

The University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita

Preventive Medicine and Public Health

Perceptions about Community Health Care Providers from the Patients' Perspective: A Study for Flint Hills Regional Health Network

Final Report



*Our vision: Healthier citizens and populations
through education, research and service.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROJECT PURPOSE6

PROJECT OVERVIEW7

 Background7

 Mercy Regional..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

 Project8

METHODOLOGY.....8

RESULTS9

 Demographics9

 Social Support10

 Health11

 Goal # 1: Adequate Health Care11

Ambulance Services12

Home Health Services12

Nursing Home Services12

Cardiac Services12

Cancer Services.....13

Prevention Services.....13

Health/ Fitness Center Services13

Dental Services.....14

Emergency Room Services14

Hospice Services14

Other Services14

Verbatim Responses15

 Specialists.....15

Cardiovascular Specialists.....16

Oncology Specialists16

Orthopedic Specialists16

“Other” Specialists.....17

 Awareness of Local Health Care Providers17

Mercy Regional Health Center17

Washington County Hospital18

Clay Center Hospital18

Wamego City Hospital18

Community Memorial Health Center.....19

 Where Respondents Go for Routine Health Care19

Clay Center19

Mercy Regional Health Center20

Wamego City Hospital20

Community Memorial Health Care.....20

Washington County Hospital20

Other Health Care Facilities21

 Travel for Medical Care21

 Satisfaction22

Confidence in Physician.....23

Respect.....24

Goal #2: What Concerns You Most.....24

CONCLUSIONS26

GRAPHS.....29

Graph 1: County in Which Respondents Self-Reportedly Reside.....29

Graph 2: How Long Respondent Has Lived in this County29

Graph 3: Respondents’ Ages.....30

Graph 4: Respondents’ Highest Level of Education.....30

Graph 5: Current Employment Status31

Graph 6: Do Respondents Consider Their Household Incomes Adequate to Cover Their Family’s Health Care Needs31

Graph 7: Respondents’ Gender32

Graph 8: Current Marital Status32

Graph 9: If You Have a Problem or Need Help, Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You Can Rely on to Help, Like for Transportation.....33

Graph 10: Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You by County.....33

Graph 11: Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You by Years Lived in County..34

Graph 12: Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You by Health Status34

Graph 13: Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You by “Cost is a Barrier to Seeking Health Services”35

Graph 14: Respondents’ Self-Report General Health.....35

Graph 15: Years Since Last Visited Doctor for Routine Checkup.....36

Graph 16: How Much is the Cost of Health Care a Barrier for You and Your Family Members to Seek Services from Local Health Care Facilities.....36

Graph 16 a: How Much is the Cost of Health Care a Barrier by County37

Graph 17: Respondents’ Rating of the Current Health Care System in Kansas.....37

Graph 18: All My Family’s Medical Needs Are Being Met within My Community...38

Graph 19: All My Family’s Medical Needs Are Being Met within My Community by County38

Graph 20: Adequate Ambulance Services39

Graph 21: Adequate Ambulance Services by County39

Graph 22: Adequate Home Health Services.....40

Graph 23: Adequate Home Health Services by County40

Graph 24: Adequate Nursing Home Services.....41

Graph 25: Adequate Nursing Home Services by County.....41

Graph 26: Adequate Cardiac Services.....42

Graph 27: Adequate Cardiac Services by County42

Graph 28: Adequate Oncology Services43

Graph 29: Adequate Oncology Services by County.....43

Graph 30: Adequate Prevention Services44

Graph 31: Adequate Prevention Services by County44

Graph 32: Adequate Health/Fitness Centers.....45

Graph 33: Adequate Health/Fitness Centers by County.....45

Graph 34: Adequate Dental Services46

Graph 35: Adequate Dental Services by County46

Graph 36: Adequate Emergency Department Services.....47

Graph 37: Adequate Emergency Department Services by County.....47

Graph 38: Adequate Hospice Services48

Graph 39: Adequate Hospice Services by County48

Graph 40: Adequate “Other” Services49

Graph 41: Adequate “Other” Services by County49

Graph 42: Are Additional Specialists Needed in Your Community50

Graph 43: Are Additional Specialists Needed in Your Community by County50

Graph 44: Are Cardiovascular Specialists Needed in Your Community51

Graph 45: Are Cardiovascular Specialists Needed in Your Community by County ..52

Graph 46: Are Oncology Specialists Needed in Your Community52

Graph 47: Are Oncology Specialists Needed in Your Community by County53

Graph 48: Are Orthopedic Specialists Needed in Your Community53

Graph 49: Are Orthopedic Specialists Needed in Your Community by County54

Graph 50: Are Other Specialists Needed in Your Community55

Graph 51: Are Other Specialists Needed in Your Community by County55

Graph 52: Familiar with Mercy Regional Health Center56

Graph 53: Familiar with Washington County Hospital.....57

Graph 54: Familiar with Clay Center Hospital57

Graph 55: Familiar with Wamego City Hospital.....58

Graph 56: Familiar with Community Memorial Health Center58

Graph 57: Do/Would You Use Different Facilities for Different Health Problems.....59

**Graph 58: Do/Would You Use Different Facilities for Different Health Problems by
County59**

Graph 59: Where Do You Go for Your Household’s Routine Health Care Needs60

**Graph 60: Where Do You Go for Your Household’s Routine Health Care Needs by
County60**

Graph 61: Travel Outside Community to Receive Medical Services.....61

Graph 62: Travel Outside Community to Receive Medical Services by County.....61

Graph 63: Travel by Ambulance Services by County62

Graph 64: Travel by Home Health Services by County62

Graph 65: Travel by Nursing Home Services by County.....63

Graph 66: Travel by Cardiac Services by County.....63

Graph 67: Travel by Cancer Services by County64

Graph 68: Travel by Prevention Services by County64

Graph 69: Travel by Health/Fitness Center Services by County65

Graph 70: Travel by Dental Services by County65

Graph 71: Travel by Emergency Room Services by County66

Graph 72: Travel by Other Services by County66

Graph 73: Satisfaction with Health Care Services.....67

Graph 74: Satisfaction with Health Care Services by County.....67

Graph 75: How Much Confidence Do You Have in Your Family Doctor68

Graph 76: How Much Confidence Do You Have in Your Family Doctor by County 68

Graph 77: How Often Able to Get an Appointment with Family Doctor if Needed ..69

**Graph 78: How Often Able to Get an Appointment with Family Doctor if Needed by
County69**

Graph 79: Enough Respect from Health Care Provider70
Graph 80: Enough Respect from Health Care Provider by County70

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Survey respondents primarily lived within eight rural counties including: Clay, Geary, Morris, Marshall, Pottawatomie, Riley, Wabaunsee, and Washington.
- The average respondent was white, approximately 51 years old, was married or living with someone, had a high school diploma, adequate social support, and relatively good health.
- This study indicates that about half (53%) of rural Kansas respondents believe they have adequate local health care services. The health care services identified by respondents in as needed most in their communities include *cardiac and oncology services*.
- Nearly all respondents reported they need physicians, especially cardiovascular, oncology, and orthopedic specialists in their communities.
- Although most (75%) were familiar with Mercy Regional Health Center, and about half (48%) were familiar with Clay County Medical Center, the majority of respondents were unfamiliar with Washington County Hospital, Wamego City Hospital, and Community Memorial Health Center. Most (73%) report going to a *different* health care facility for their *routine* health care needs. Additionally, most respondents indicated they travel to other facilities for *non-routine* health care services such as *surgery* or to *see specialists*.
- Respondents reported numerous concerns about health care in their communities. Several themes emerged including the rising cost of health care, lack of emergency response, long distance from health care facilities, and lack of quality physicians, especially specialists, available to rural residents.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this telephone survey was to assess perceptions of health care providers in eight rural Kansas counties. The voluntary telephone survey was designed to assess factors that influence health care decisions and behaviors for rural community members. The primary purpose of the survey was to collect rural residents perceptions of medical care providers and available services.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Background

Access to care has risen to the top of the list of national health problems. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) made access to care one of the 10 leading health indicators in the updated DHHS Healthy People 2010 (HP 2010) goals. Three Healthy People 2010 objectives address goals to improve access to care among U.S. residents.

Flint Hills Regional Health Network

Project members include leadership at Mercy Regional Health Center, as well as representatives from the communities served by Clay County Medical Center, Community Memorial Healthcare, Wamego City Hospital, and Washington County Hospital (which include individual physicians, physician clinics, rural health clinics, health departments and emergency medical services). The Flint Hills Regional Health Network strives to educate, provide resources, and increase visibility of hospitals/network and physician relations reducing fragmentation in rural health care delivery and reducing duplications where possible.

Project

Through the support of a Kansas Rural Health Options Project grant, Flint Hills Regional Health Network developed the Perceptions about Community Health Care Providers from the Patients' Perspective project to determine where citizens of eight rural counties (Clay, Geary, Morris, Marshall, Pottawatomie, Riley, Wabaunsee, and Washington) seek health care services. Within these counties, there are several local hospitals, and Flint Hills Regional Health Network sought to assess local perceptions of health care services and to better understand if or why local citizens travel for health care.

Flint Hills Regional Health Network has conducted a series of focus groups in eight rural Kansas counties to examine the issues that discourage and encourage rural citizens to travel outside of their counties to receive health care. As a follow-up to these activities, Flint Hills Regional Health Network subcontracted the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Wichita (KUSM-W), Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health to conduct a needs assessment. The Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health collaborated with Wichita State University to perform a random digit dialing telephone survey for these eight counties (see Appendix 1 for survey).

METHODOLOGY

The two goals of the analyses were to:

- 1) Determine if rural Kansas citizens believe they have adequate local health care services,
and
- 2) Analyze the concerns rural citizens have about health and health care.

Data were collected via telephone survey from approximately 50 persons in each of the eight rural counties.

RESULTS

Demographics

Respondents were surveyed from each of the eight counties, including: Clay, Marshall, Geary, Morris, Pottawatomie, Riley, Wabaunsee, and Washington (Graph 1). Due to two respondents refusing, eight respondents indicating they are from another county (two from Marion, and one from Marvel, Dixon, Dickens, Jackson, Norton, and Sedgwick counties), and seven “missing,” some counties had slightly more responses than others (Washington, n = 44 versus Clay, n = 54). The majority of respondents (56%) reported living in their counties for 20 years or longer. Approximately 15% have lived in their counties for 10-19 years, and 12% for 5-9 years, and another 12% for 1-4 years (Graph 2).

