AN ALPHANUMERIC PAGING SYSTEM:
AN ONGOING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Dr J. Mateshaytis, Dr K. Greeff, Dr J. Tankel
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta

Background

Many tertiary care centers utilize alphanumeric paging systems. According to a review of the literature, the results of switching to a message based paging system have been extremely positive. The process of text-paging sends a message that includes pertinent information to allow the recipient to triage the page appropriately - subsequently improving patient care.

Objective

➢ To implement an alphanumeric paging system for the Royal Alexandra Hospital Labour and Delivery unit and wards
➢ Streamline communication between nurses and residents
➢ Enhance patient safety by improving resident: efficiency, response time to emergent situations, triaging abilities
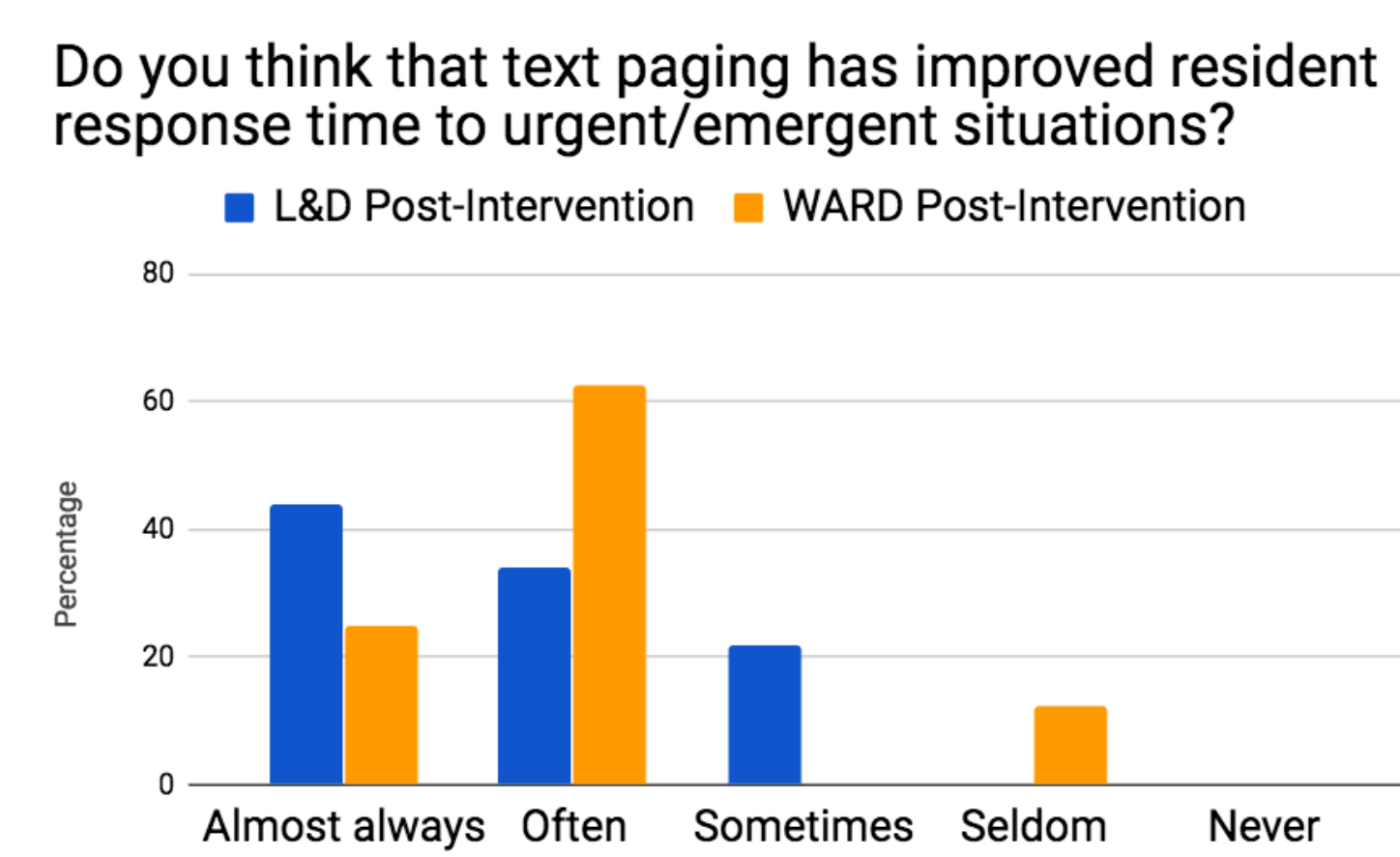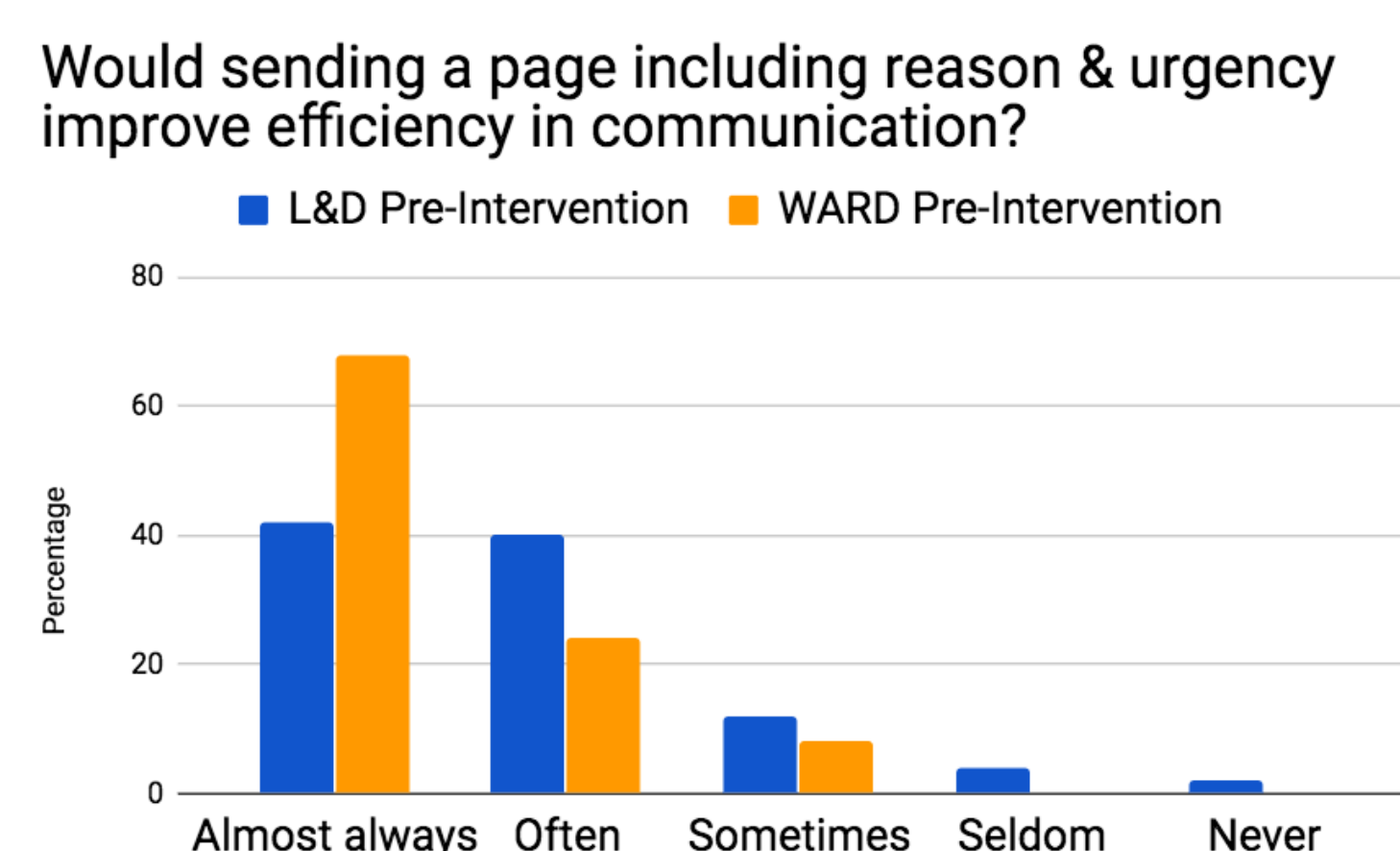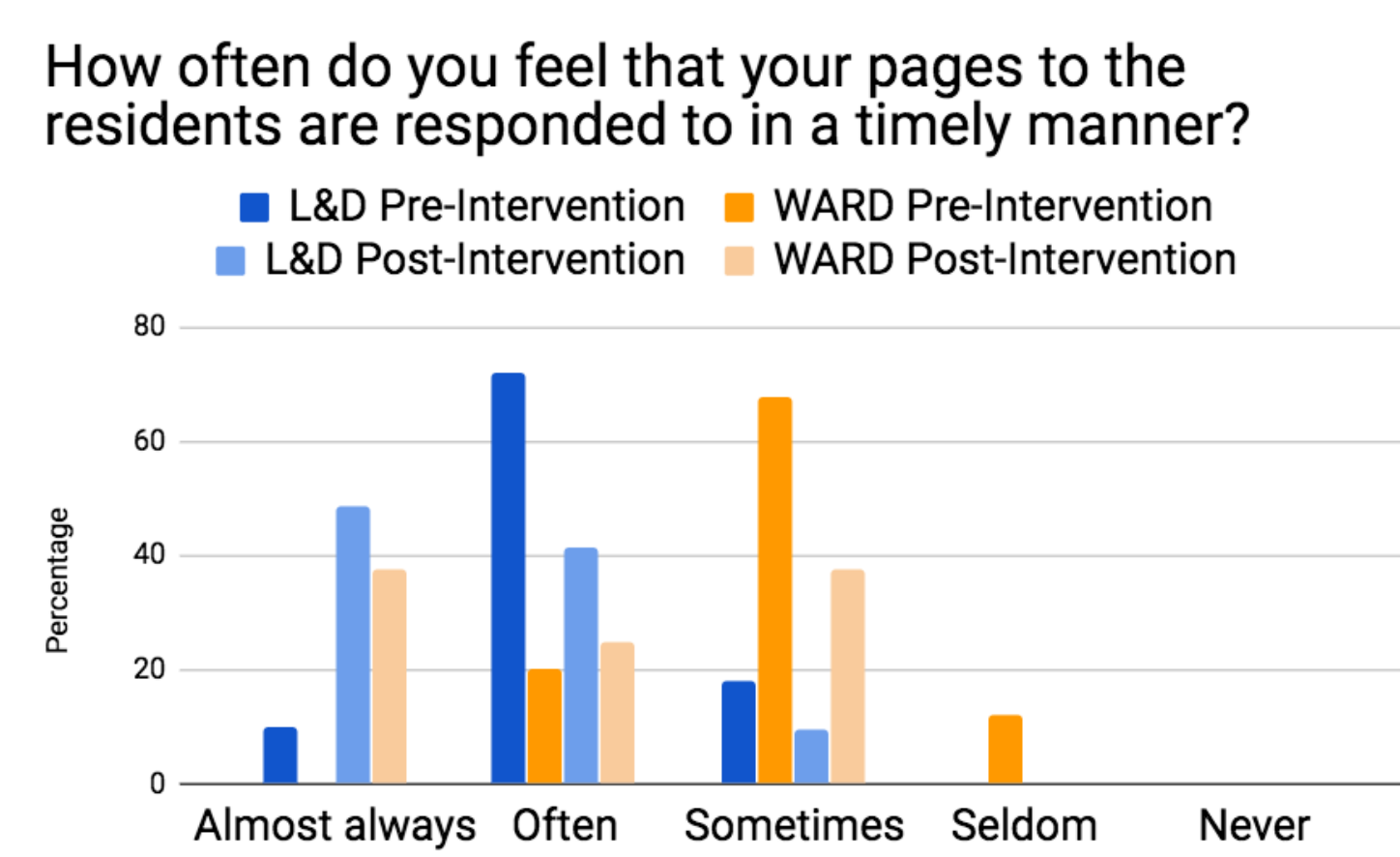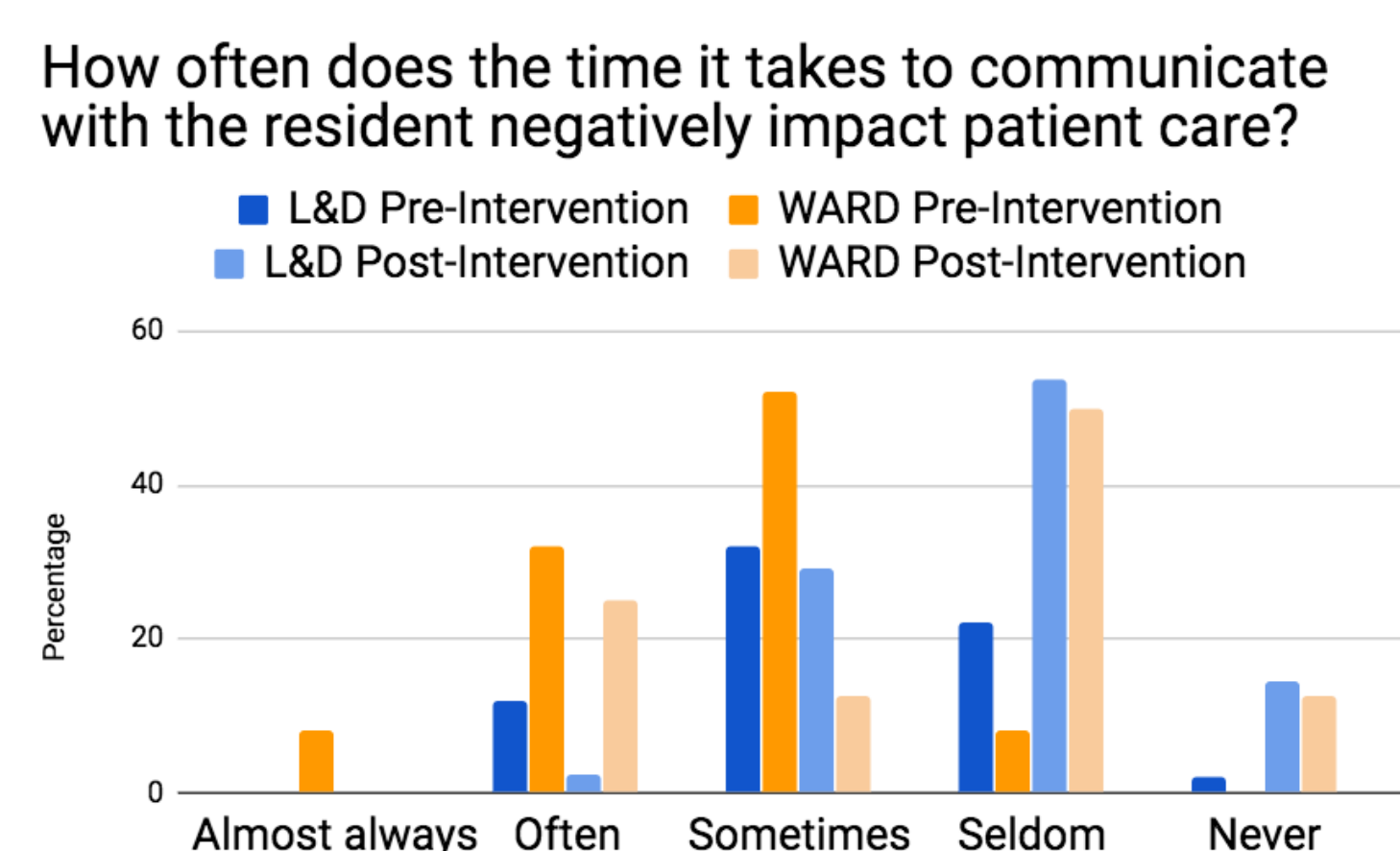
Method

