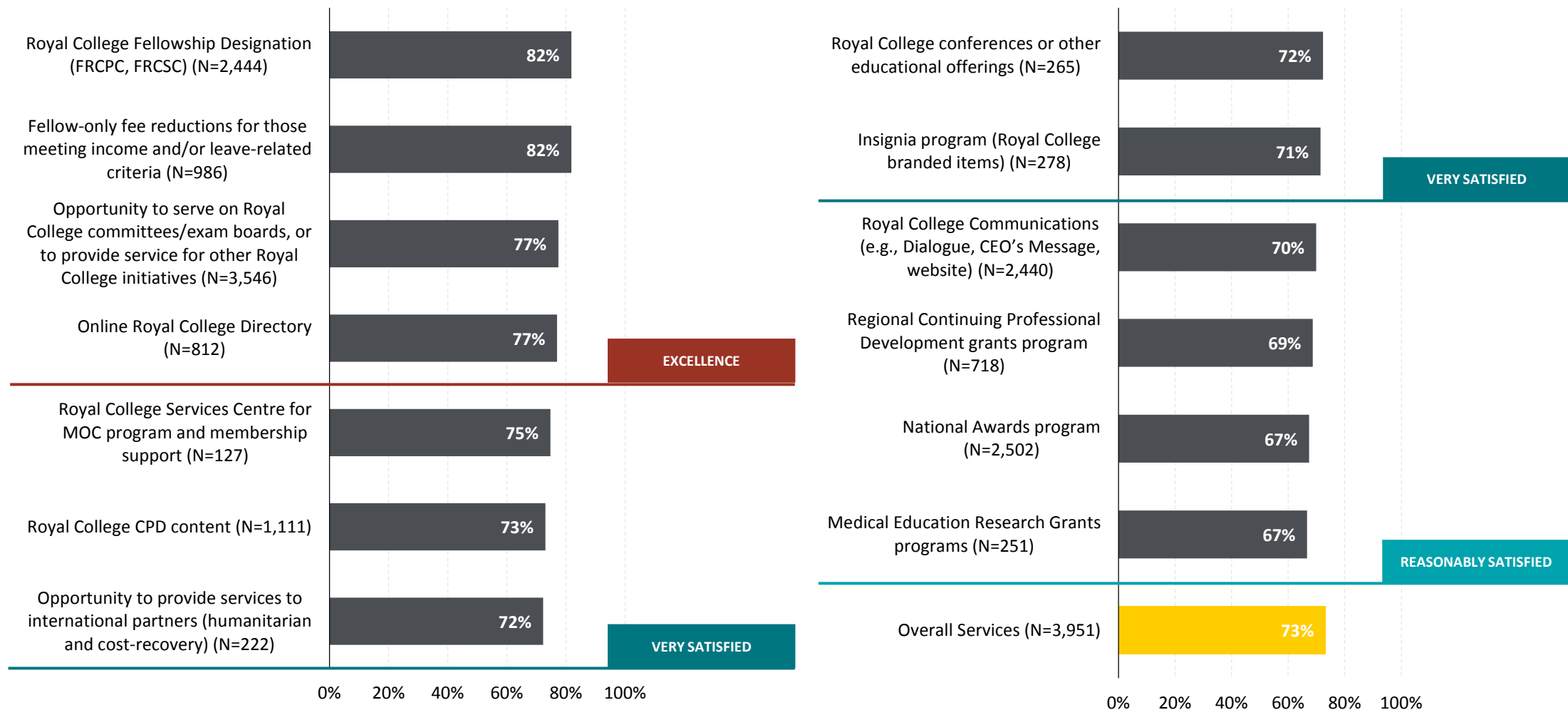
N=4,066

■ Aware and Currently Use ■ Aware and Used in the Past ■ Aware But Don't Use ■ Not Aware but Might Use ■ Not Aware and Won't Use





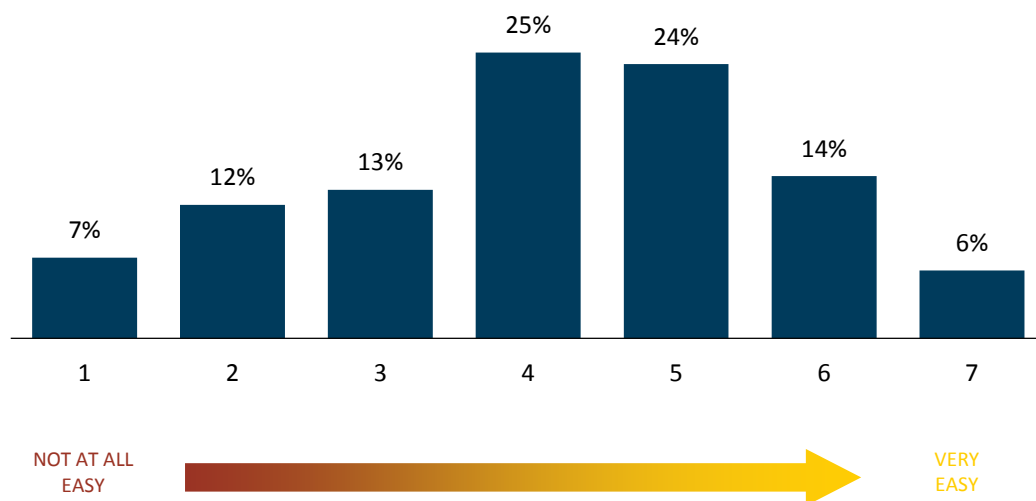
Satisfaction With Royal College Services (cont'd)





Ease of Having Voice Heard

■ Total (N=3,240; Mean 4.1; Benchmark 52%)