Survey respondents were primarily married, white, middle-aged, educated, and employed. Ages of respondents ranged from 18 to 89, with the average respondent at age 51 (Graph 3). Most respondents (36%) reported their highest level of education completed was achieving high school diploma. Another 30% had received some vocational training or college, and 27% earned a college degree (Graph 4). The majority of respondents (52%) reported being employed full-time, and another 26% reported being retired, disabled, or sick (Graph 5). In response to the question: do you consider your household income adequate to cover you and your family’s health care needs, 70% responded “yes,” and 30% responded “no” (Graph 6).

The clear majority of respondents (96%) reported being white, non-Hispanic, and 66% were female (Graph 7). The majority of respondents were married or living with someone (72%), and approximately 16% reported being widowed/separated/divorced, and 13% single/never married (Graph 8).

Social Support

In response to the question: “If you have a problem or need help, do you have a friend or relative who you can rely on to help, like for transportation,” 92% (n=379) indicated they did, although approximately 6% (n=25) reported they did not know or they did not think so (Graph 9).

Of the 22 who responded they did *not* have a friend or relative that could provide help if needed, 27% live in Morris County, 18% live in Washington and Clay counties, and 14% live in Geary County (Graph 10). The highest percentage of respondents (13%) reporting *not* having a friend or relative that could help have lived in their county for 1 – 4 years (Graph 11). Forty-one percent (41%) are employed full-time, and 36% report being retired, disabled, or ill. In fact, thirteen percent (13%) of those reportedly having “very poor” health, 9% of those reportedly having “fair” health, 7% of those reportedly having “poor” health indicated they did not have a friend or relative upon whom they could rely (Graph 12). Ten percent (10%) of those who responded that the cost of health care is very much a barrier to receiving services responded they did not have friends or relatives to help them. At the same time, only 4% of those who indicated the cost of health care is not a barrier to receiving services reported not having friends or relatives that could help them (Graph 13).

Health

The majority of respondents (57%) reported that, in general, their health is “good,” and an additional 21% reported their health is excellent. Conversely, 16% reported having “fair” health, and 6% reported having “poor” or “very poor” health (Graph 14).

Years since last visited doctor for routine checkup, ranged from zero (n=266) to 20 (n=2) years, with a median and mode of zero, and a mean of less than one year (see Graph 15). In response to the question: “How much is the cost of health care a barrier for you and your family members to seek services from local health care facilities,” 21% of respondents indicated it is “very much” a barrier, 32% reported “somewhat,” and 46% reported “not.” See Graph 16.

Goal # 1: Adequate Health Care

In response to the question: “How would you rate our present health care system in Kansas,” 43% indicated “good,” 33% reported “fair,” and 18% reported “poor” or “very poor” (Graph 17).

Fifty-three percent (53%) agree that all their family’s medical needs are being met within their communities, while 29% disagree, and 12% strongly disagree (Graph 18). Specifically, 48%, 47%, and 45% of respondents in Geary, Morris, and Marshall counties indicated they disagree or strongly disagree that their family’s medical needs are being met in those communities (Graph 19).

Ambulance Services

Across all eight counties, 83% reported having adequate ambulance service, 13% reported having inadequate ambulance service, and 4% reported not knowing (Graph 20). It is notable that 20% and 15% of respondents in Geary and Riley counties do not believe they have adequate ambulance service (Graph 21).

Home Health Services

Across the eight counties, 62% of respondents reported having adequate home health care services. Nineteen percent (19%) reported inadequate home health services, and an additional 20% reported not knowing (Graph 22). It is noteworthy that 40% and 37% of respondents from Morris and Geary, respectively, reported having inadequate home health services (Graph 23).

Nursing Home Services

Across the eight counties surveyed, 65% indicated their nursing home services were adequate. An additional 20% reported having inadequate nursing home services, and 15% reported not knowing (Graph 24). Many respondents (39%) in Geary County reported not having adequate nursing home services in their community. An additional 30% in Wabaunsee County reported having inadequate nursing home services (Graph 25).

Cardiac Services

Only 41% of respondents in all eight counties reported having adequate cardiac services. In fact, 38% reported having inadequate cardiac services, and 20% reported not knowing (Graph 26). A notable group of respondents in each county reported inadequate cardiac services: 67% in

Washington, 59% in Morris, 51% in Wabaunsee, 47% in Pottawatomie, 43% in Marshall and Geary, and 37% in Clay (Graph 27).

Cancer Services

Only 36% of respondents from all eight counties reported having adequate oncology services. In fact, 42% reported their community had inadequate oncology services, and 21% reported not knowing (Graph 28). Relatively large groups of respondents in each county reported inadequate services: 67% in Morris, 63% in Washington, 61% in Marshall, 56% in Wabaunsee, 53% in Pottawatomie, 52% in Geary, and 45% in Clay and Riley (Graph 29).

Prevention Services

Of the respondents from all eight counties, 78% reported having adequate prevention services, while 18% reported inadequate prevention services (Graph 30). However, 32% of respondents in Wabaunsee, 30% in Morris, and 19% in Marshall counties reported their communities have inadequate prevention services (Graph 31).

Health/ Fitness Center Services

Although 60% of respondents from the eight counties reported their communities have adequate health or fitness center services, 35% reported having inadequate health and fitness center services in their communities (Graph 32). Especially notable are the 72% in Morris County who responded that their community has inadequate health/fitness center services. Another 59% in Wabaunsee, 51% in Washington, 33% in Marshall, and 32% in Geary reported also having inadequate health/fitness center services in their communities (Graph 33).

Dental Services

Across the eight counties surveyed, 69% reported having adequate dental services, and 27% reported having inadequate dental services in their communities (Graph 34). Specifically, 50% of respondents in Wabaunsee, 29% in Geary and Washington, 28% in Morris, 27% in Marshall, and 26% in Clay reported having inadequate dental services (Graph 35).

Emergency Room Services

Of the respondents in all eight counties, 72% reported having adequate emergency room services, and 21% reported having inadequate emergency room services (Graph 36). In fact, 53% of respondents in Wabaunsee, 26% in Geary, 23% in Marshall, and 22% in Morris indicated they had inadequate emergency room services (Graph 37).

Hospice Services

Although 55% of respondents in all eight counties reported having adequate hospice services in their communities, 18% indicated their communities have inadequate hospice service, and 27% reported not knowing (Graph 38). In fact, 55% of respondents in Morris County, 34% in Wabaunsee County, and 30% in Marshall County reported having inadequate hospice services (Graph 39).

Other Services

In addition to the responses offered above, 77% of respondents across all eight counties reported their communities provided “other” inadequate services (Graph 40). In fact, 98% in Clay, 96% in

Wabaunsee and Morris, 92% in Riley, 91% in Pottawatomie, 89% in Marshall, 86% in Geary, and 75% in Washington reported their communities did not provide “other” adequate services (Graph 41).

Verbatim Responses

Respondents were asked what were other services (in addition to the above listed services) their communities needed. Basic services were identified as community needs. Several community respondents indicated their communities need an ambulance, care for their elderly, a physician, and dental services. Several indicated the communities need more doctors. One person summarized a theme throughout this study: *“No doctors are available here in this elderly community.”* Several others indicated they wanted more fitness and recreational centers for youth and the elderly. One person stated having a *“fitness center where they can walk and have a swimming pool”* is a very important service missing in these rural counties.

Others emphasized the need to improve services that are currently available in their communities. *“They need great improvements in the hospital.” “We need improved cardiologists.” “More neurological services. We need stronger cancer services.”* At the same time, several indicated their communities needed to offer services for low-income families. *“They need to offer better care for lower income families; [they need to] individualize it.”*

Specialists

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents indicated that additional specialist doctors are needed in their counties (Graph 42). In fact, 73% of respondents from Geary County, 63% from Washington

County, 62% from Morris County, 61% from Marshall County, 54% from Clay County, 52% from Riley County, and 50% from Pottawatomie and Wabaunsee counties reported they think additional specialists are needed in their counties (Graph 43).

Cardiovascular Specialists

Across all eight counties, although 46% did not respond, 42% reported needing cardiovascular specialists in their communities; this resulted in a valid 78% reported needing cardiovascular specialists (Graph 44). Specifically, 84% of respondents in Marshall County, 83% in Morris and Wabaunsee counties, 80% in Riley County, 79% in Clay and Geary counties, and 67% in Washington County report a need for cardiovascular specialists in their counties (Graph 45).

Oncology Specialists

Regarding oncology specialists needed, 47% did not respond, but 41% reported needing oncology specialists in their communities; this resulted in a valid 77% reporting needing additional oncology specialists in their communities (Graph 46). Like cardiovascular specialists, oncology specialists are particularly desirable in all eight counties. In fact, 88% of respondents in Marshall County, 86% in Morris County, 83% in Pottawatomie County, 82% in Geary County, 75% in Wabaunsee, 68% in Clay, and 63% in Washington County indicated oncology specialists are needed in their counties (Graph 47).

Orthopedic Specialists

Although 47% did not respond, 31% reported needing orthopedic specialists in their communities; this resulted in a valid 58% indicating orthopedic specialists are needed in their communities

(Graph 48). Specifically, 84% of respondents in Marshall County, 69% in Morris County, 67% in Wabaunsee County, and 57% in Geary County reported needing orthopedic specialists in their counties (Graph 49).

“Other” Specialists

Overall, 19% of respondents indicated “other” specialists were needed in their communities, and 54% did not respond (Graph 50). In Clay and Wabaunsee counties, 46% of respondents indicated they need specialists from medical fields outside cardiovascular, oncology, and orthopedic medicine in their communities (Graph 51).

Respondents most commonly mentioned surgeons, OB/GYN, dentists, neurologists, and pediatricians as the specialists most needed in their counties. Many also reported, when asked what other specialists were needed in their communities, wanting general practitioners, family doctors, or simply a “*doctor in general.*” Others noted an endocrinologist, oncologist, dermatologist, and urologist specialists are needed in their communities.

Awareness of Local Health Care Providers

Mercy Regional Health Center

The majority of respondents (75%) are familiar, and 24% who were not familiar with Mercy Regional Health Center (MRHC). Although only 6% of respondents in Riley County were not familiar with MRHC, 43% of respondents in Washington County were not familiar with the facility. Additionally, 33% of respondents in Morris County, 28% in Wabaunsee County, 25% in

Marshall County, 22% in Geary County, 20% in Clay County, and 15% in Pottawatomie County were not aware of Mercy Regional Health Center (Graph 52).

Washington County Hospital

Only 28% of respondents were familiar with Washington County Hospital (WCH). Most respondents (71%) were not familiar with Washington County Hospital. Specifically, 92% of respondents in Morris County, 91% in Pottawatomie County, 90% in Wabaunsee County, 89% in Geary County, and 85% in Riley County reported being unfamiliar with Washington County Hospital. Although 11% of Washington County residents were not familiar with WCH, an additional 54% of respondents in Clay and Marshall counties reported being unfamiliar with Washington County Hospital (Graph 53).

