

Needs Assessment and Education of Nurses in Radiation Oncology

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PURPOSE

Single-site pilot QI project to improve orientation to radiation oncology (RO) for new orientees; and explore resources, knowledge, and confidence for established RO nurses (RN).

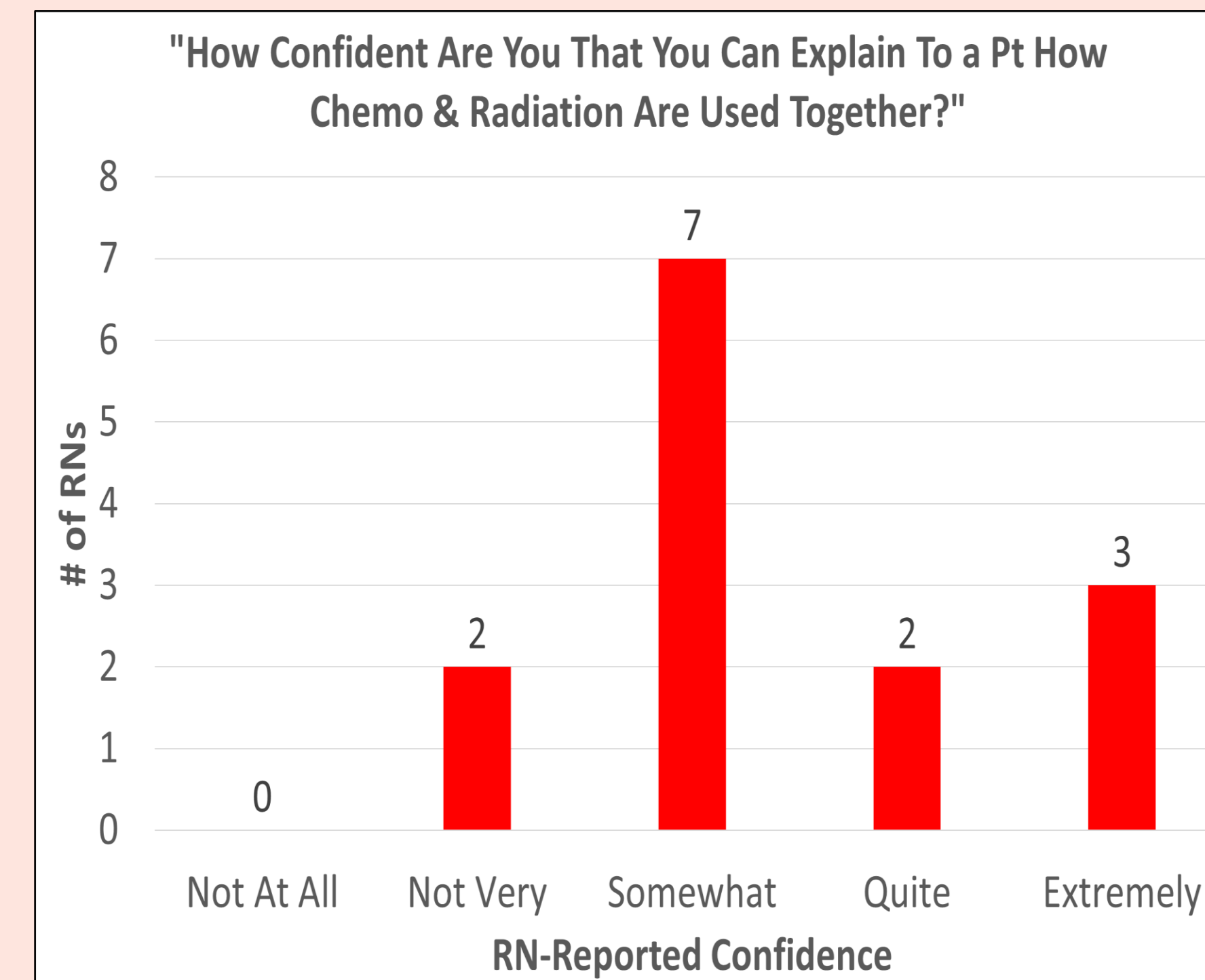
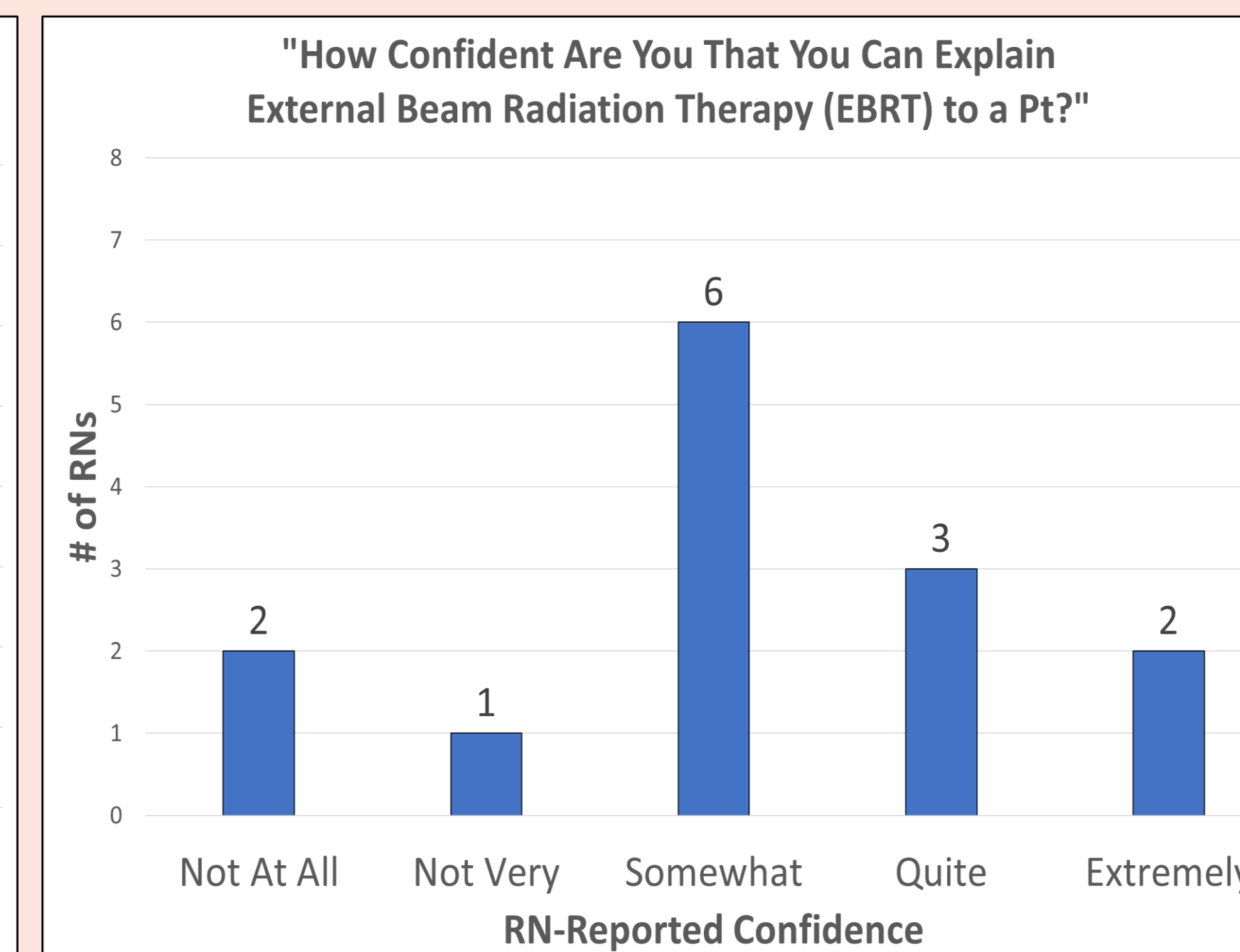
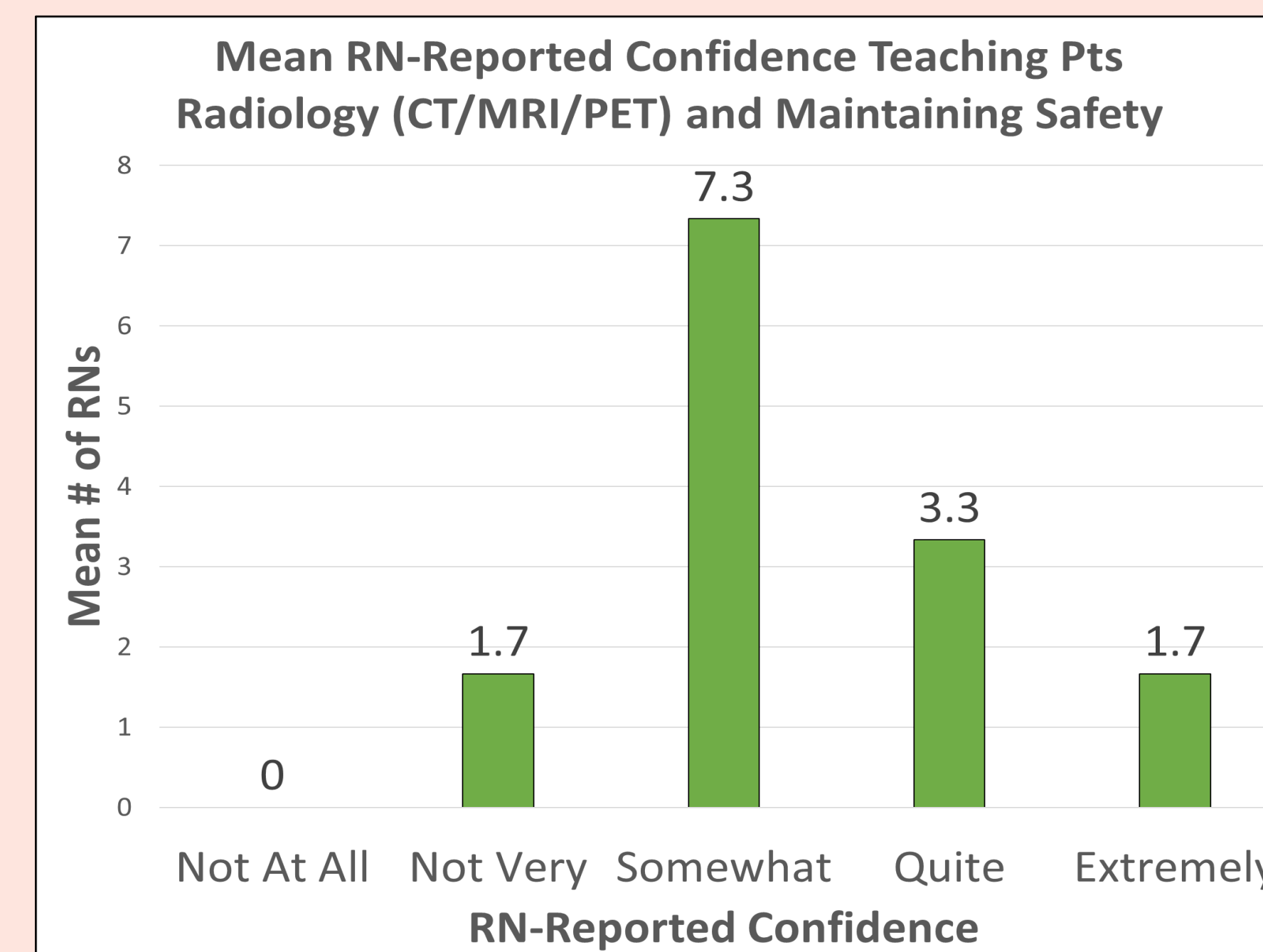
BACKGROUND