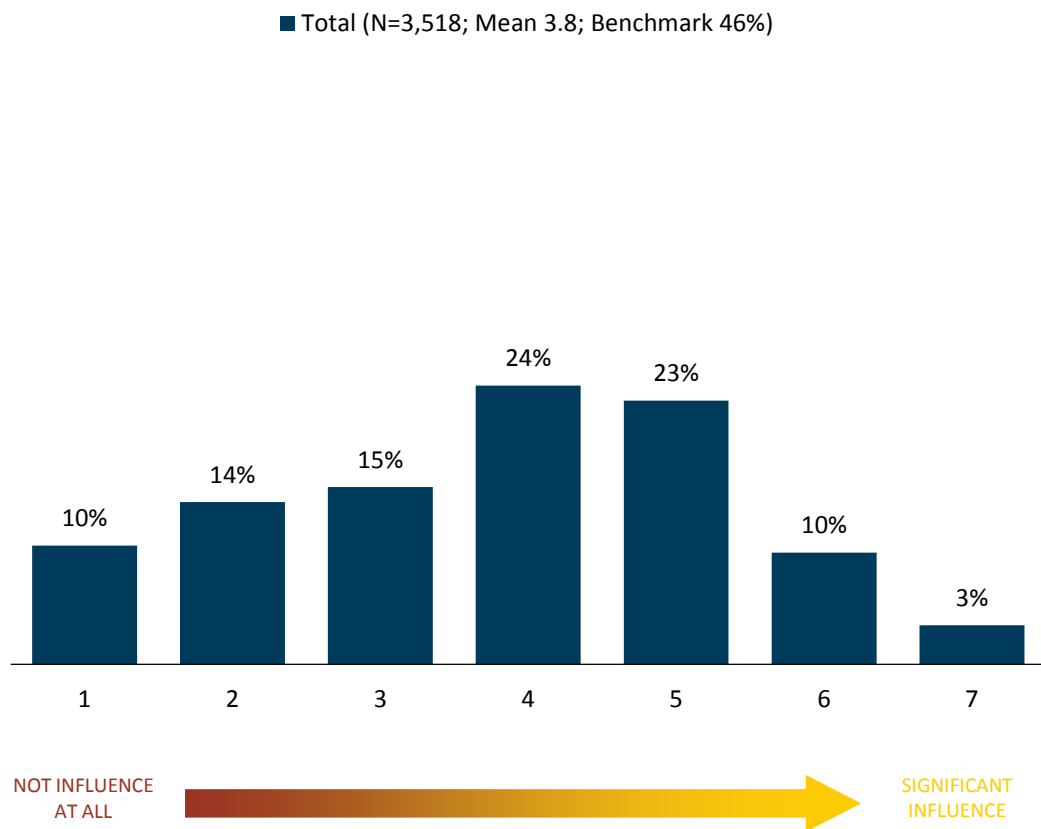


- Members do not believe it is very easy to have their voices heard by the Royal College. Responses focused around a rating of 4 or 5 out of 7 (49%). However, one third (32%) awarded a failing grade of 3 out of 7.
- The Royal College's benchmark in this area is much lower than the average of 61% for professional associations overall. However, it is important to note that many of the larger organizations (by number of members) TPG has worked with struggle in this area.





Members' Influence Over the Priorities of the Royal College



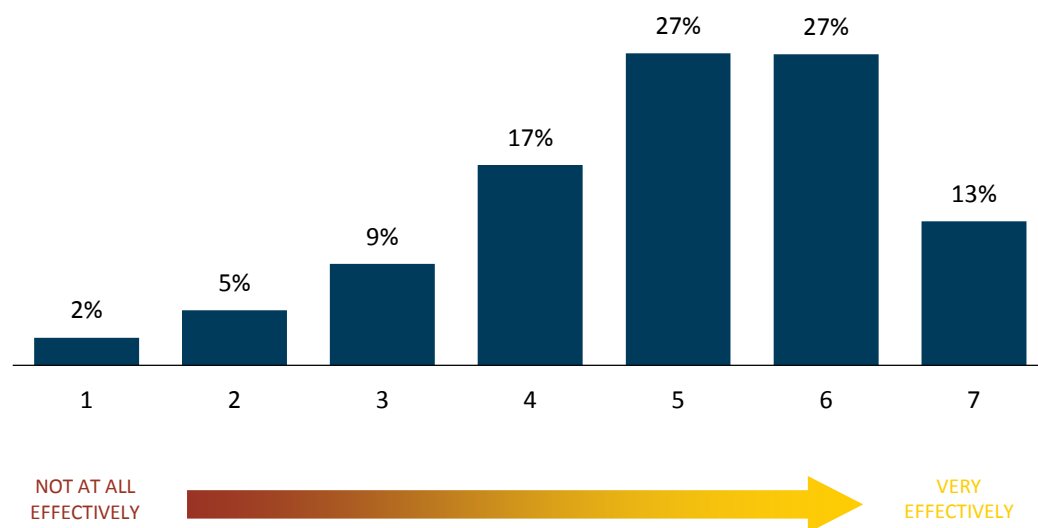
- There are two key contributors to members' perceived level of influence. One of these is obviously the degree to which the association actually allows member input to drive its agenda. The second is the degree to which the association communicates to the members about how the agenda reflects their input.
- Members do not believe that they have a significant influence over the Royal College's priorities. In fact, only 36% of members awarded a rating on the positive side of the scale (5 or higher).
- The organization only achieved a 46% satisfaction benchmark, further evidence of the need to improve the levels of two-way communication with members.
- The Royal College's benchmark in this area is considerably lower than the average of 57% for professional associations overall.





The Royal College's Effectiveness at Communicating to its Members

■ Total (N=3,979; Mean 4.9; Benchmark 66%)

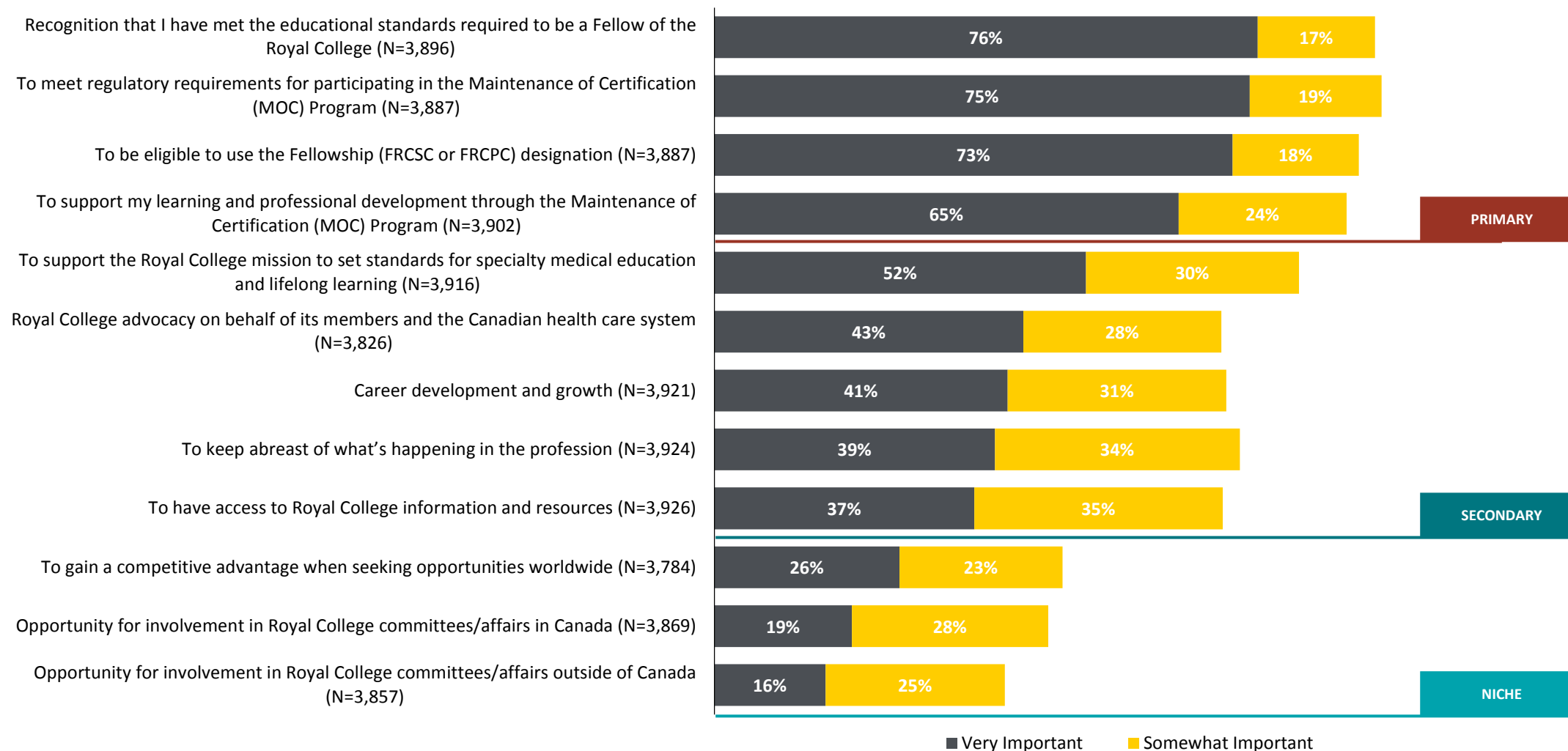


- Communicating to members is a key element of member satisfaction.
- The results show that the Royal College does a reasonable job at communicating effectively to its members. A solid majority (67%) awarded ratings of 5 or above out of 7, with 13% awarding full marks. At the other end of the spectrum, 16% of respondents awarded a failing grade in this area.
- The benchmark rating of 66% shows that members are “reasonably satisfied” with the Royal College in this area, indicating that while it is on the right track, there is room to improve. The rating is slightly below the 69% average for all professional associations we have worked with.