Clay County Medical Center Hospital

Almost half of respondents (48%) were familiar with Clay Center. Although only 6% of Clay County residents were unfamiliar with Clay County Medical Center, 30% of respondents in Washington County, 36% in Riley County, 60% in Marshall County, 65% in Geary County, 68% in Wabaunsee County, 75% in Morris County, and 79% in Pottawatomie County were unfamiliar with Clay County Medical Center Hospital (Graph 54).

Wamego City Hospital

Almost two-thirds of respondents (58%) were not familiar with Wamego City Hospital. Although only 6% and 8% of respondents in Pottawatomie and Wabaunsee counties were unfamiliar with Wamego City Hospital (WCH), 63% of respondents in Marshall County, 70% in Clay and Riley

counties, 76% in Geary County, 85% in Morris County, and 91% in Washington County were unfamiliar with Wamego City Hospital (Graph 55).

Community Memorial Health Center

Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73%) reported being unfamiliar with Community Memorial Health Center (CMHC). Although 17% of respondents in Marshall County reported being unfamiliar with CMHC, 57% of respondents in Washington County, 81% in Clay and Pottawatomie counties, 83% in Riley County, 88% in Wabaunsee County, 91% in Geary County, and 95% in Morris County stated they were unfamiliar with Community Memorial Health Center (Graph 56).

Where Respondents Go for Routine Health Care

Approximately 70% indicated they use different facilities for different health problems (Graphs 57 and 58). However, across all eight counties, 89% report using family doctors for most of their routine health care (Graph 59). In fact, for their households' routine health care needs, 12% to Clay County Medical Center, 6% of respondents report going to Mercy Regional Health Center, 4% to Wamego City Hospital, 3% Community Memorial Health Care, and 2% to Washington County Hospital (Graph 60).

Clay County Medical Center

Twelve percent (12%) of respondents (n=48) indicated they go to Clay County Medical Center for their household's routine health care needs, 34 of whom reside in Clay County. An additional 7

respondents in Riley and Washington counties reported going to Clay County Medical Center for routine health care.

Mercy Regional Health Center

Six percent (6%) of respondents (n=23) indicated they go to Mercy Regional Health Center for their household's routine health care needs; 14 from Riley County, 3 from Marshall and Pottawatomie counties, and 1 from Geary, Morris, and Washington counties.

Wamego City Hospital

Only 4% of respondents (n=16) reported going to Wamego City Hospital for their household's routine health care needs. Eleven of these respondents live in Pottawatomie County, two in Wabaunsee and Marshall counties, and one in Morris County.

Community Memorial Health Care

Only 3% of respondents (n=12) stated they go to Community Memorial Health Care for their household's routine health care needs; nine in Marshall County, and one in Wabaunsee, Washington and another nearby county.

Washington County Hospital

Only 2% of respondents (n=7), reported going to Washington County Hospital, all of them residing in Washington County.

Other Health Care Facilities

The majority of respondents (73%) (n=300), report going to another health care facility for their household's routine health care needs (Graph 60). Although it varies, the hospitals where respondents most frequently mentioned receiving routine health care included: Marysville Hospital, Cotton O'Neil Clinic, Alma Health Care Clinic, Morris County Family Health Center, and Geary County Medical Center.

Travel for Medical Care

The majority of respondents (76%) indicated they or their family members have traveled outside of their communities for medical care (Graphs 61 & 62). In fact, 8% report traveling for ambulance service, 9% for home health services, 5% for nursing home services, 21% for cardiac services, 18% for cancer services, 13% for prevention services, 7% for health/fitness center services, 17% for dental services, 14% for emergency room services, and 41% for "other" services. See Graphs 63 through 72 for community-specific responses.

The majority of respondents indicated they travel to see specialists and for surgery. Some reported traveling for any medical service, even routine health care. Others indicate they travel for *"anything that is past the basic part of health care."* One person said, *"For all medical visits because of insurance reasons, unless emergency."*

In response to the question: "What would make you go to a facility further than the one in your community," some stated, *"I can't think of anything,"* while others reported, *"basically everything."* Many reported not liking or trusting the local doctor, while others indicated they

would travel to another facility if they were referred to another doctor. Again, many respondents reported they would travel to see a specialist. They want “*better care and better equipment,*” “*better service, newer facilities with better technology,*” and “*a wider selection of doctors with different specialties.*” In fact, one respondent reported that “*nobody can take x-rays in town; there are not enough specialists locally.*” Consistently, respondents reported they travel to other facilities because there are “*better doctors with more services elsewhere.*”

Satisfaction

Respondents reported relatively high satisfaction levels to the question, “Thinking of all the health care services you used in the past 12 months, how satisfied are you with them overall” (Graphs 73 and 74).

Very dissatisfied. Overall, 3% of respondents reported being “very dissatisfied.” Nine percent (9%) of respondents in Pottawatomie County and 7% of respondents in Washington County reported being “very dissatisfied” with the health care services they received in the past year. These are relatively high numbers compared to 0% in Clay County and 2% in Marshall, Geary, Morris, Riley, and Wabaunsee counties.

Dissatisfied. Overall, 2% of respondents reported being “dissatisfied.” Six percent (6%) of respondents in Riley County and 4% in Marshall, Geary, and Wabaunsee counties reported being “dissatisfied” with the health care services they received over the past year. Two percent (2%) of respondents in Pottawatomie County and no respondents in Clay, Morris, or Washington counties indicated they were dissatisfied.

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Overall, 11% of respondents indicated they were “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.” Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents in Geary County reported feeling neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with health care services. Another 19% in Clay County, 13% in Pottawatomie, 10% in Marshall County, and 9% in Riley County reported feeling neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Satisfied. Approximately half of respondents (51%) reported being “satisfied.” Specifically, 66% of Washington County respondents, 58% of respondents in Marshall County, 55% in Wabaunsee County, 53% in Pottawatomie County, 52% in Morris County, 49% in Riley County, 46% in Clay County, and 39% in Geary County reported being satisfied with the health care services they received over the past year.

Very satisfied. Twenty-seven percent (27%) reported being “very satisfied.” In fact, 33% of respondents in Morris and Wabaunsee counties, 32% in Riley County, 31% in Clay County, 26% in Geary County, 23% in Marshall County, 18% in Washington County, and 17% in Pottawatomie County reported being “very satisfied.”

Confidence in Physician

The majority of respondents (67%) have “good” or “total” confidence in their family doctors (Graphs 75 and 76). Approximately 66% report “always” being able to get an appointment with their family doctors when needed (Graph 77). Specifically, 88% of respondents in Washington County and 80% of respondents in Wabaunsee County report “always” getting a needed

appointment with their family doctors. However, 13% of respondents in Geary County reported “sometimes” or “seldom” getting a needed appointment (Graph 78).

Respect

The majority of respondents (90%) feel they get enough respect from their health care providers. Only 7% of respondents felt they did not get enough respect (Graph 79). Specifically, 11% of respondents in Geary County, 9% in Riley County, 8% in Wabaunsee and Marshall counties, 5% in Washington County, and 4% in Clay, Morris, and Pottawatomie counties stated they did not feel they were given enough respect from their health care providers (Graph 80).

Goal #2: What Concerns You Most

In response to the question: “What concerns you most about health care in your community,” respondents painted a rather gloomy forecast for medical care in their communities. First, many reported distance from a facility as a concern. *“Have to go so far to get a doctor.” “No access to specialist; cost of traveling to Kansas City, Topeka, Manhattan, et cetera.”* One family reported being *“twenty miles away from the nearest facility.”* One person from Marshall County reported, *“If you have an emergency, you have to transport yourself to the center. After hours, you have to go to a hospital if you have a problem.”* Another said, *“The lack of a local hospital. The distance to travel in an emergency is scary.”*

The lack of quality physicians is a very large concern for most respondents. One respondent stated, *“Our health care providers do not have the knowledge to take care of patients properly.”* Another responded, *“the lack of doctors, in general...how untrained people are providing care.”*

One person in Washington County reported, *“We only have one doctor. If we lose him, we’re doomed.”* From another community, one person reported, *“Attempts to close small town doctor, and if she leaves, there won’t be a doctor in the community.”* From yet another community, *“I’m afraid that we may lose the doctors and the clinics.”* One person from another community reported, *“the community is not large enough to support two groups of doctors, and that it may end up closing both clinics.”*

One person said, *“lack of doctors; lack of pharmacies; being able to keep the hospital going.”* Another reported, *“If the hospital closes, it will ruin our community.”* One simple stated in response to “what concerns you most about health care in your community,” *“the lack of it; we have a bunch of quacks for doctors.”* Another said, *“the hospital size, equipment availability, and severe health problems.”*

Some reported being concerned about the *“the lack of specialty doctors and the lack of caring.”* One responded, *“doctors not informing patients of the choices they have.”* One person reported, *“Nurses have bad attitudes toward patients.”*

Additionally, respondents reported the *“lack of emergency response”* as a concern. *“If something happens out here, you’re screwed.”* *“Emergencies are not able to be treated here. For example, life-saving techniques are not available, and no anesthesiologists are available.”* Another said, *“I don’t think that we have an adequate ER. If you had a big emergency, you would have to be transferred.”* Another said, *“The lack of a near emergency room, especially considering that the community is full of elderly people.”*

Many cited the rising costs of health care as serious concerns. Even the cost of the copayment was reported often as a concern. *“The cost of copayment. Insurance costs so much, with high deductibles like \$1,000!”* Another person stated, *“Major problems; high costs and minimal health care. It costs \$460 for an ambulance to run eight miles!”*

CONCLUSIONS

Survey respondents primarily lived within eight rural counties, and most have lived in these counties for 20 years or longer. The average respondent was white, approximately 51 years old, had a high school diploma, was married or living with someone, had adequate social support, and relatively good health.

This study indicates that about half (53%) of rural Kansas respondents believe they have adequate local health care services. The health care services identified by respondents in all eight counties as most needed in their communities include *cardiac and oncology services*. These findings parallel the results of the focus groups previously conducted in these rural counties. Ambulance, home health, and nursing home services are also identified services needed especially in Geary County. Morris County especially identified the need for health/fitness center services, while most counties identified dental and emergency department services as also needed.

Although most respondents identified basic needs in their communities such as the need for ambulance services, care for their elderly, dental services, and medical equipment (i.e. X-Ray, MRI), nearly all respondents reported they need physicians, especially cardiovascular, oncology, and orthopedic specialists. The need for specialists, especially cardiovascular and oncology

specialists again parallels the findings from the focus groups previously conducted in these counties.