- RO is not taught in nursing schools nor at the project facility
- The USA does not have national standards of practice for RO nurses, nor a credential¹.
- Previous studies found RO nurses lack training, onboarding, and experience¹.
- >1 million courses of radiation therapy for 800,000 pts/y².
- 50-60% of all cancer pts receive RO at some point³.
- 5-year cancer survival rate has increased to 68%⁴.
- 29% of all cancer survivors have received radiation therapy⁵.
- 4.17 million radiation-treated survivors by 2030⁵.

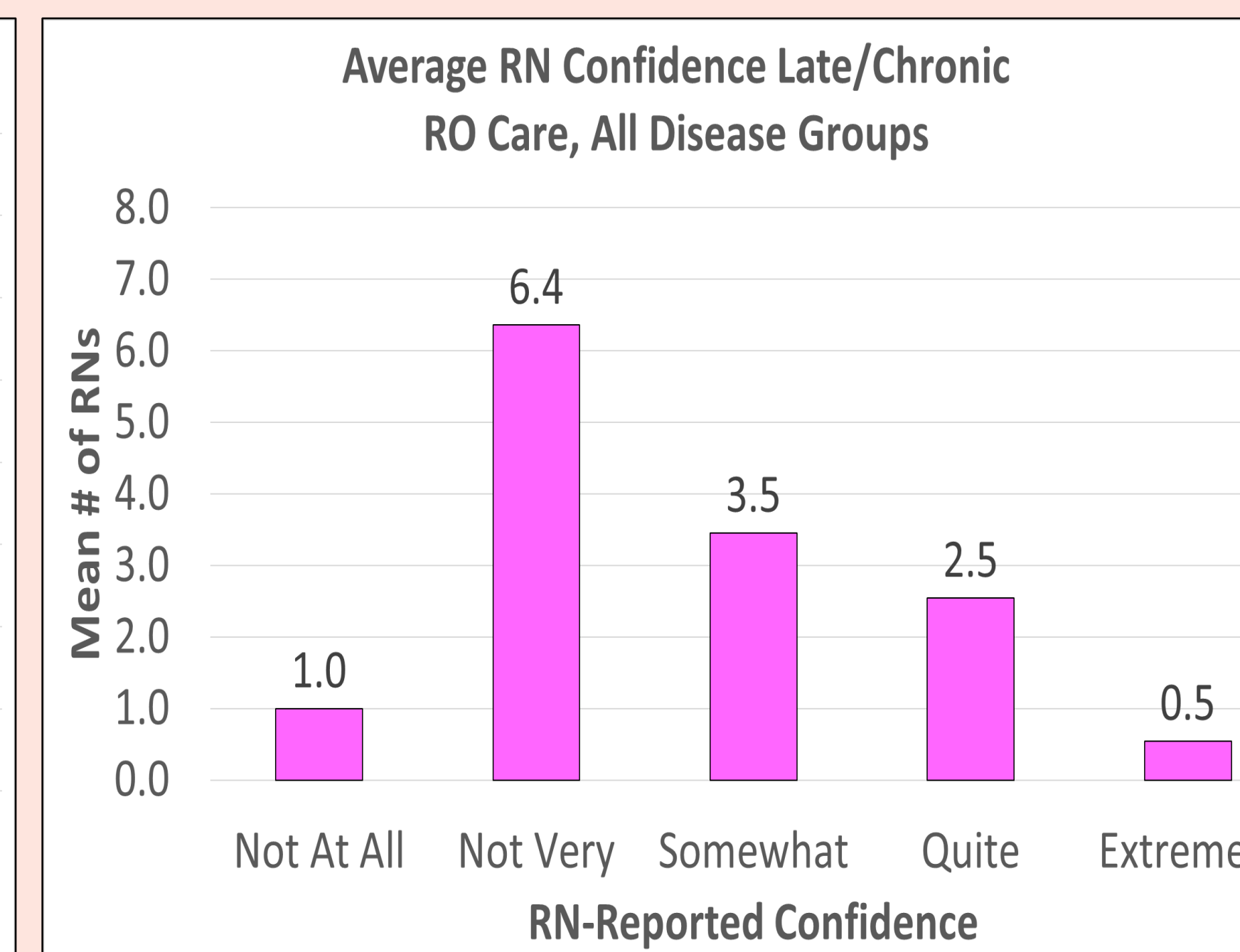
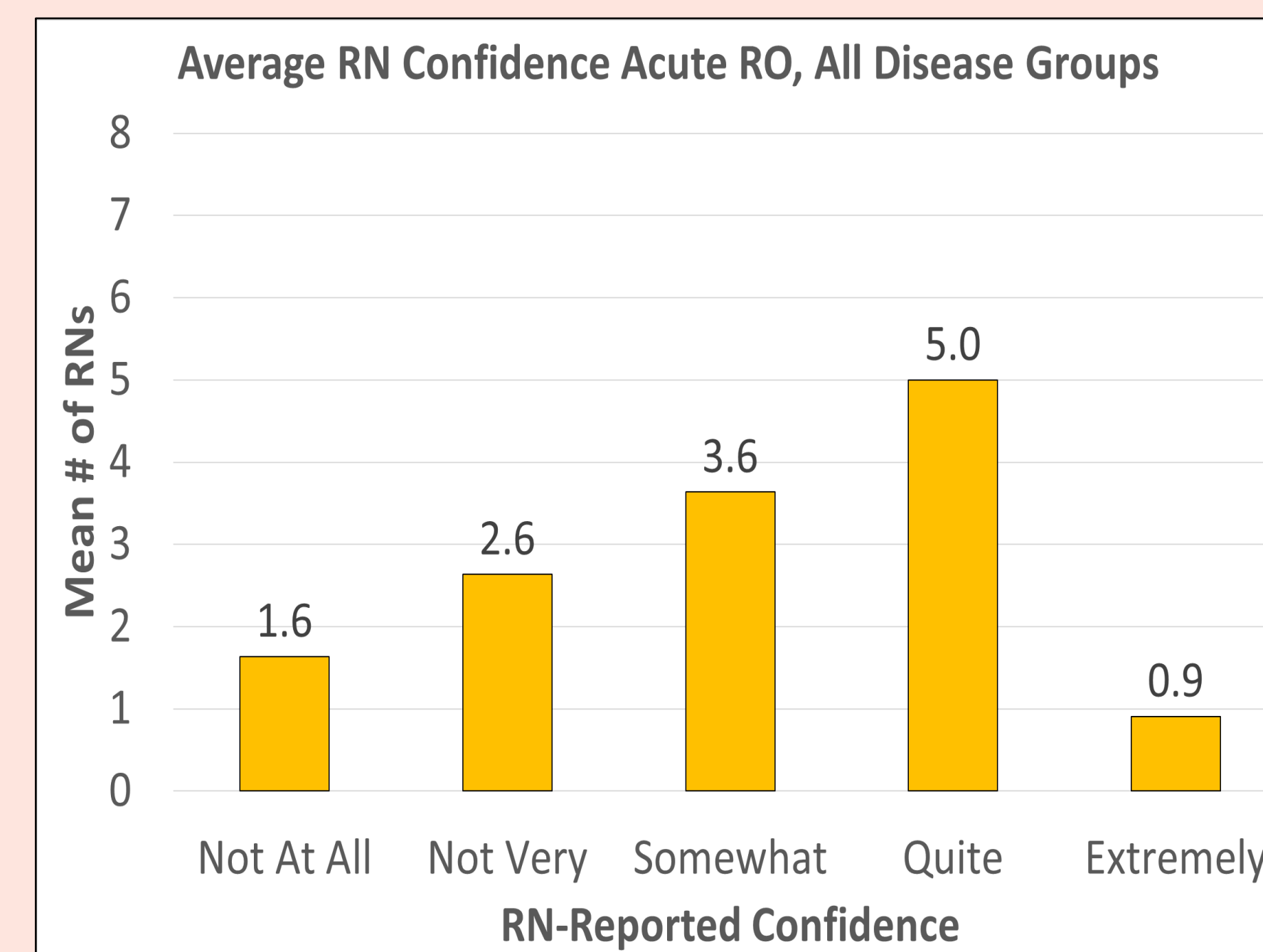
METHOD