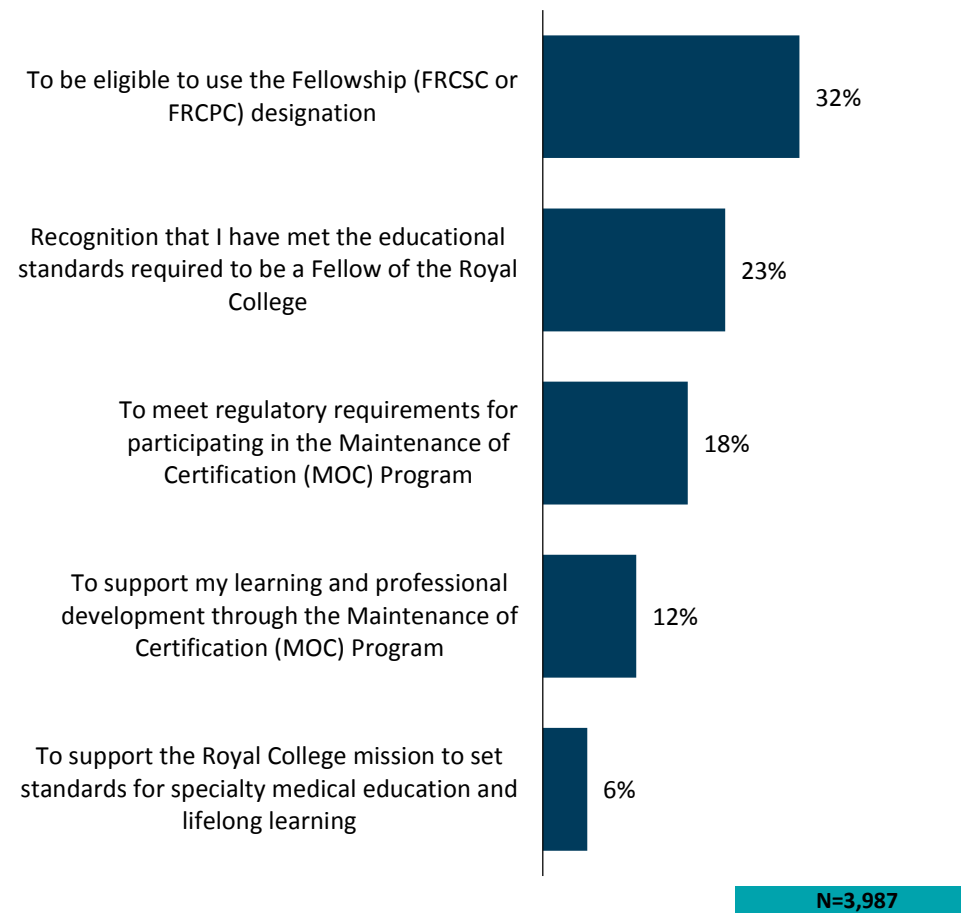
Reasons For Belonging to the Royal College



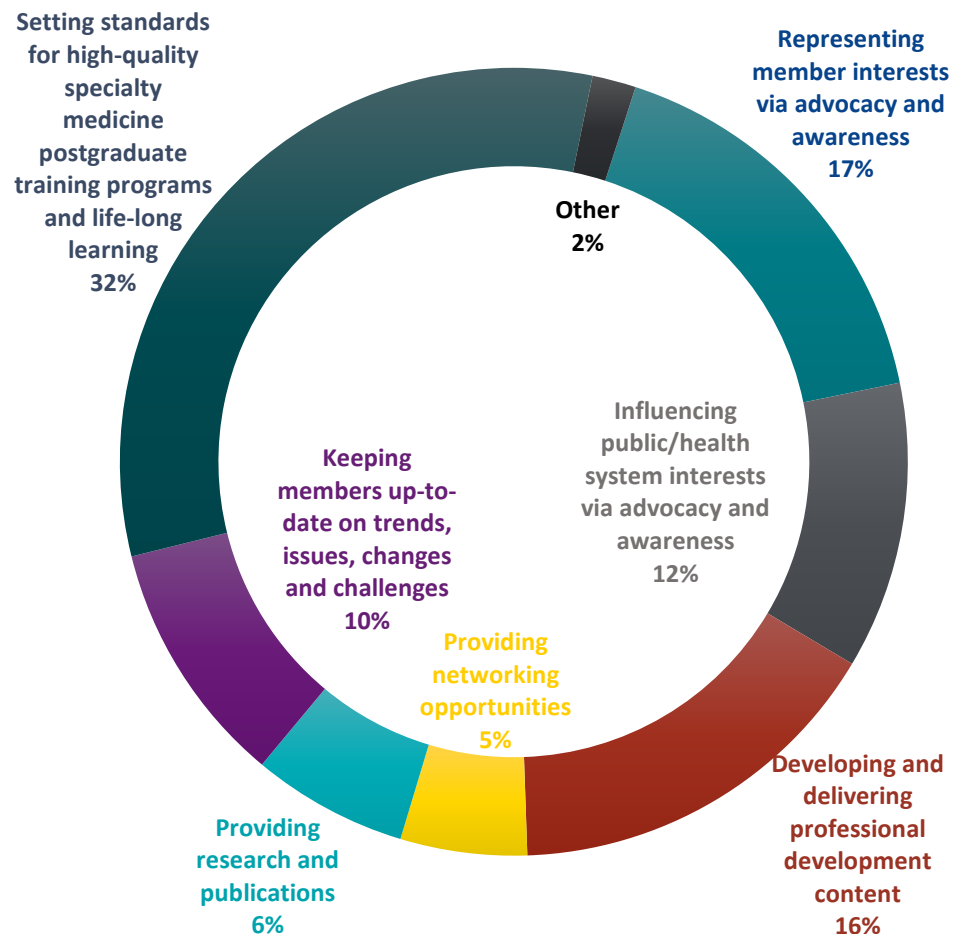


Primary Reason For Belonging to the Royal College

- When asked to identify the primary reason for belonging to the Royal College, the same three reasons ranked as most important show up at the top of the list.
- With almost one third (32%) of members identifying it as the primary reason for membership, eligibility to use the Fellowship designation is the clear front runner.
- Recognition that I have met the educational standards required to be a Fellow of the Royal College is a distant second at 23% followed closely by meeting regulatory requirements for participating in the MOC Program (18%).
- Combined, these five reasons account for just over nine in ten members. None of the remaining reasons for membership was selected by more than 1.6% of respondents.