Although most (75%) are familiar with Mercy Regional Health Center and about half (48%) are familiar with Clay County Medical Center Hospital, the majority of respondents were unfamiliar with Washington County Hospital, Wamego City Hospital, and Community Memorial Health Center. Regardless, 73% of respondents report going to a *different* health care facility for their *routine* health care needs. Additionally, the majority of respondents indicated the travel to other facilities for non-routine health care services such as surgery or to see specialists. Many reported not trusting or liking their local doctor and traveling to other facilities because there are “*better doctors with more services elsewhere.*” On the whole, respondents reported being satisfied with the medical services they have been receiving from these facilities. They have confidence in their physicians, and they feel respected by their physicians.

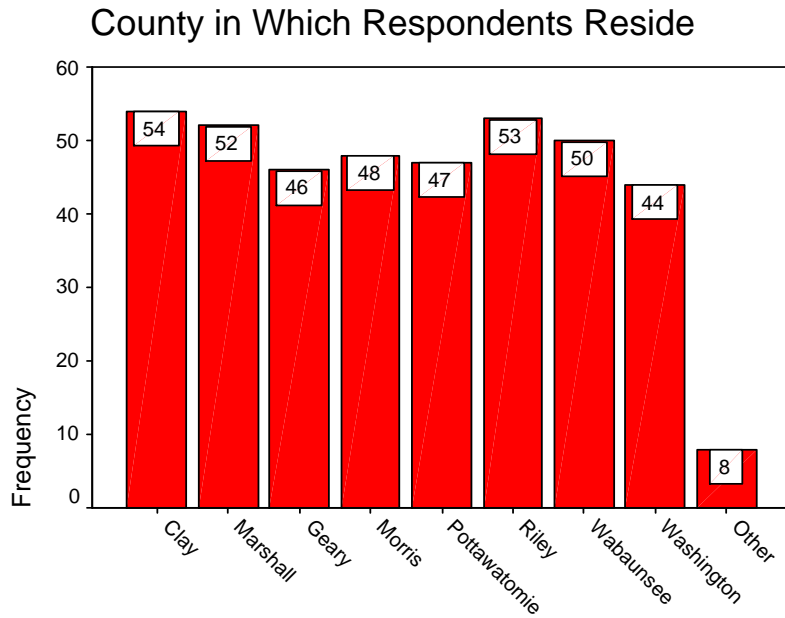
The rural respondents reported numerous concerns about health care in their communities. Several themes emerged including the rising cost of health care, lack of emergency response, long distance from health care facilities, and lack of quality physicians available to rural residents. In other words, residents first and foremost want a quality, trained physician with updated technology and equipment in their communities. They want specialists who can provide cardiology and oncology services. They want health care services that are in a near enough proximity that residents’ health is not further endangered by the great distance that must be traveled to receive care (such as ambulance services and emergency departments).

The primary concern underlying these themes seems to be a lack of certainty regarding quantity and quality of basic services. Residents want to receive quality health care, and they are willing to travel in order to receive it. However, many respondents fear losing local health clinics, even though they perceive the provided services are poor and equipment outdated.

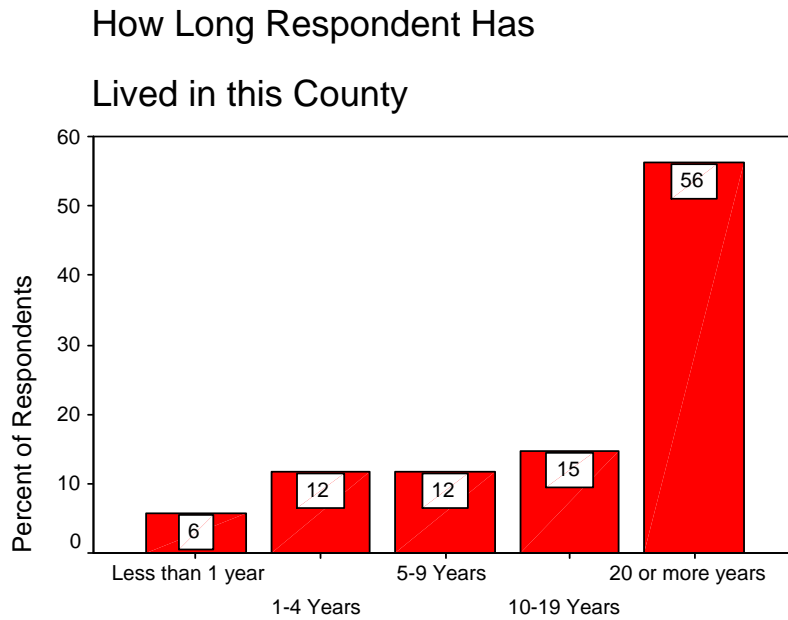
The need for quality physicians, general practitioners as well as specialists, and equipment has been expressed clearly by the residents of Clay, Geary, Morris, Marshall, Pottawatomie, Riley, Wabaunsee, and Washington counties. Residents have repeatedly identified cardiac and cancer services as gaps in health services, and they are willing to travel to receive these services, although they would prefer to receive local services.

GRAPHS

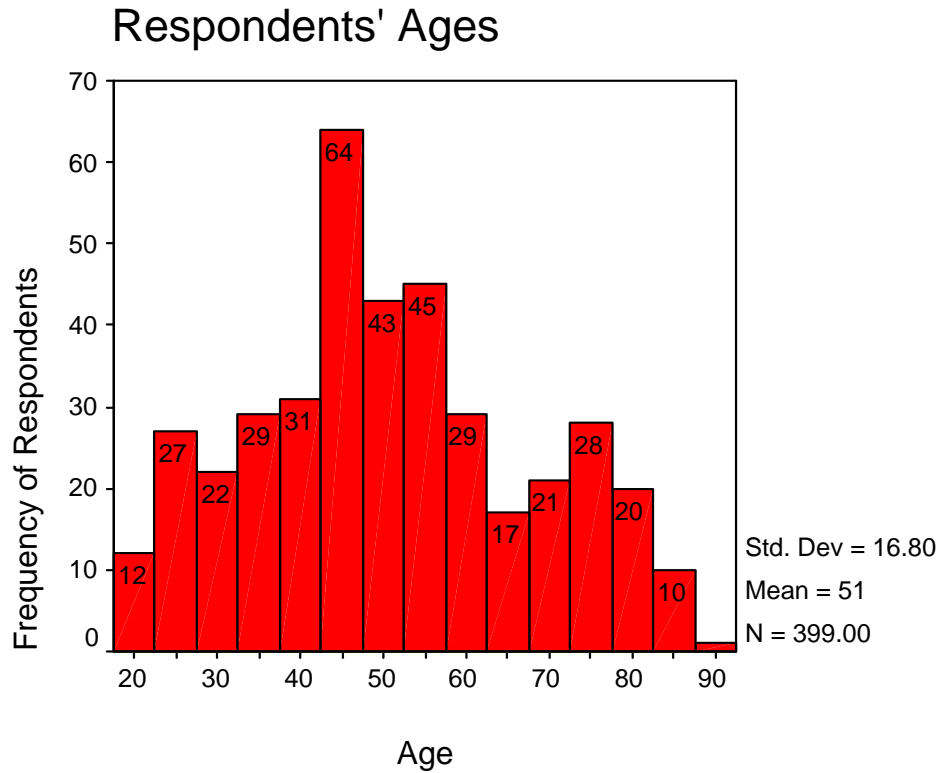
Graph 1: County in Which Respondents Self-Reportedly Reside



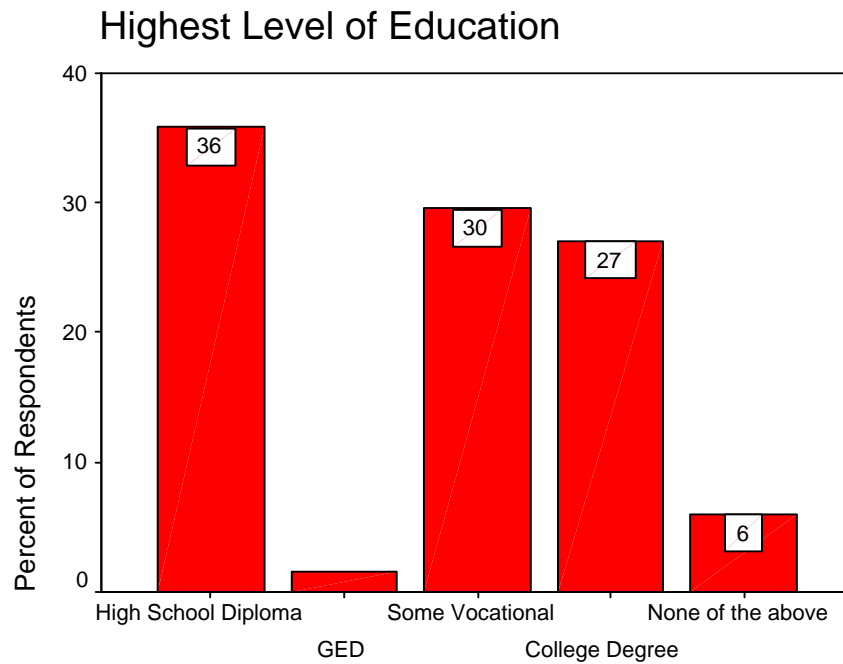
Graph 2: How Long Respondent Has Lived in this County