- Anonymous Qualtrics needs assessment survey to a single-site academic center RO department.
- 8 lecture modules were developed and available online and on-demand. Use of videos was not tracked.
- Pre-and post-test assessment design and PDSA framework used.
- Participant feedback requested on the modules.

RESULTS



- **100% RNs (n=14) responsible for patient education**
- **RNs reported moderate confidence in knowledge base**
- **Mostly informal RO education**
- **78.6% (n=11) responsible for F/U**
- **Regulatory knowledge deficits**



- **Top RN-reported sources of RO knowledge:** On-The-Job, colleagues, and personal continuing education.
- **Lowest RN-reported sources of RO knowledge:** Professional association, employer-provided education, and nursing school.

DISCUSSION

- RNs expressed only moderate confidence in their knowledge and understanding of subjects they are responsible for teaching patients about.
- Radiation safety knowledge deficits noted consistent with national^{6,7} and international⁸ calls for increased medical radiation safety training.
- Millions of RO-treated survivors and growing. RNs responsible for triage and follow-up care but expressed low confidence in their preparation for this role.

CONCLUSIONS

- WHO: Unskilled use of medical radiation is a public health and patient safety concern⁸.
- Many areas of health care affected by medical radiation, but education is lacking.
- Increased education is critical for patient outcomes and employee safety.

References



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