

# The Wellness Thermometer: healthcare professionals' experiences of using the tool in practice

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## Background

Treatment and management of patients with HIV has evolved enormously over the previous few decades, from caring for patients with an infectious disease and poor prognosis, to long-term chronic disease management. Present day HIV care embraces more than the achievement of undetectable viral load.

This includes monitoring patients' wellbeing and quality of life as these can impact adherence to therapy. Effective communication between patients and health care professionals (HCP) is essential and all efforts should be made to overcome any communication barriers that exist. Here we report HCPs' experience with the Wellness Thermometer – a tool to facilitate patient-HCP communication.

## Methods

The Wellness Thermometer was offered to all patients attending three UK HIV clinics over eight weeks. Participating HCPs were invited to complete a short anonymous survey giving their opinion and experience of the Wellness Thermometer. Ratings from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' were collected for the following:

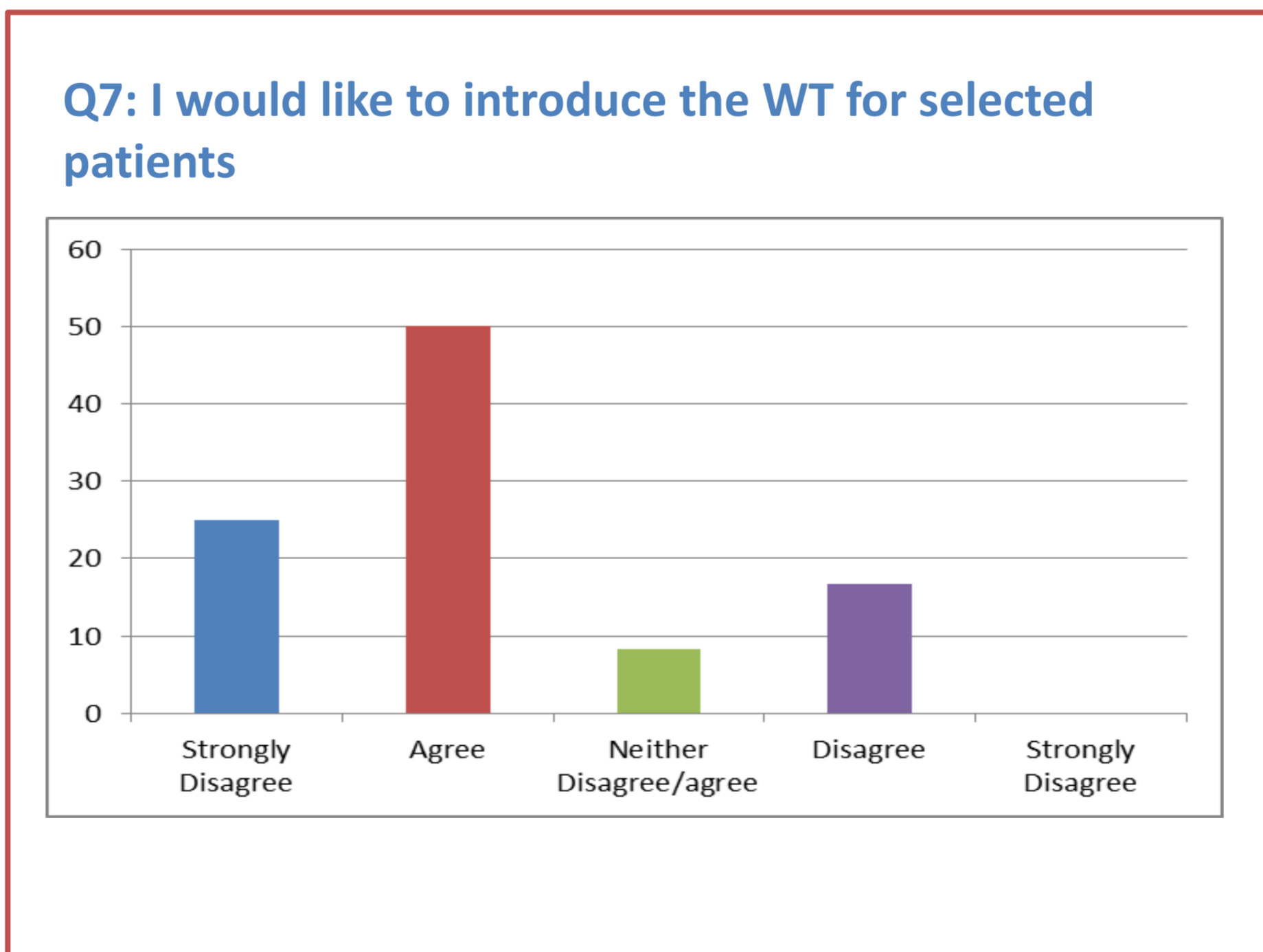
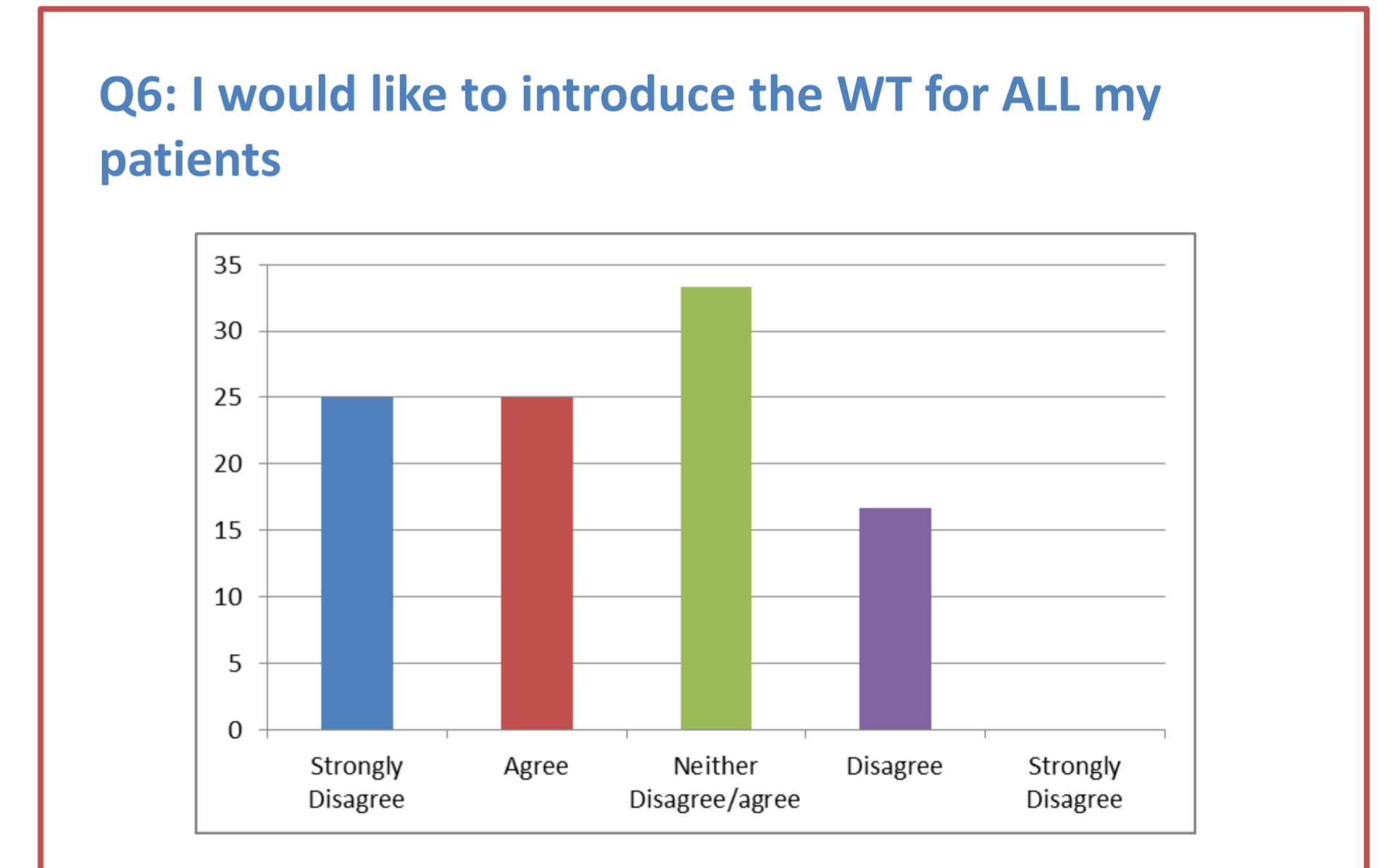
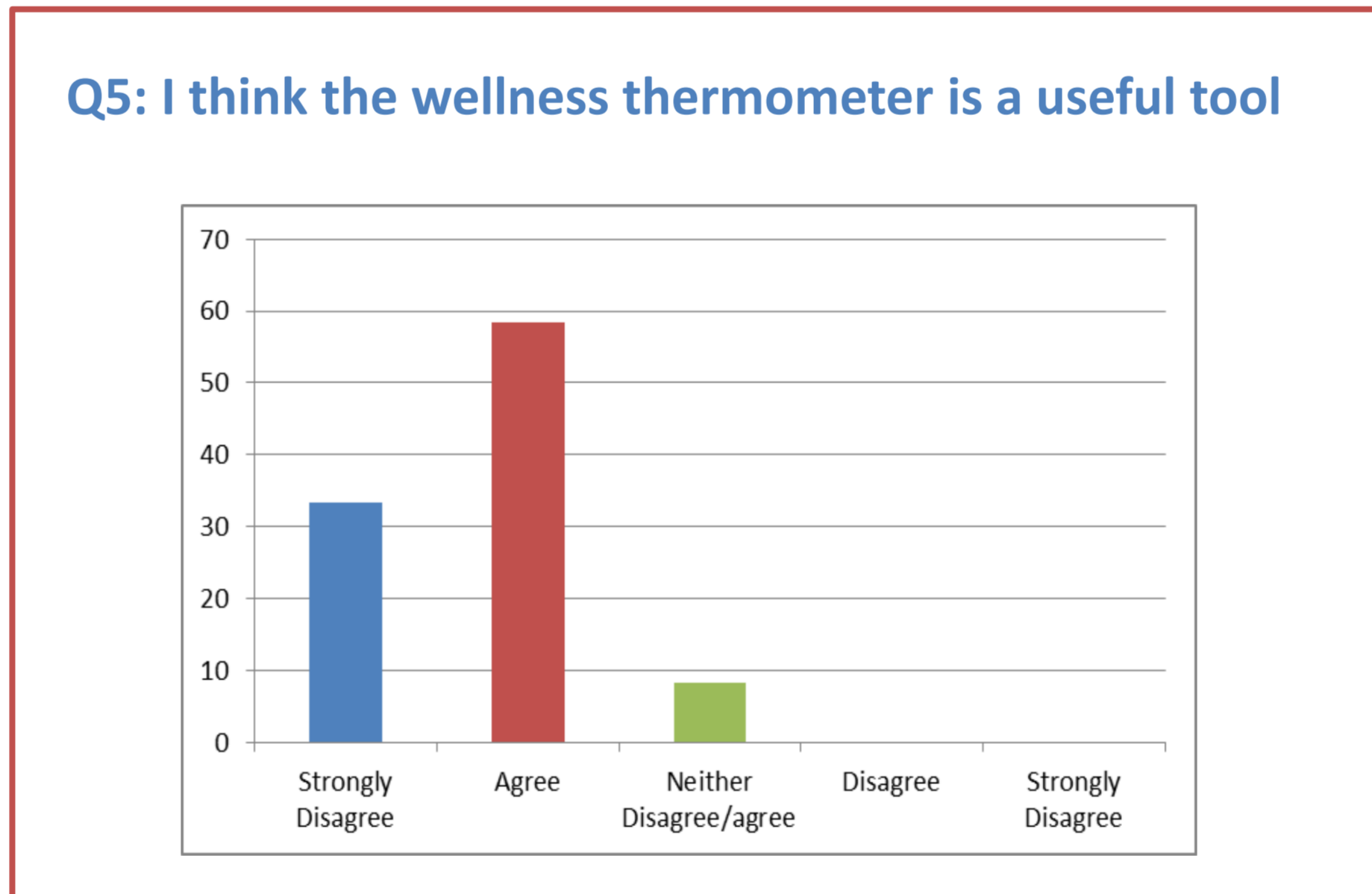
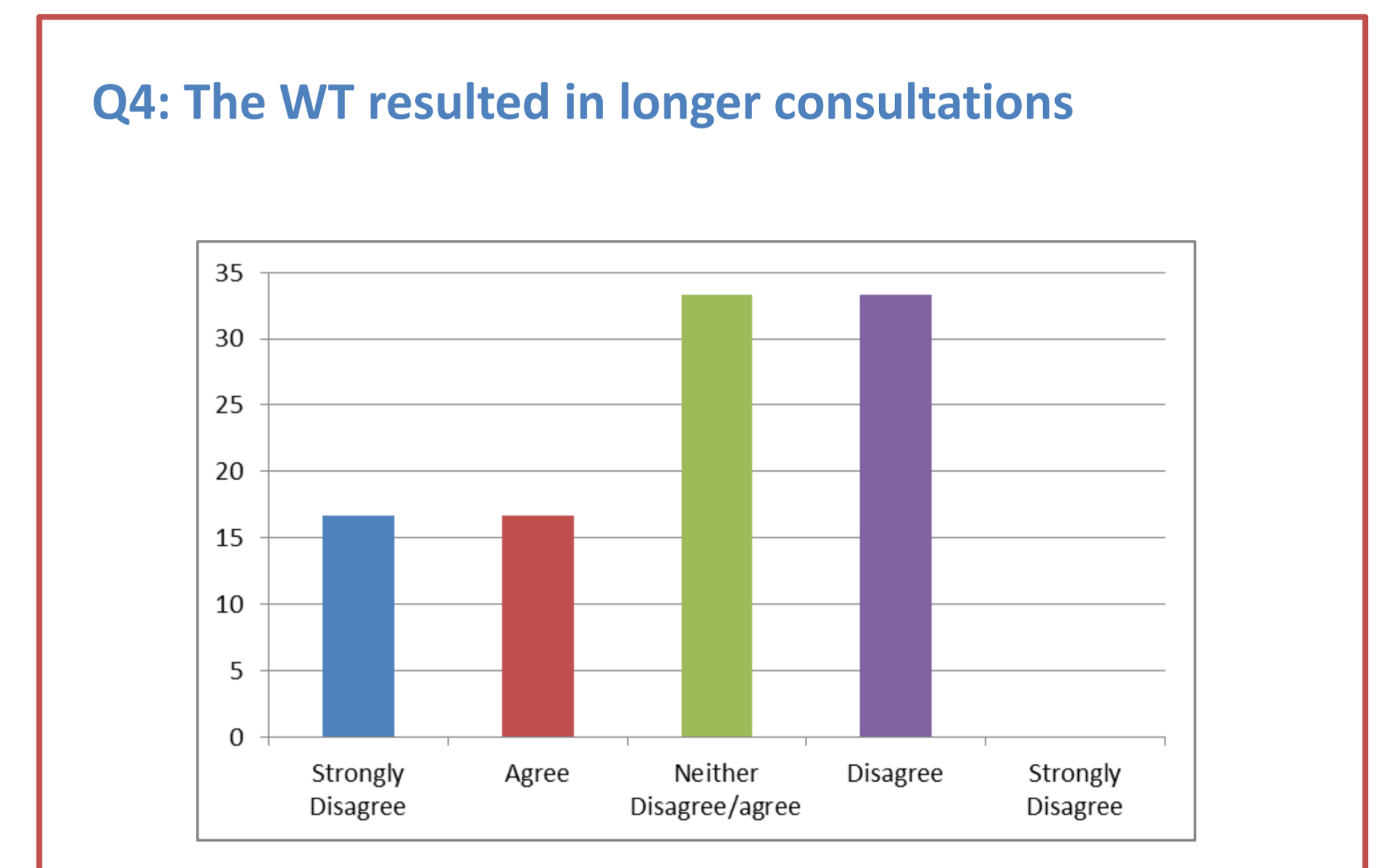
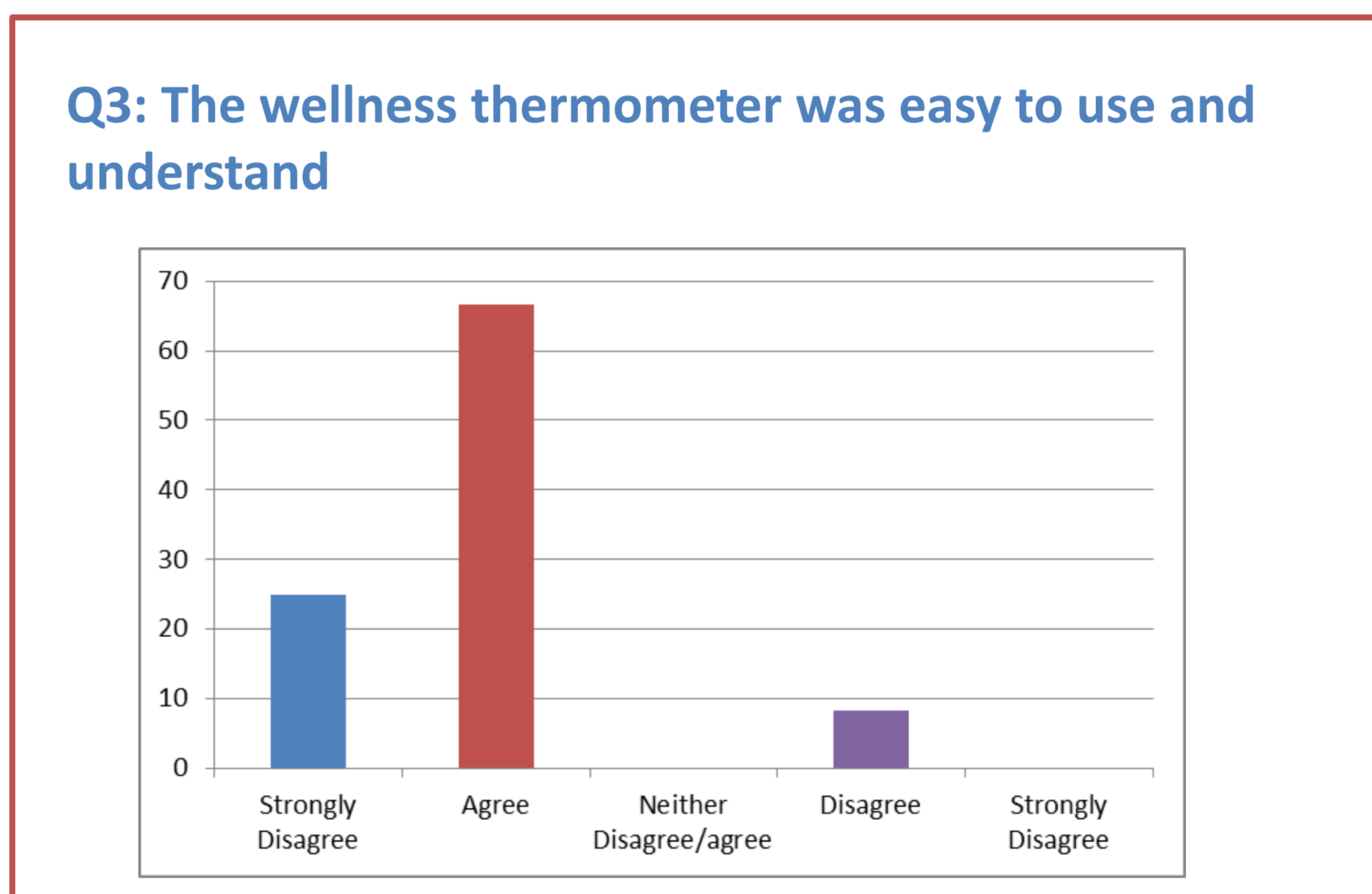
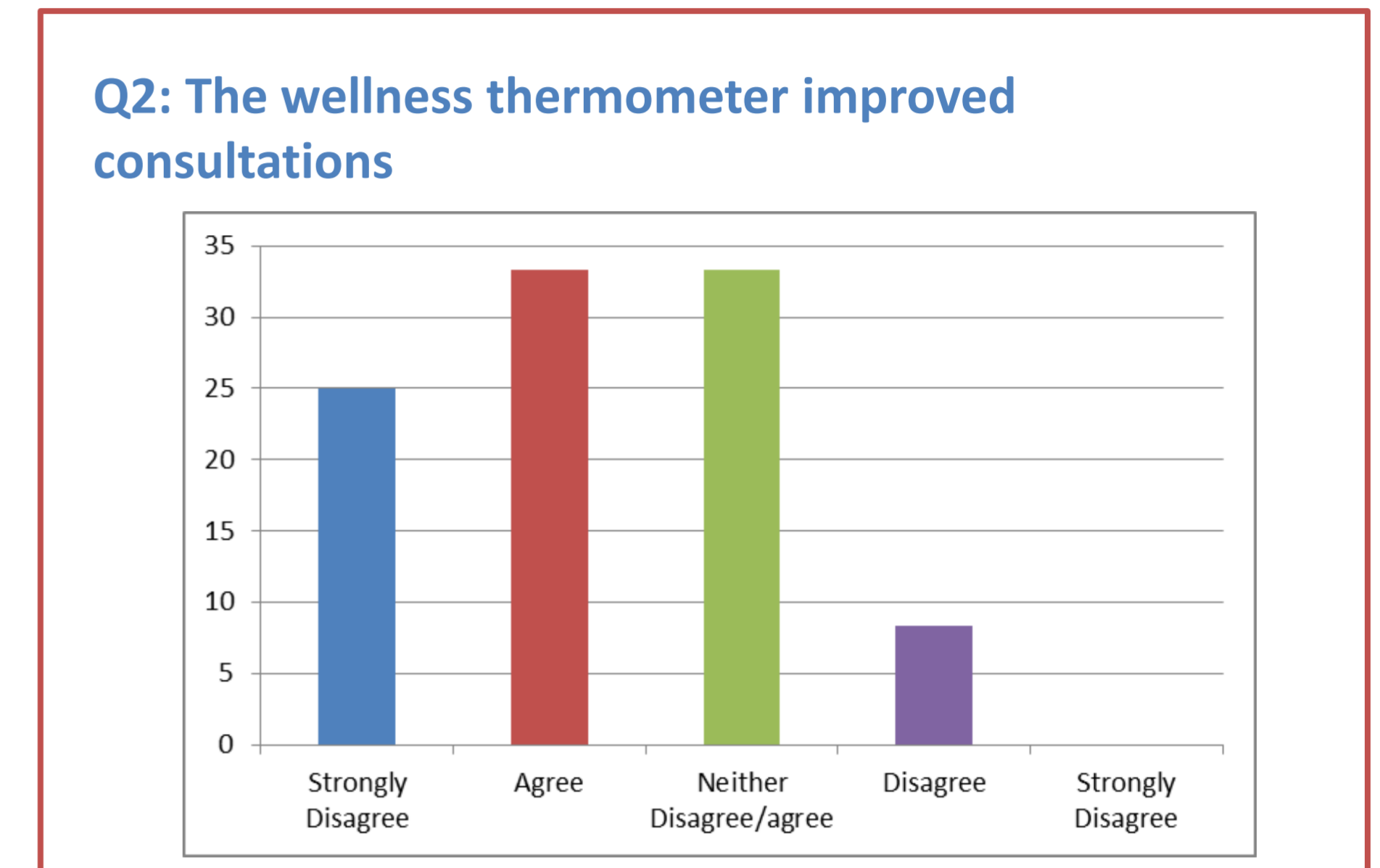
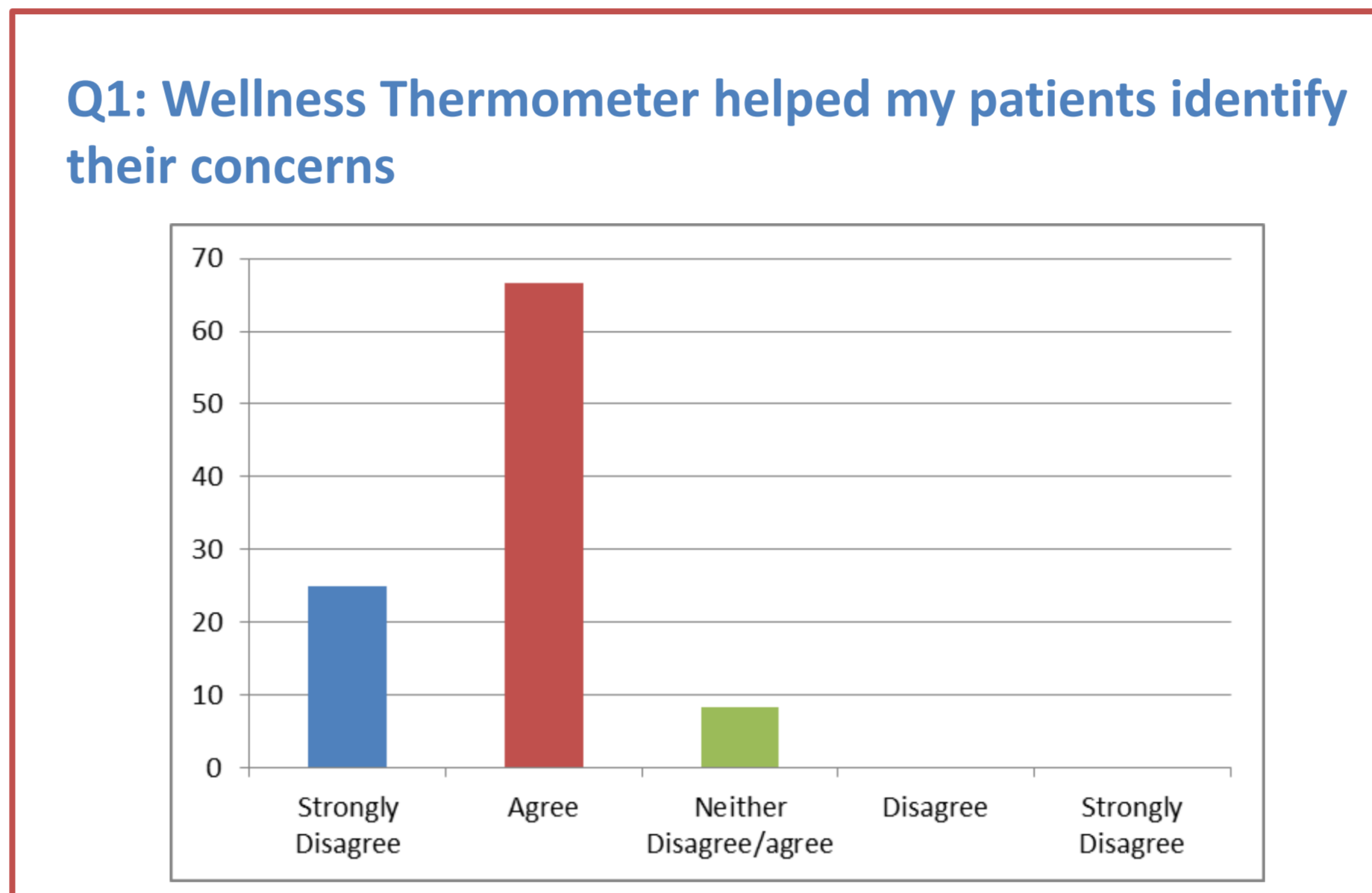
Figure 1. Health Care Professional Engagement Survey Card & Questions

HCPs were asked to rate the usefulness of patients being able to write down discussion points ahead of the consultation and the ability to record overall wellbeing and specific concerns.

Figure 2. Sample of Wellness Thermometer

## Results

To date, 12 HCPs have evaluated the Wellness Thermometer. Responses are given below:



Item on Wellness thermometer	Most Useful (%)	Useful (%)	Least Useful (%)
Scale 1-10 to record well being	18	64	18
Ability to circle and record specific issues regarding my wellbeing	9	91	0
Being able to write down what I wanted to discuss during the consultation	45	45	9

## Conclusions

HCPs' experiences of using the Wellness Thermometer were extremely positive. HCPs indicated that the Wellness Thermometer enabled patients' agendas to shape the consultation and enable better communication of any concerns. We envision that the Wellness Thermometer could become a useful tool for establishing open communication between patients and HCPs.

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To access the Wellness Thermometer: [www.positiveconversations.co.uk](http://www.positiveconversations.co.uk)