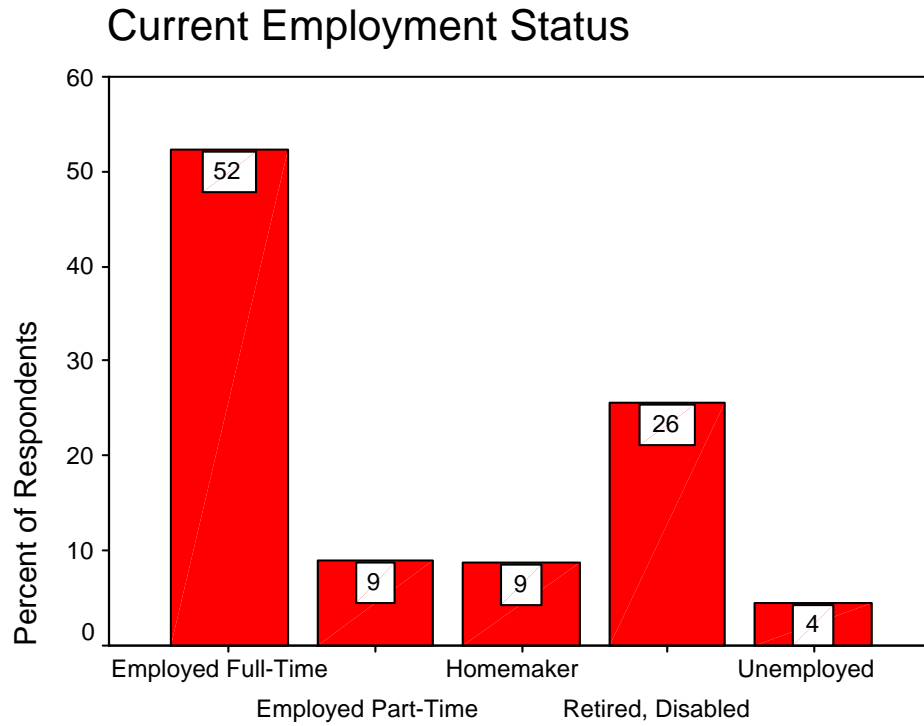
Graph 3: Respondents' Ages



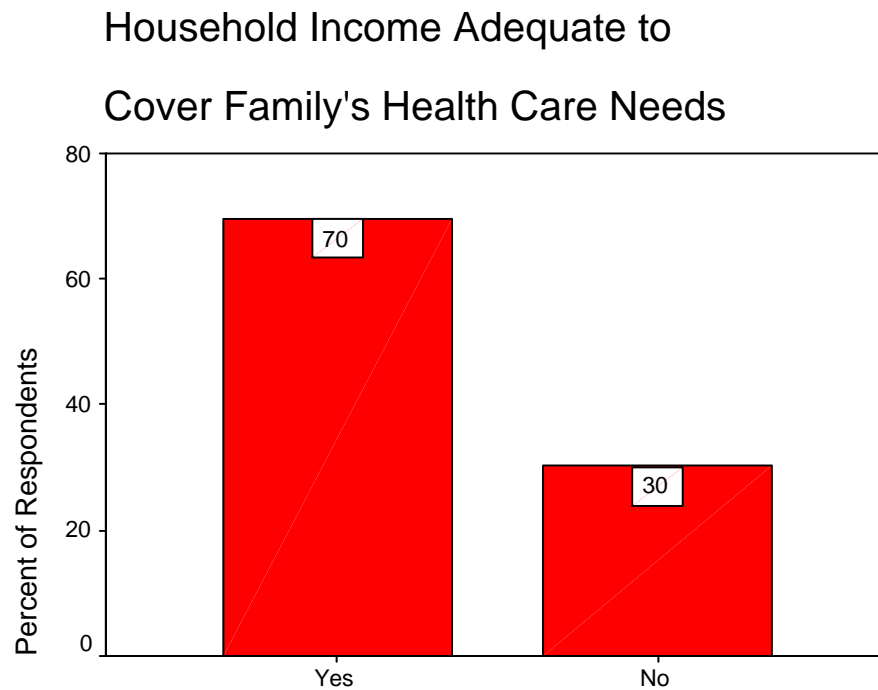
Graph 4: Respondents' Highest Level of Education



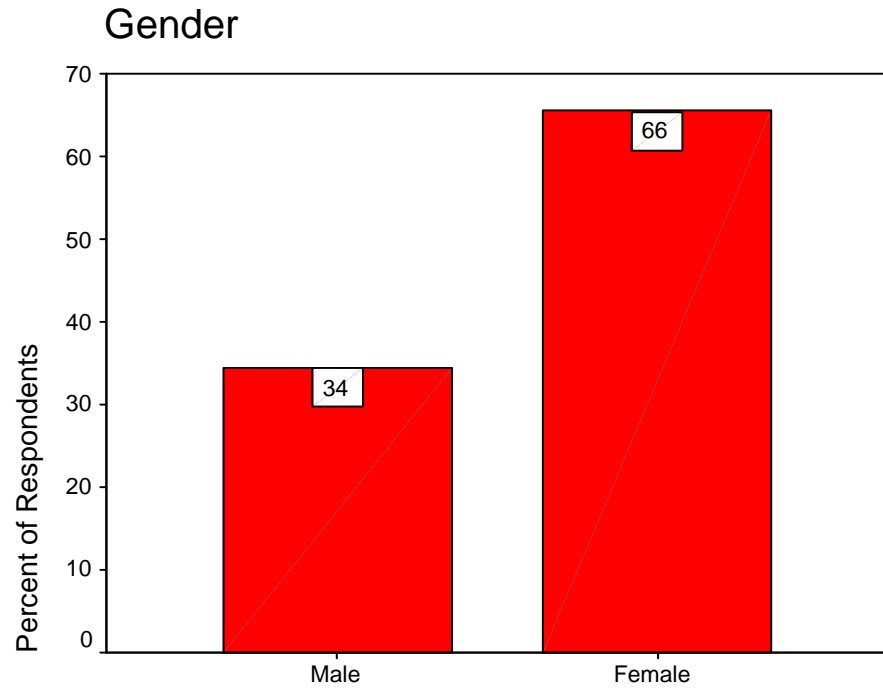
Graph 5: Current Employment Status



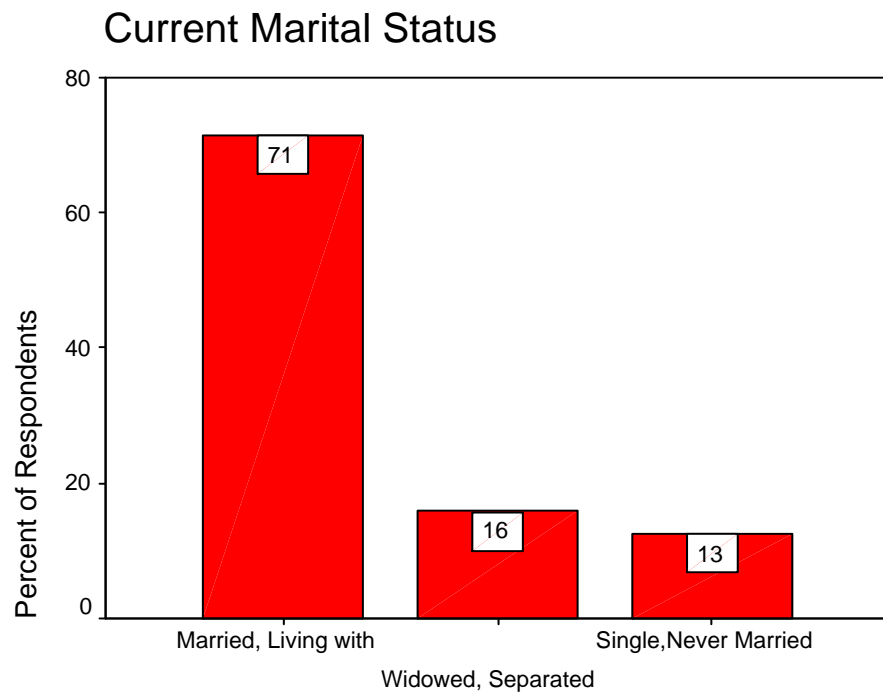
Graph 6: Do Respondents Consider Their Household Incomes Adequate to Cover Their Family's Health Care Needs