Where the Royal College Should Focus its Time, Effort and Financial Resources

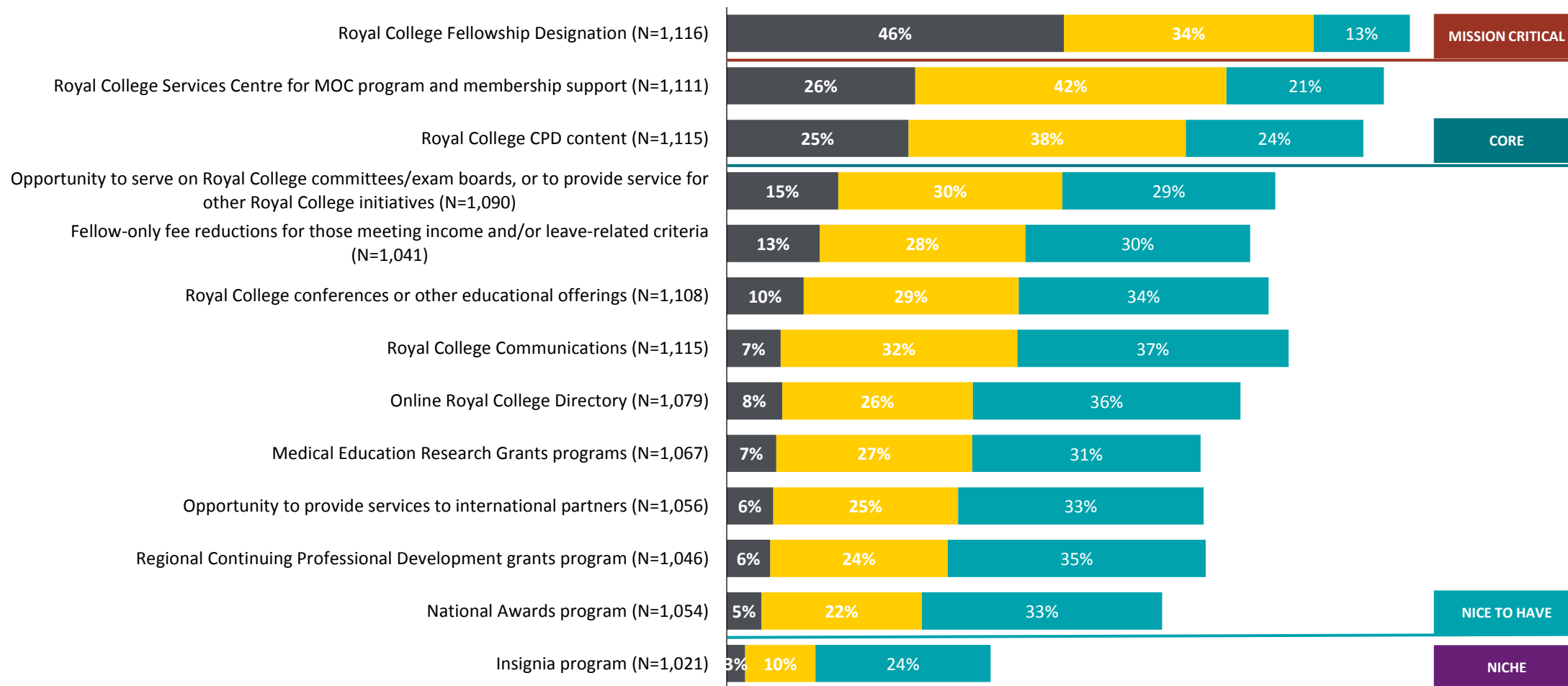


- In the eyes of members, the top area for the Royal College to focus its time, effort and resources on is on setting standards for high-quality specialty medicine postgraduate training programs and life-long learning. Members would allocate almost one third (32%) of the Royal College’s time, effort, and resources to this area.
- Representing member interests via advocacy and awareness (17%) and developing and delivering professional development content (16%) are next with influencing public/health system interests via advocacy and awareness (12%) and keeping members up-to-date on trends, issues, changes and challenges (10%) following close behind.
- It should be noted that the results should not be viewed as the definitive way in which members would like resources divided. Rather, they should be viewed as a weighted ranking.





Services Members Want



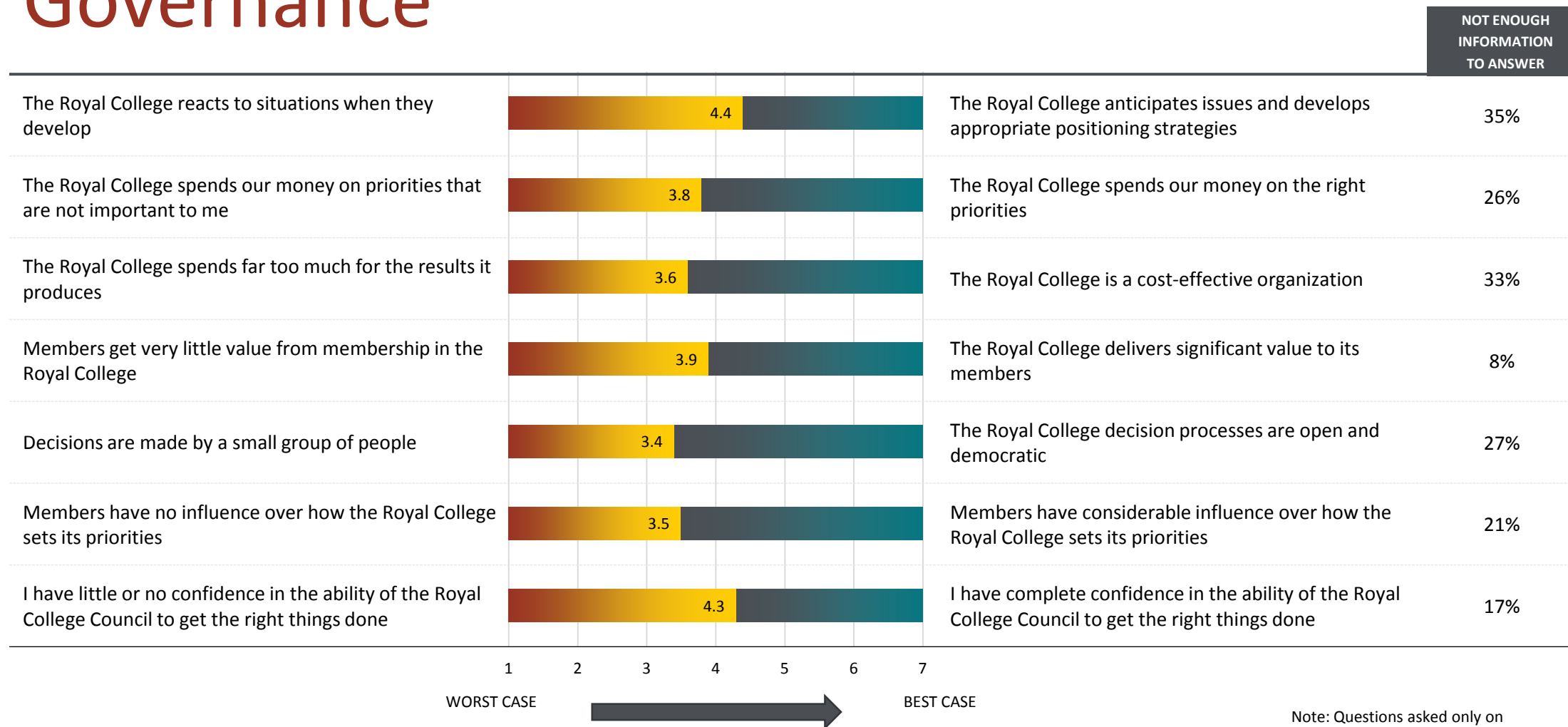
Note: Questions asked only on Stream C.