➢ Pre and post-intervention Likert format surveys were distributed to OBGYN residents and nurses to evaluate paging practices at RAH
➢ Surveys assessed perceptions of efficiency, ability to triage, effectiveness of communication and patient safety
➢ Nursing staff were educated on paging with a specific reproducible template which included the location, urgency and context of the page.
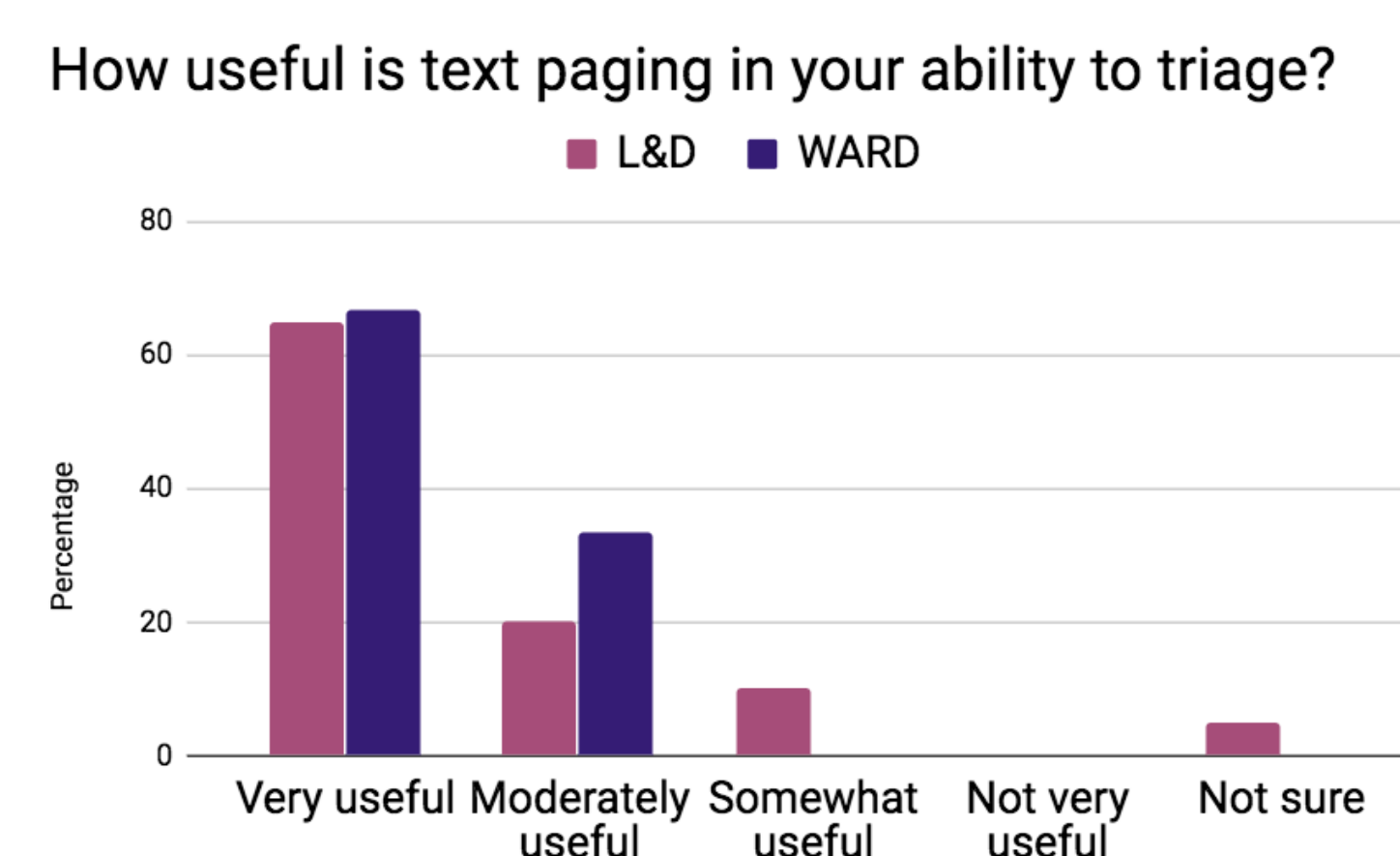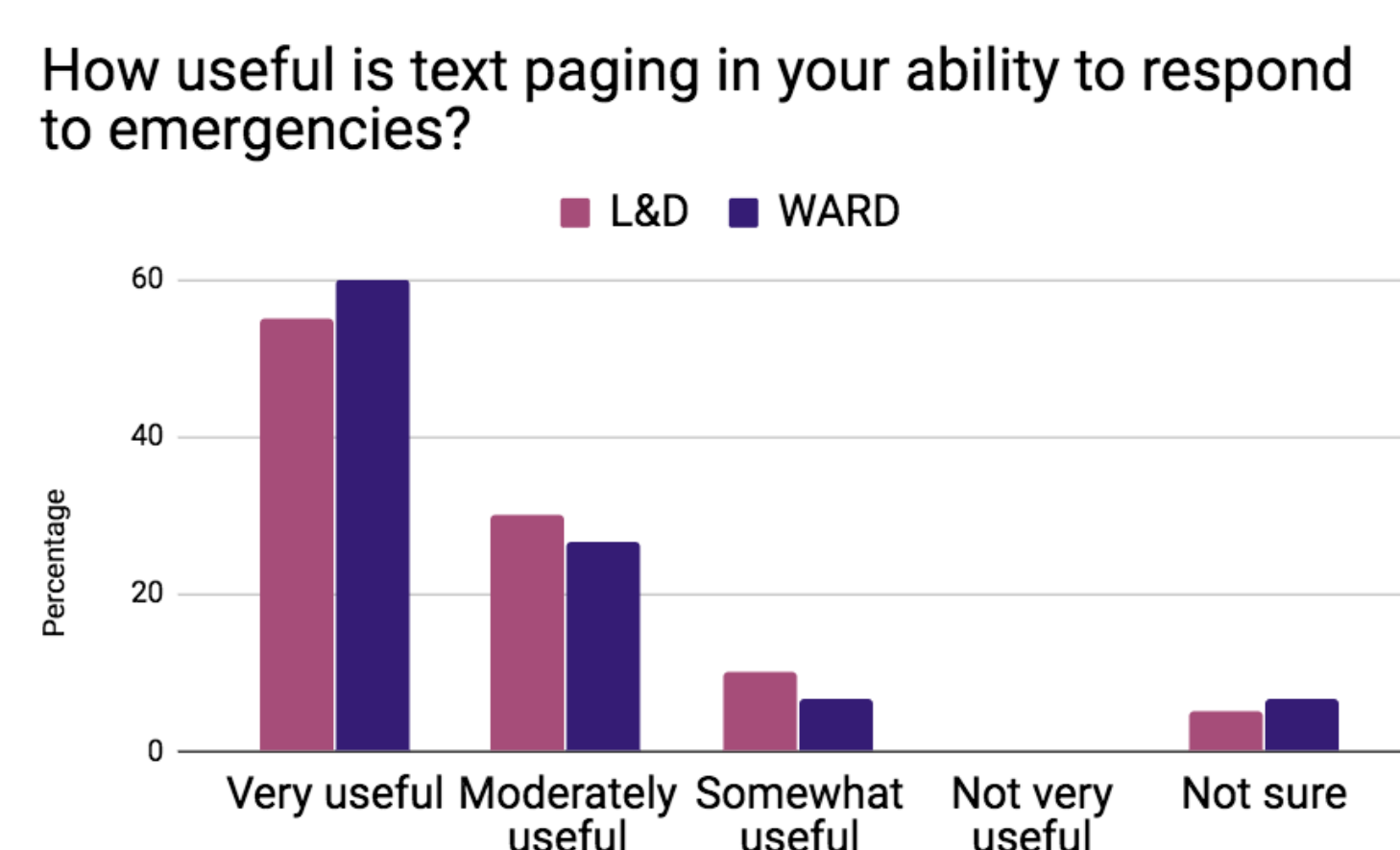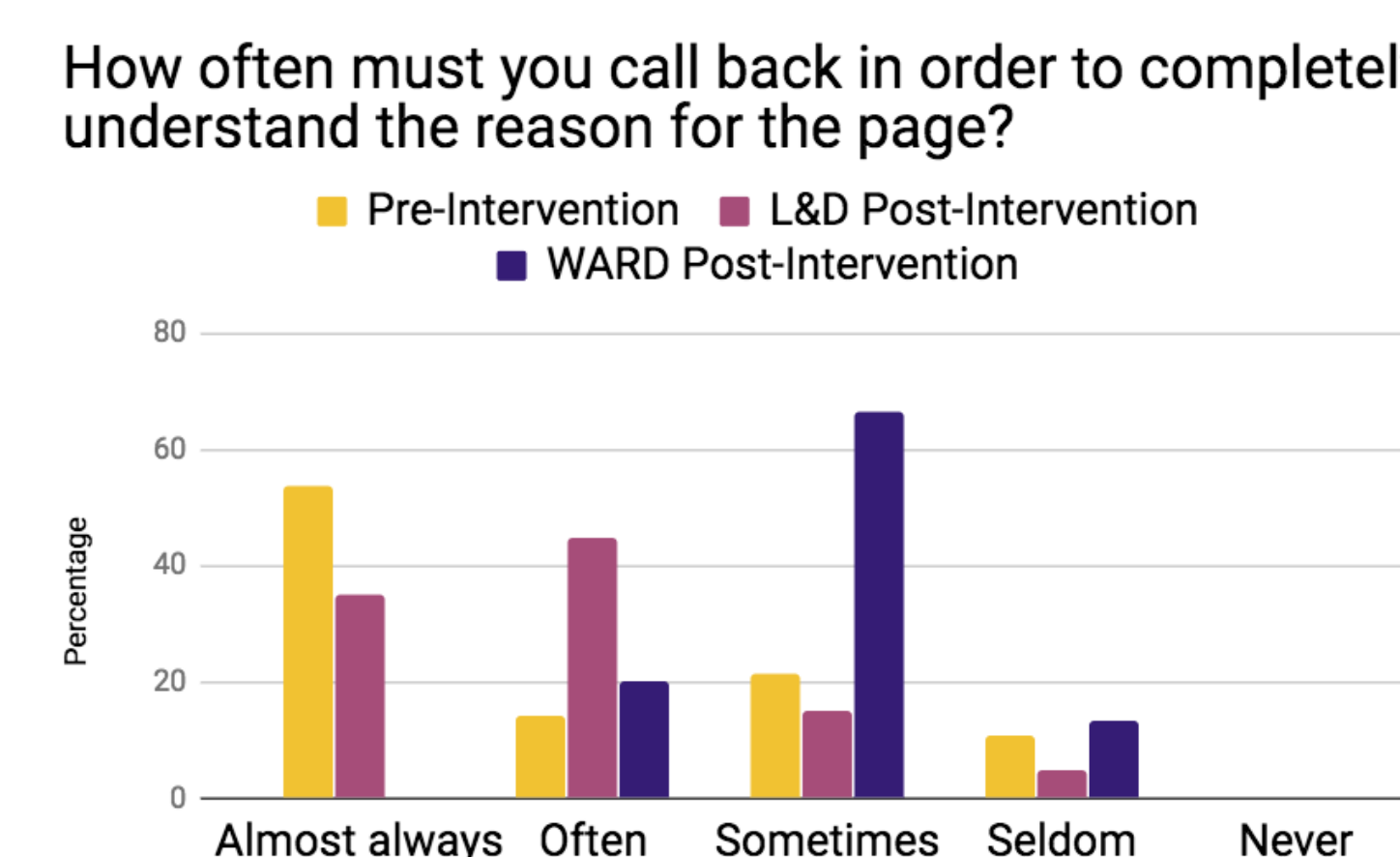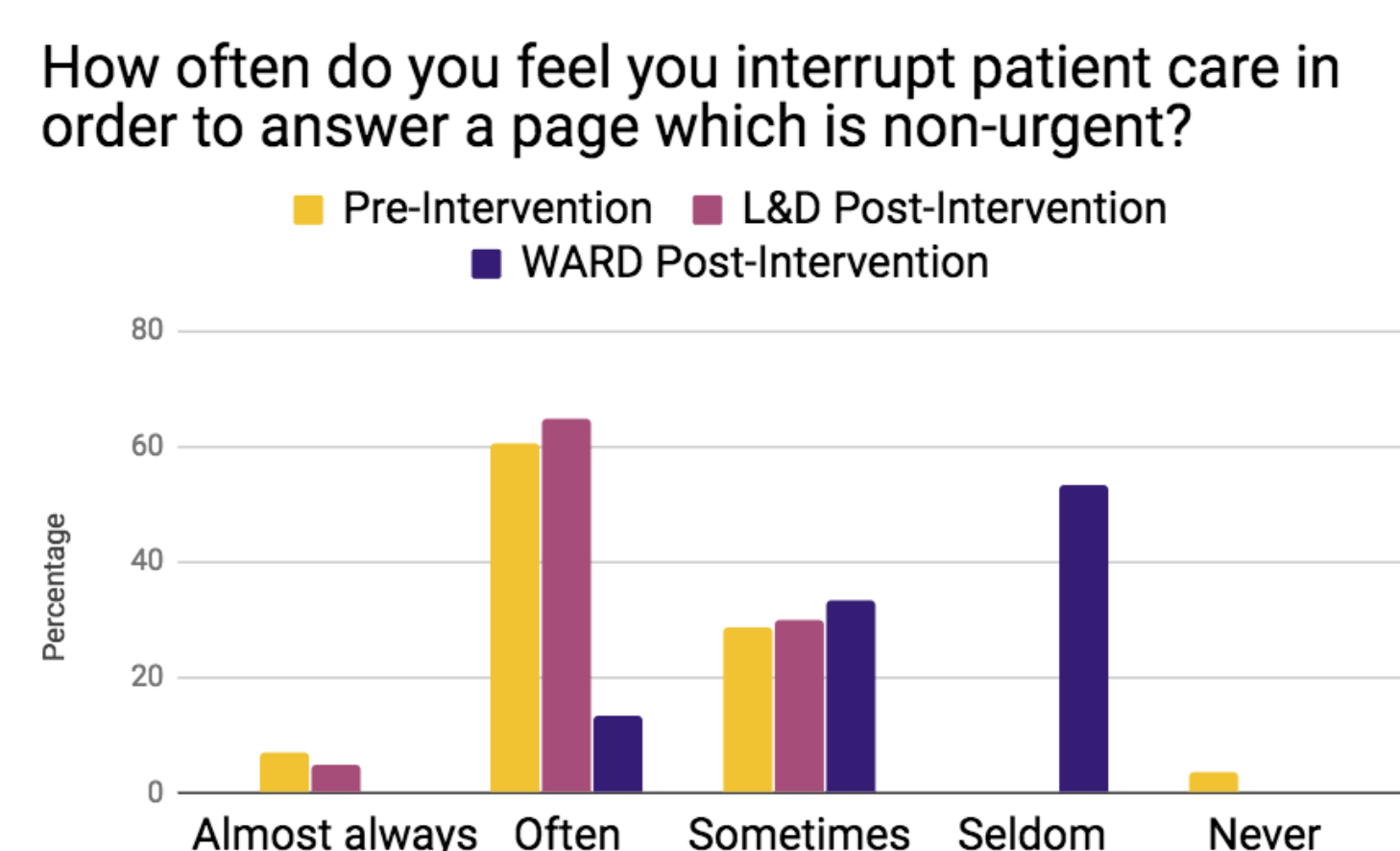➢ The data was collected/analyzed via REDcap