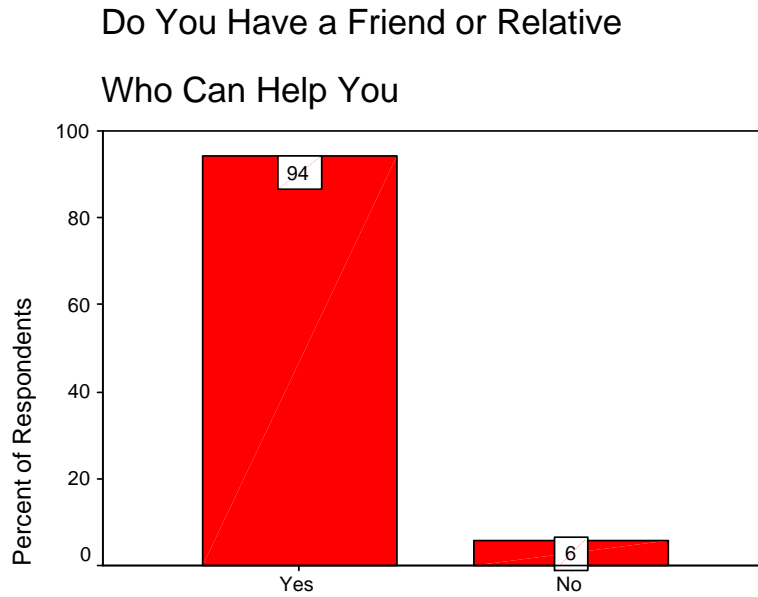
Graph 7: Respondents' Gender



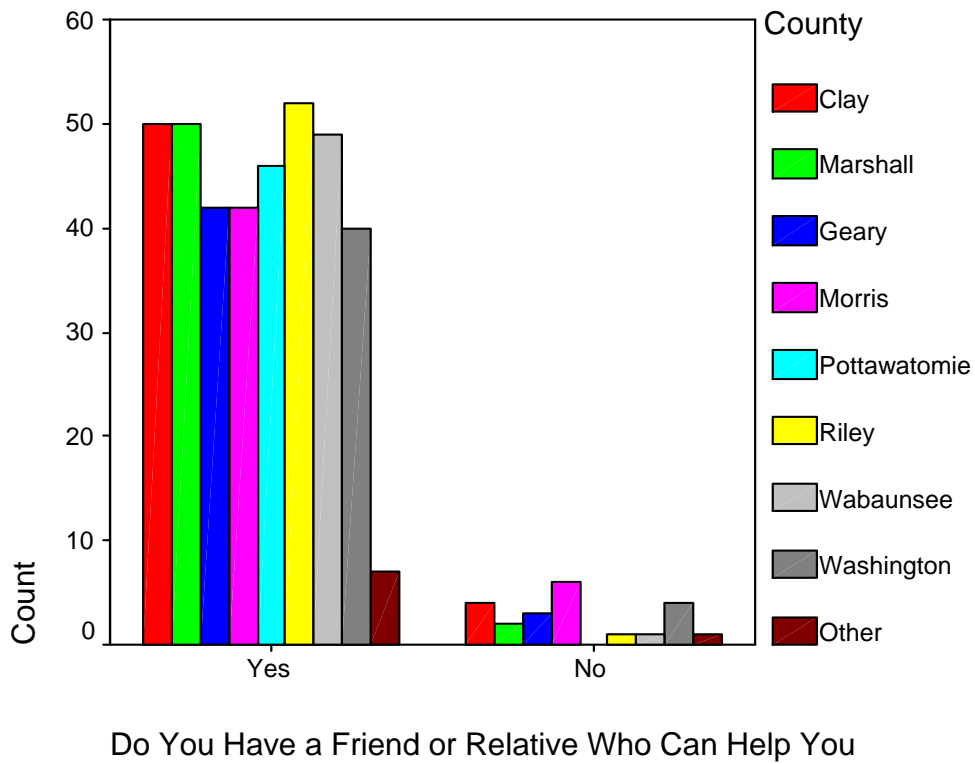
Graph 8: Current Marital Status



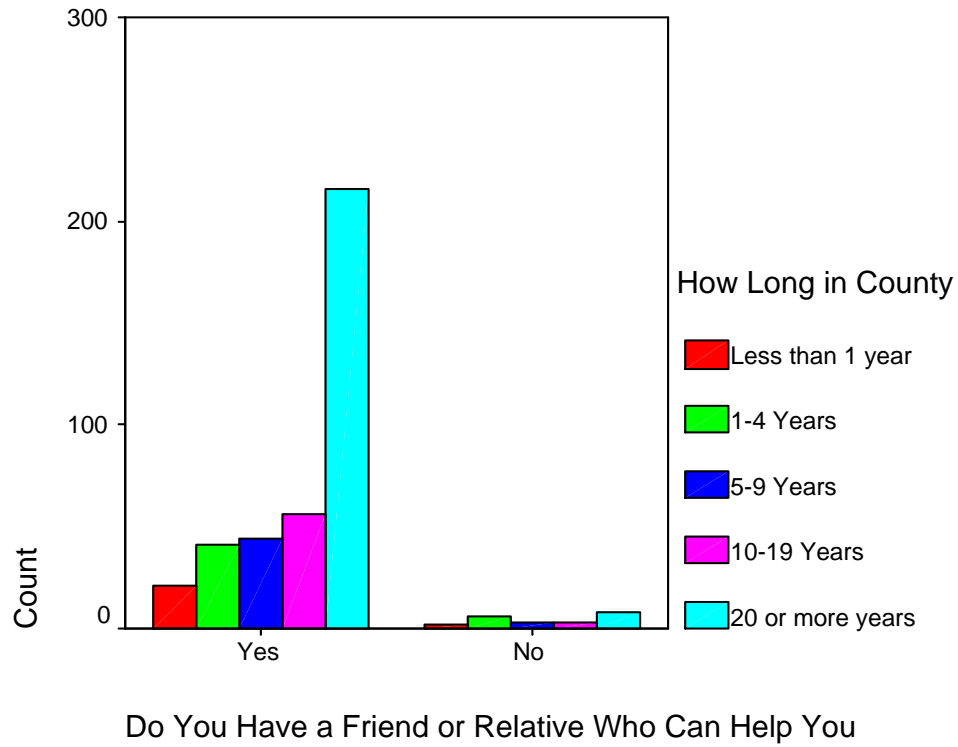
Graph 9: If You Have a Problem or Need Help, Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You Can Rely on to Help, Like for Transportation



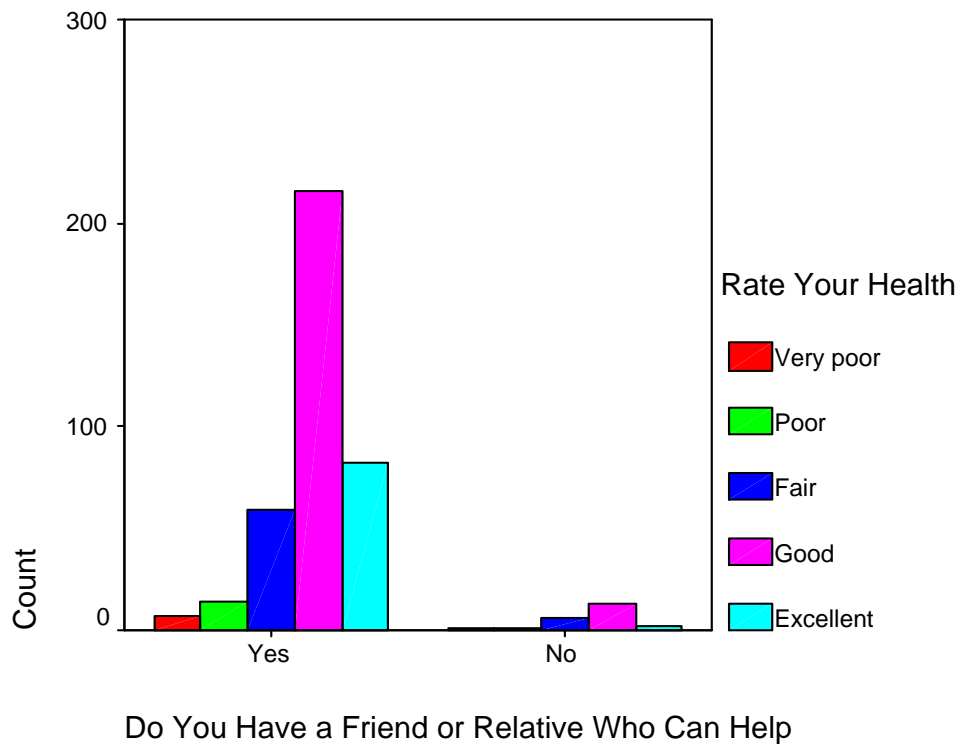
Graph 10: Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You by County



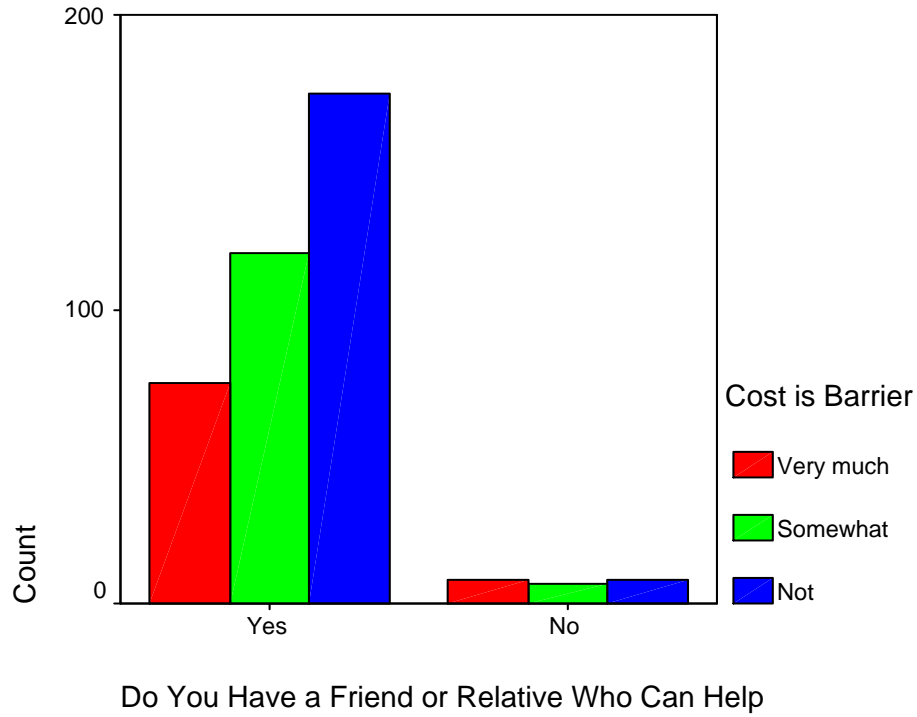
Graph 11: Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You by Years Lived in County



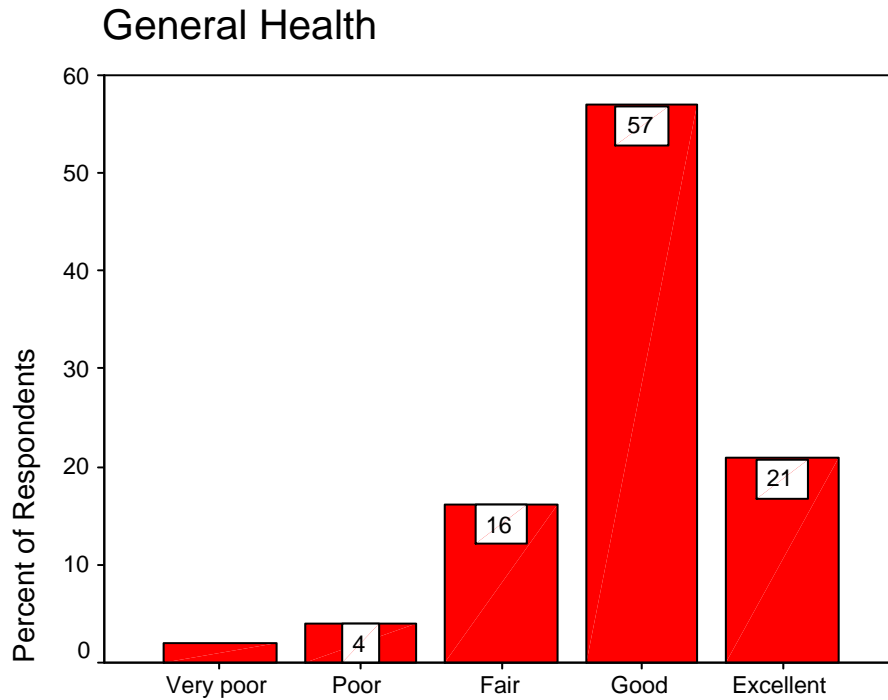
Graph 12: Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You by Health Status



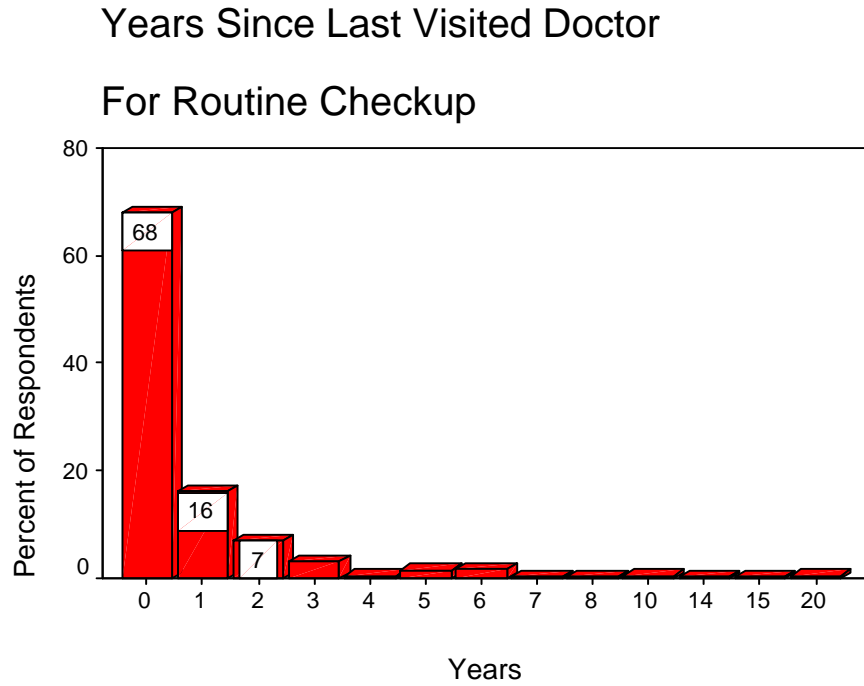
Graph 13: Do You Have a Friend or Relative Who You by “Cost is a Barrier to Seeking Health Services”