■ Critically Important ■ Very important ■ Somewhat important





Attitudes About Performance and Governance



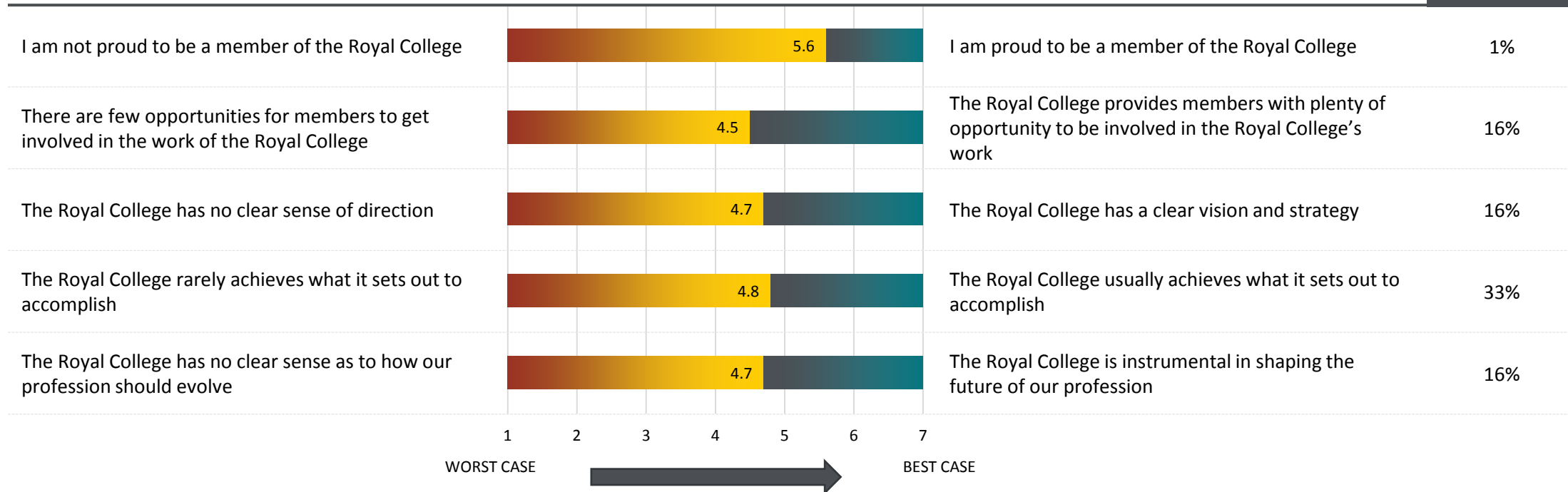
Note: Questions asked only on Stream C.





Attitudes About Performance and Governance (cont'd)

NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION TO ANSWER



Note: Questions asked only on Stream C.





Continuing Professional Development

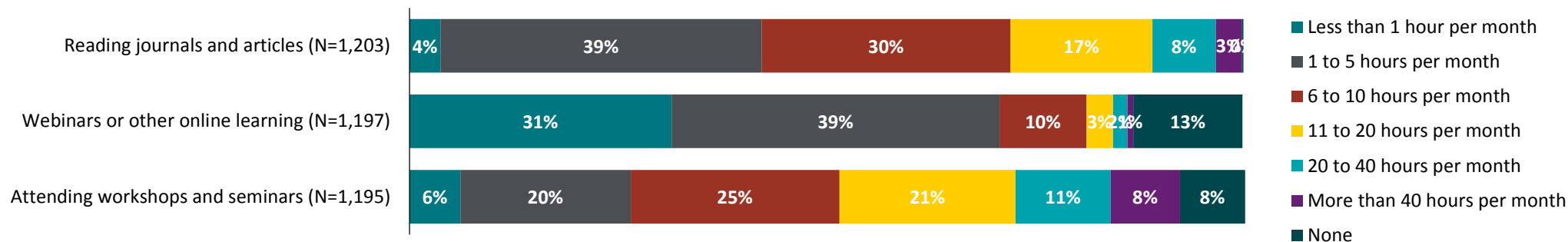




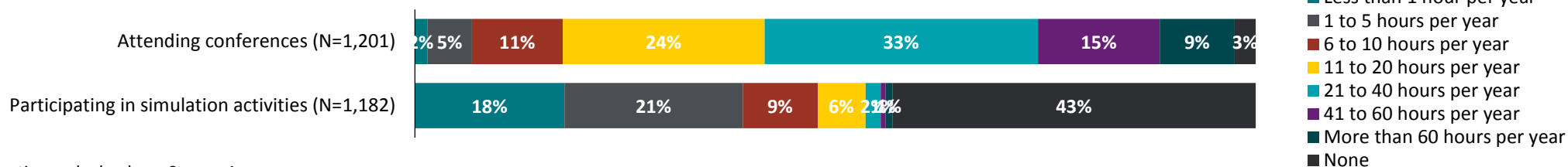
Time Spent on CPD Activities

- The survey shows that the Royal College members spend a considerable amount of time on CPD activities throughout the year.
- Virtually all indicated that they spend at least some time each month reading journals and articles. In fact, six in ten (58%) spend more than 5 hours each month on this ongoing CPD activity.
- Two thirds (66%) spend more than 5 hours per month attending workshops and seminars.
- On the other hand, 84% spend five hours or less per month on webinars or other e-learning.
- Other CPD activities were measured on a yearly basis. The time commitment is greatest for conferences where over half (56%) spending more than 20 hours per year and a further 24% spend 11 to 20 hours per year.
- Conversely, 43% of members indicated that they did not participate in simulation activities. Among those that did, the majority spend less than five hours per year (39%).