Progress and Results

➢ Pre and Post-intervention survey results collected from residents and nurses (L&D and wards)
➢ Feedback for potential improvements to paging process obtained; integrated into second QI cycle.

RN Data:

How often does the time it takes to communicate with the resident negatively impact patient care?

How often do you feel that your pages to the residents are responded to in a timely manner?

Would sending a page including reason & urgency improve efficiency in communication?

Do you think that text paging has improved resident response time to urgent/emergent situations?

Resident Data:

How often do you feel you interrupt patient care in order to answer a page which is non-urgent?

How often must you call back in order to completely understand the reason for the page?

How useful is text paging in your ability to respond to emergencies?

How useful is text paging in your ability to triage?

Progress and Results Continued

Feedback:

➢ "It is a good way to quickly get orders for silly things such as tylenol. Allows residents to go directly where needed in the event of an emergency. Faster response to events where a resident is needed quickly"
➢ "Love it, able to update, easily get analgesic orders or inform of deliveries, etc"
➢ "I love it and hope it is a permanent change. I think it is helpful in communicating information appropriately and allows for better time management of the Dr's"
➢ "It is awesome. I think they should be short and brief, sometimes they are too long and give patient history. The shorter and more concise the better."
➢ "Non-urgent issues classified as urgent or STAT"
➢ **Major themes noted in RN and Resident feedback of the Text Paging Intervention:**
  ○ Confirmation of text pages received by residents
  ○ Triaging classifications; re-education required
  ○ Length of text pages; too long!
  ○ Overall positive change and improvement to patient care.

Conclusions

➢ As demonstrated by the figures and comments, the alphanumeric paging system has improved efficiency of resident-nursing communication, response to emergency situations and triaging.

➢ **Plans moving forward:**
  ○ Re-education regarding responses to non-urgent pages (ex FYI) by residents → discuss at academic day
  ○ Re-education of triage classifications: STAT/Urgent vs ASAP and FYI → plan for inservice
  ○ Expand to staff OBGYN physicians → discussed at recent business meeting