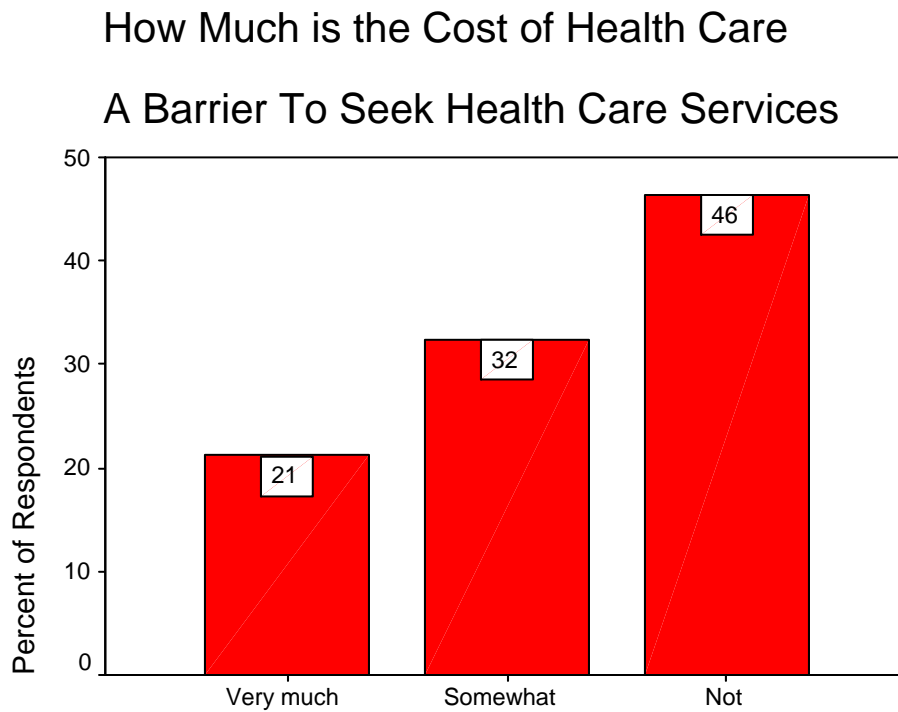
Graph 14: Respondents’ Self-Report General Health



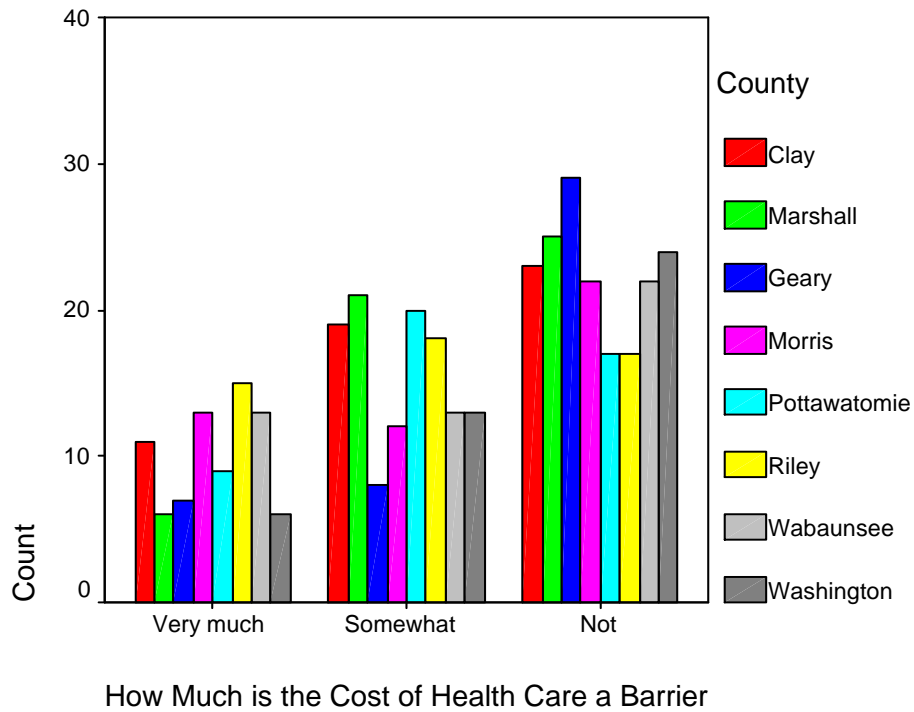
Graph 15: Years Since Last Visited Doctor for Routine Checkup



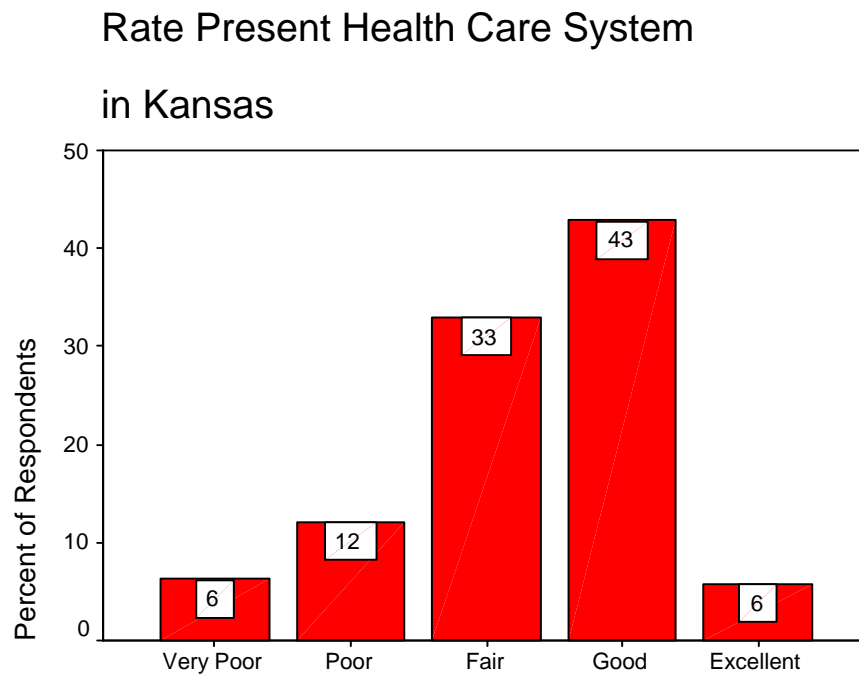
Graph 16: How Much is the Cost of Health Care a Barrier for You and Your Family Members to Seek Services from Local Health Care Facilities



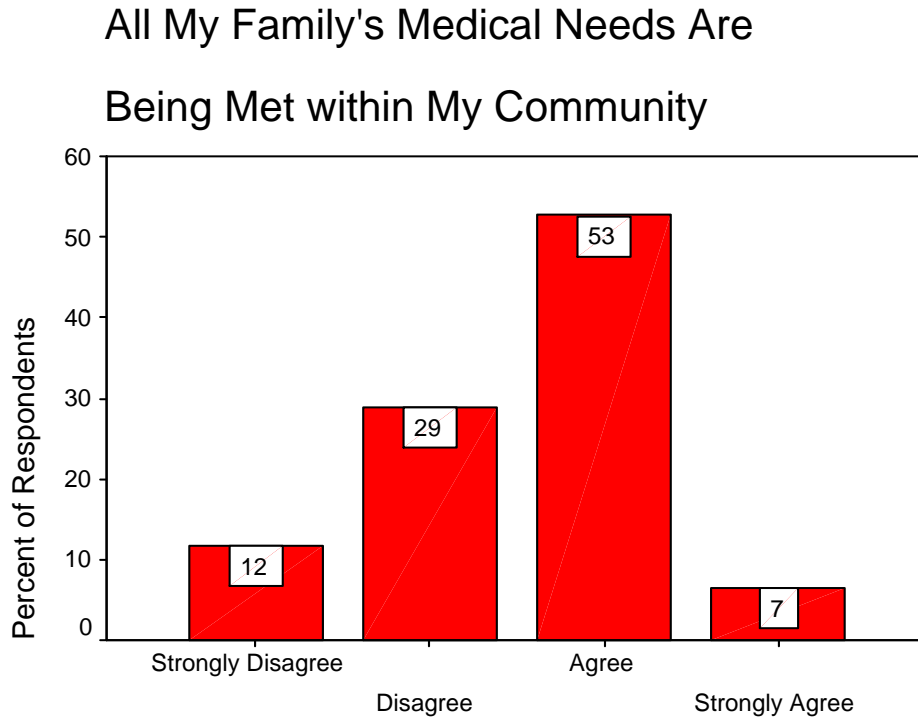
Graph 16 a: How Much is the Cost of Health Care a Barrier by County



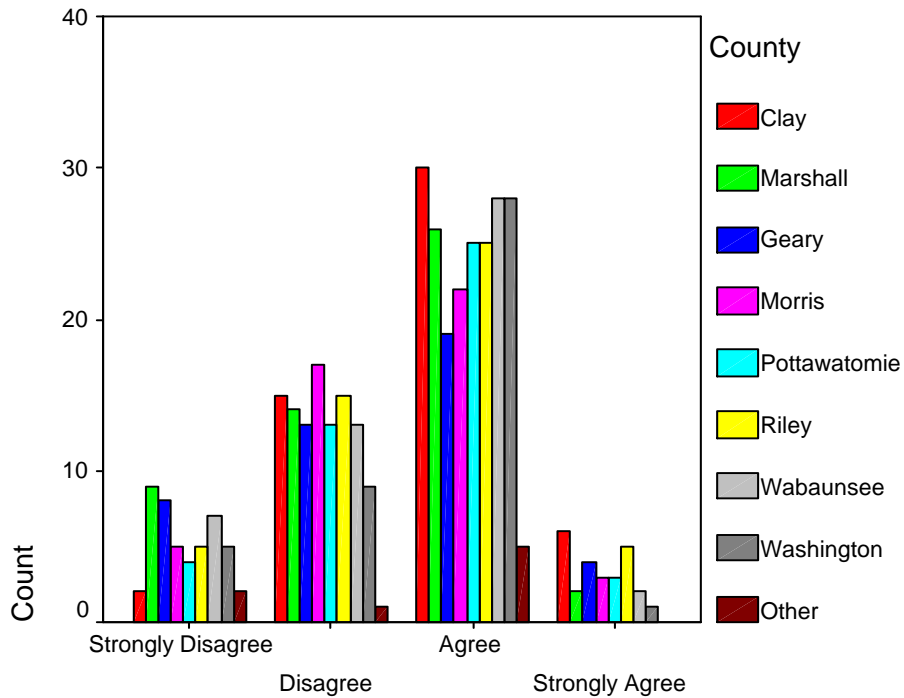
Graph 17: Respondents' Rating of the Current Health Care System in Kansas