CPD Activities Measured Monthly



CPD Activities Measured Annually



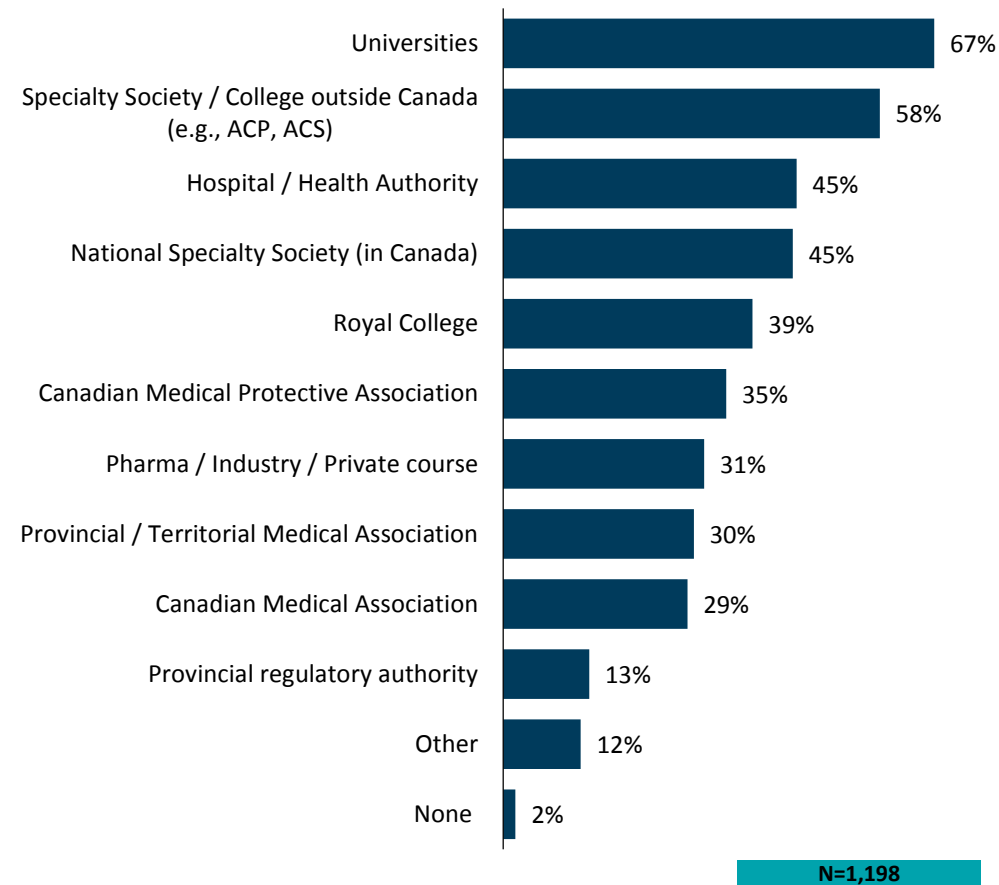
Note: Questions asked only on Stream A.





CPD Providers Accessed in Past 12 Months

- The vast majority of members (98%) have accessed a CPD provider in the past 12 months.
- The top CPD provider by a considerable margin is universities. Two thirds (67%) of members accessed CPD from a university in the past 12 months.
- The next most common provider, and the only other to be accessed by more than half of members, is specialty society / college outside of Canada (58%).
- The Royal College ranked fifth at 39% as a provider behind hospitals / health authorities and national specialty societies in Canada (both at 45%). Canadian Medical Protective Association was accessed by one-third of members (35%).

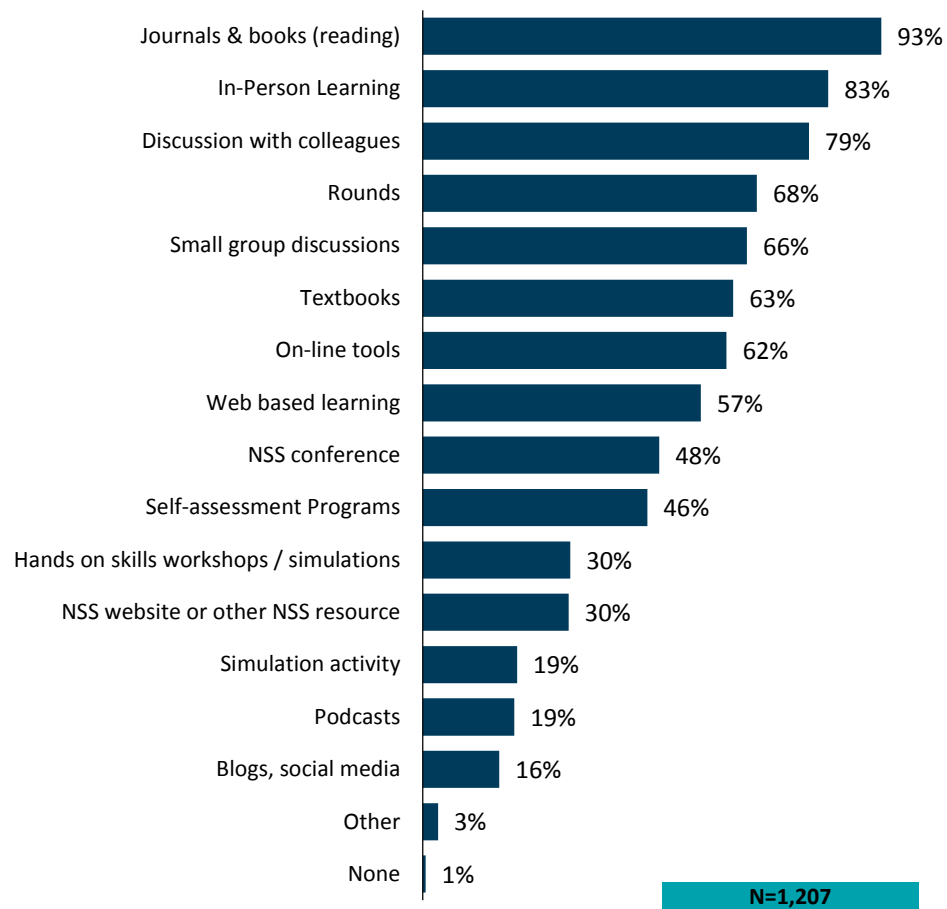


Note: Questions asked only on Stream A.





Learning Formats Accessed in Past 12 Months



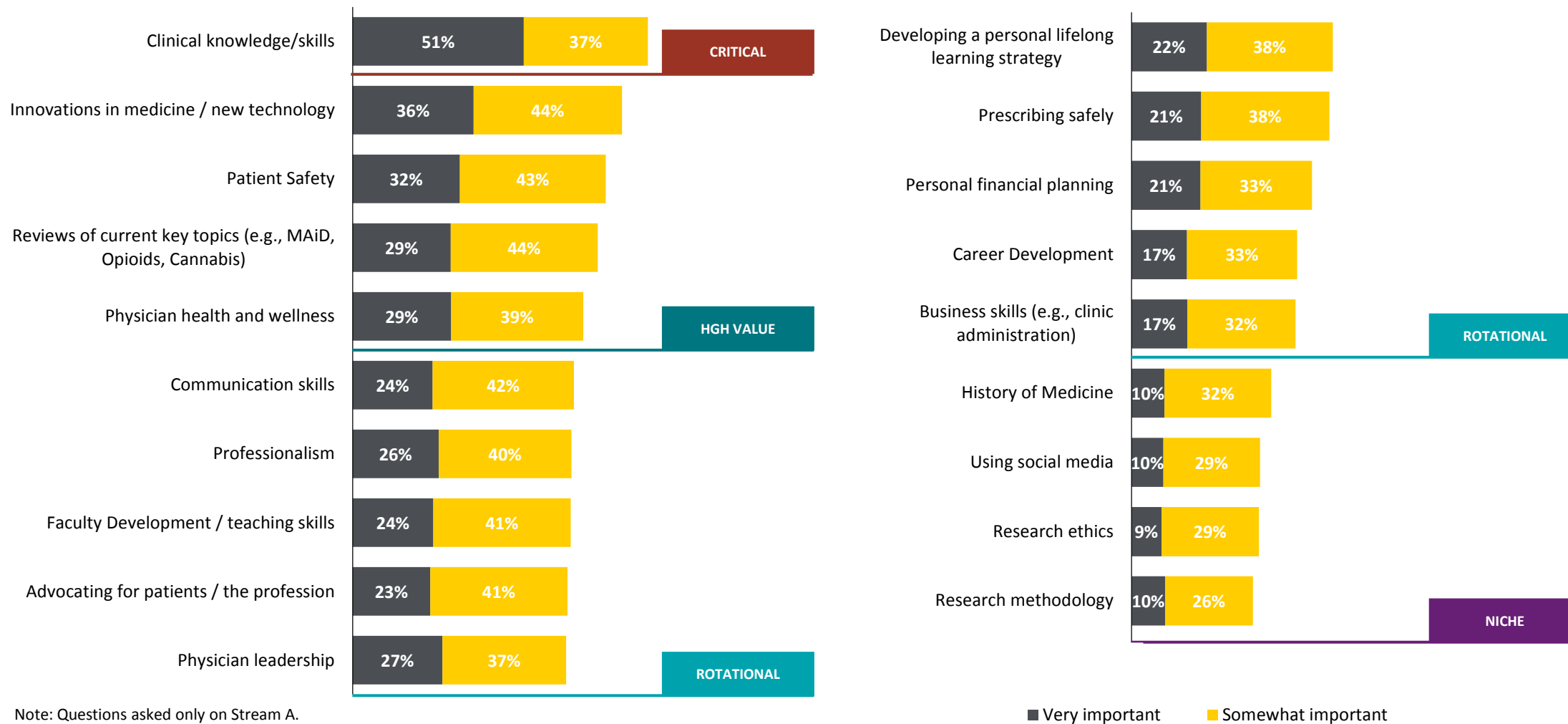
- At 93%, journals and books are the most common learning format accessed by members in the past 12 months. However, in-person learning (83%) and discussions with colleagues (79%) are not far behind with approximately four in five members having used them.
- There is no common theme among the top formats as they include a mix of text based learning, online and peer discussion.

Note: Questions asked only on Stream A.





Interest in CPD Topics



Note: Questions asked only on Stream A.





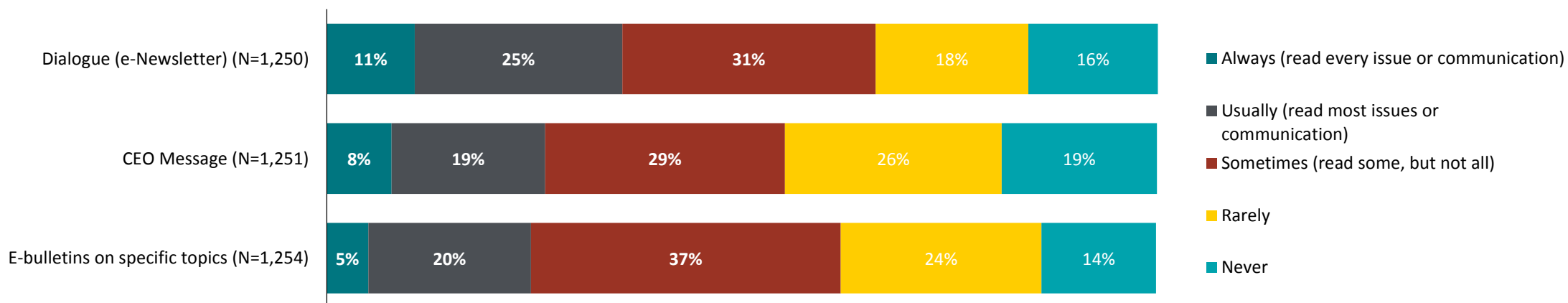
Communications





Readership Frequency of Ongoing Publications

- While there is a group of members who read most publications, the Royal College's ongoing publications are read with sporadic frequency.
- Importantly, all ongoing publications are read at least sometimes by more than half of members.
- The strongest readership is for Dialogue where two thirds (67%) of members report that they read at least some issues with just over one third (36%) reporting they read most or all issues.
- E-bulletins are regularly read by one quarter (25%) of members with a further 37% reading sometimes.
- Just over half (56%) report that they read the CEO message at least sometimes with 27% reporting frequent readership.



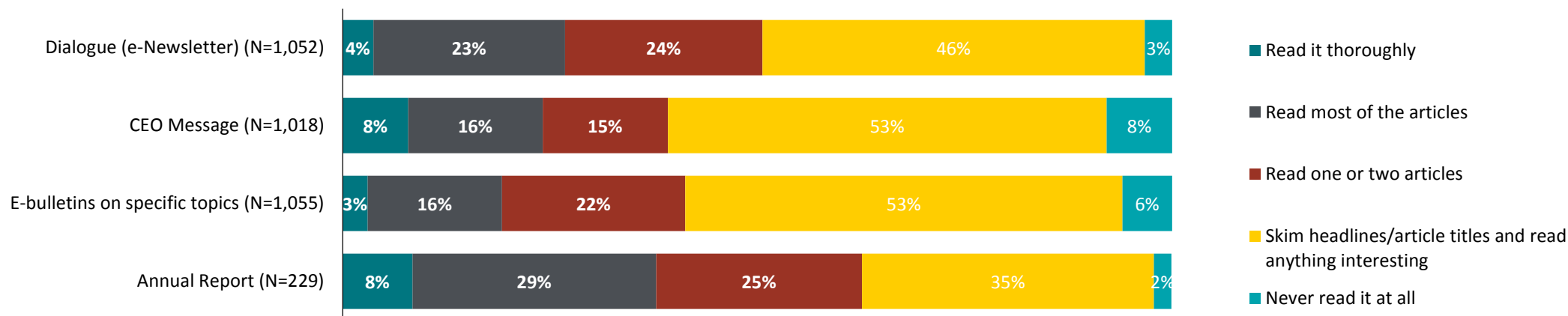
Note: Questions asked only on Stream B





Degree to Which Members Read Royal College Content

- Those who read or access Royal College communications were asked to indicate the extent to which they read the content.
- Results show that, for the most part, the publications are not being read in-depth. For the CEO Message and e-bulletins, just over half (53%) merely skim read while a further 15% and 22%, respectively, read ‘one or two articles’.
- While the portions are different, it is a similar situation for Dialogue with 46% skimming and 24% reading one or two articles.
- While readership is low, those who do read the annual report are more likely to read most of it (37%) than other publications.

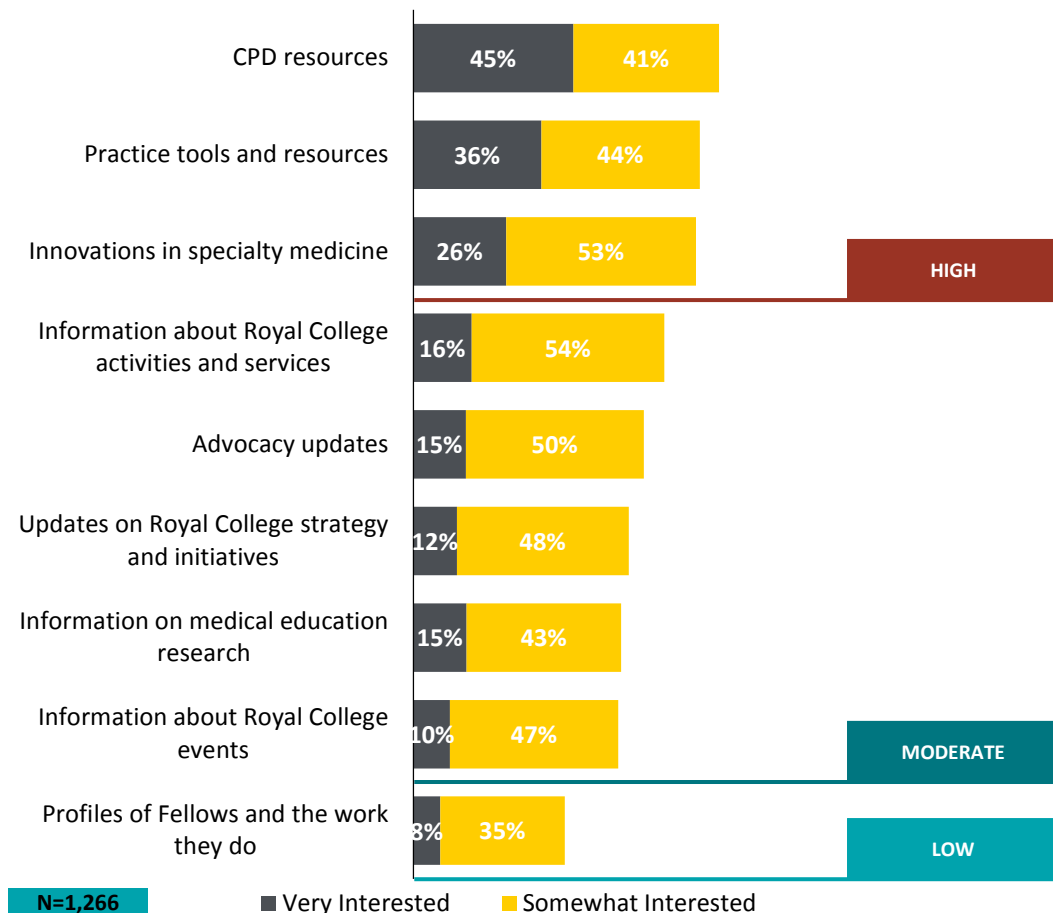


Note: Questions asked only on Stream B





Interest in Information Topics

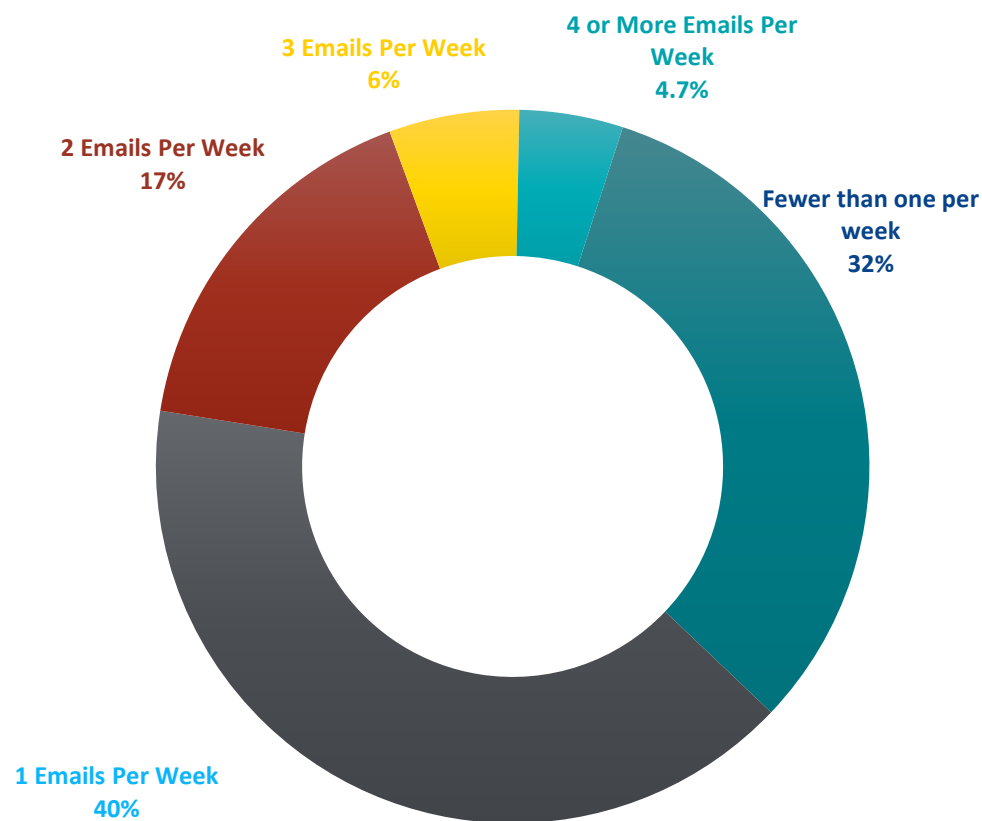


Note: Questions asked only on Stream B.

- Respondents were asked to rate their level of interest in receiving information in nine different topic areas. Topics are ordered by percent indicating they were 'very' or 'somewhat' interested. No topics stood out as 'critical' as none were rated as 'very' important by more than half of respondents.
- If only the 'very' interested category is considered, the topics can be divided into three tiers as follows:
 - **High Interest Topics (25% to 45% rated very interested):** Topics in this tier group are of some interest to almost all members and of great interest to at least one quarter. On the whole, these are topics members want information on. These are topics that should be communicated regularly. Topics of high interest include CPD resources (45% very important), practice tools and resources (36%) and innovations in specialty medicine (26%).
 - **Moderate Interest Topics (10% to 24% rated very interested):** These topics are of some interest to at least half of members, but of significant interest to less than one quarter. Members want to be in the loop on these topics, but do not want to be bombarded with communications. In this group are information about Royal College activities and services (16%), advocacy updates (15%), updates on Royal College strategy and initiatives (12%), information on medical education research (15%) and information about Royal College events (10%).
 - **Low Interest Topics (Less than 10% rated very interested):** Fewer than half of members have any interest in these topics and less than one in ten is highly interested. These topics are low priority in the minds of members and should be treated as such. The only topic in this category is profiles of Fellows and the work they do (8%).



Number of Emails Members Want to Receive



- The ideal number of weekly email communications most members want to receive from the Royal College is two or fewer. Almost nine in ten (89%) selected a number of weekly emails in this range.
- The average number of emails per week members feel would be appropriate is 1.3.



Conclusions and Strategic Considerations

- The purpose of the 2018 Royal College membership study was to provide detailed insights to support the Royal College's strategic and operational planning activities. Following are some key conclusions and considerations from the research to help guide the Royal College's leadership in continuing to ensure the organization continues to thrive in the years to come.
- The key takeaway from this research is that while there are some areas where the Royal College is performing at an acceptable level, there are a number of areas in need of improvement. Compared to 47 other professional member-based organizations, the Royal College is performing on par in some areas and worse in others.
- Members are proud to belong to the Royal College, something that is not always the case and is something to be proud of!