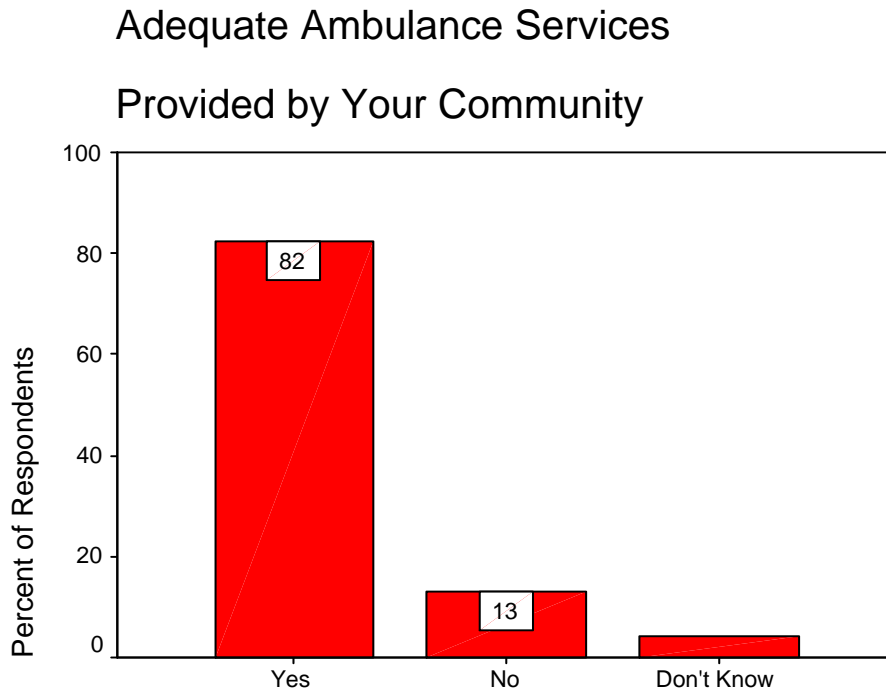
Graph 18: All My Family's Medical Needs Are Being Met within My Community



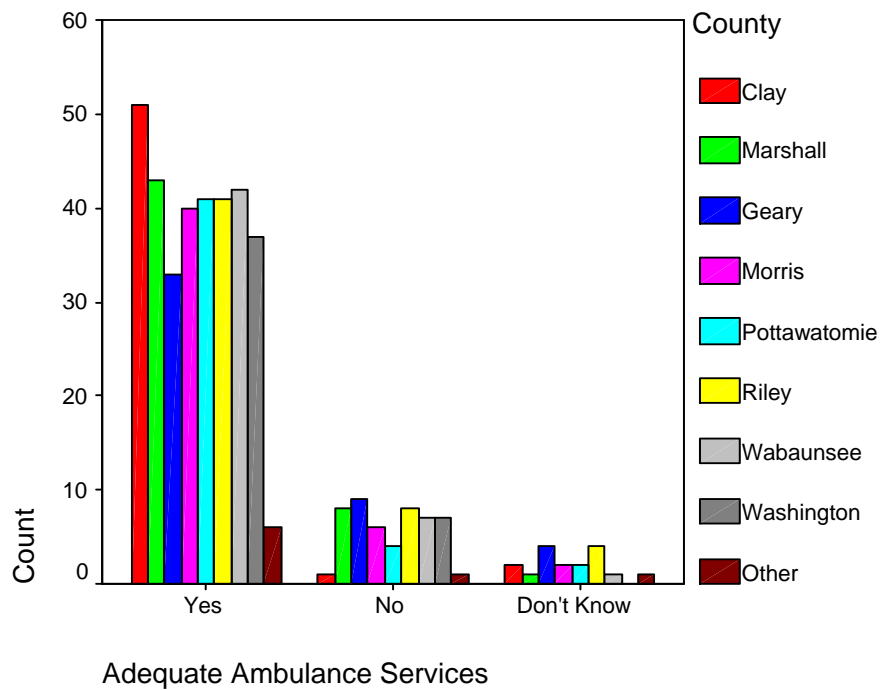
Graph 19: All My Family's Medical Needs Are Being Met within My Community by County



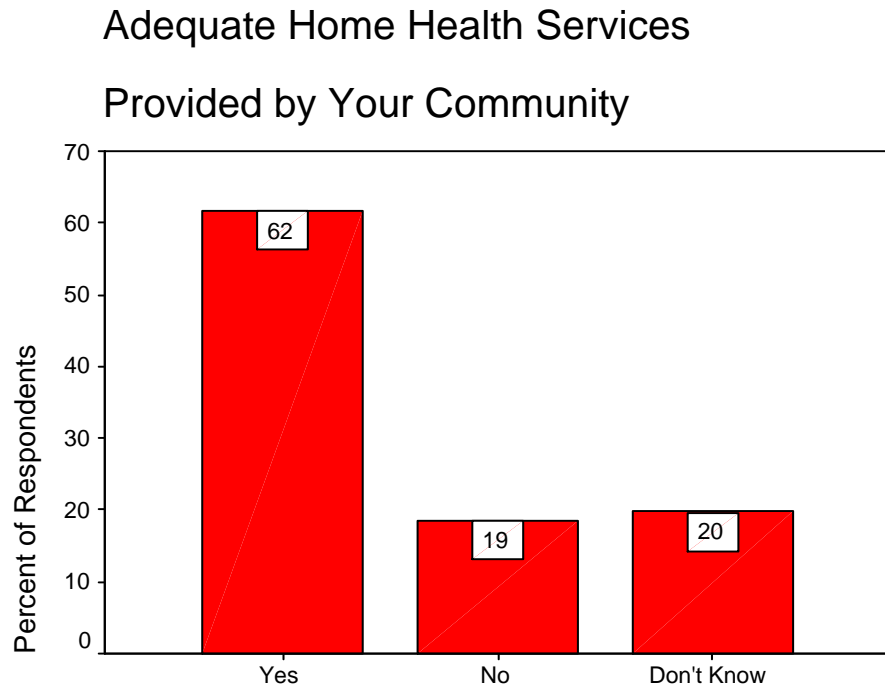
Graph 20: Adequate Ambulance Services



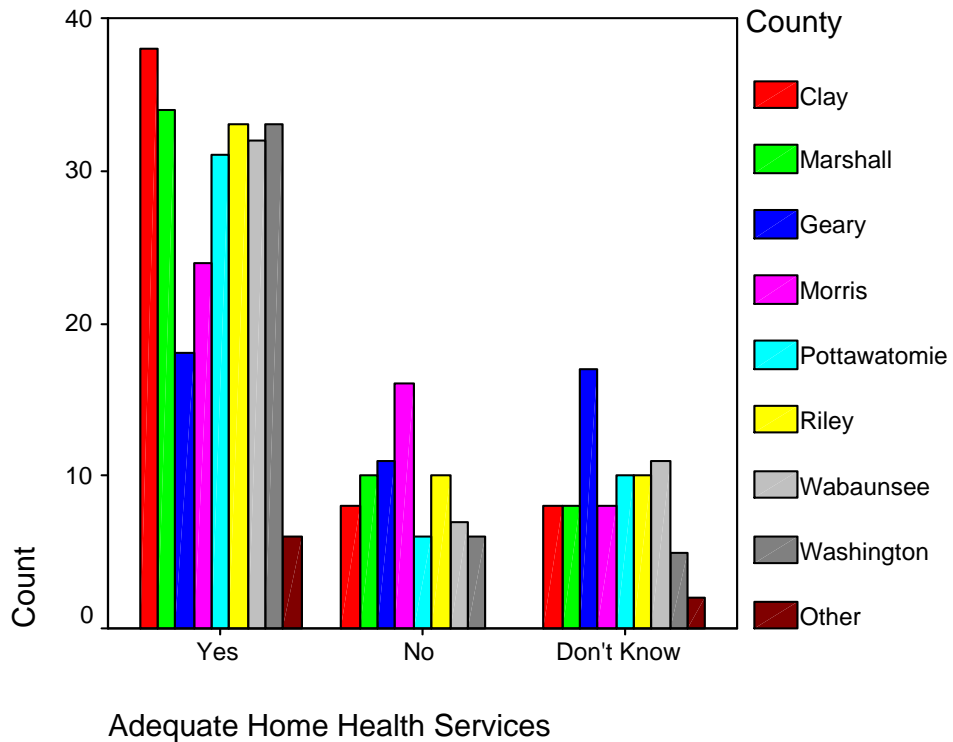
Graph 21: Adequate Ambulance Services by County



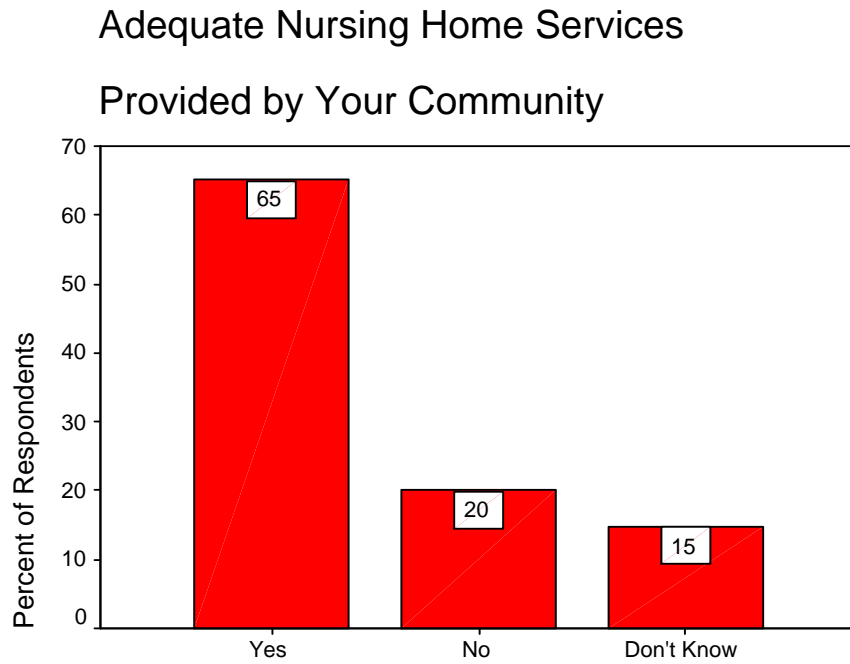
Graph 22: Adequate Home Health Services



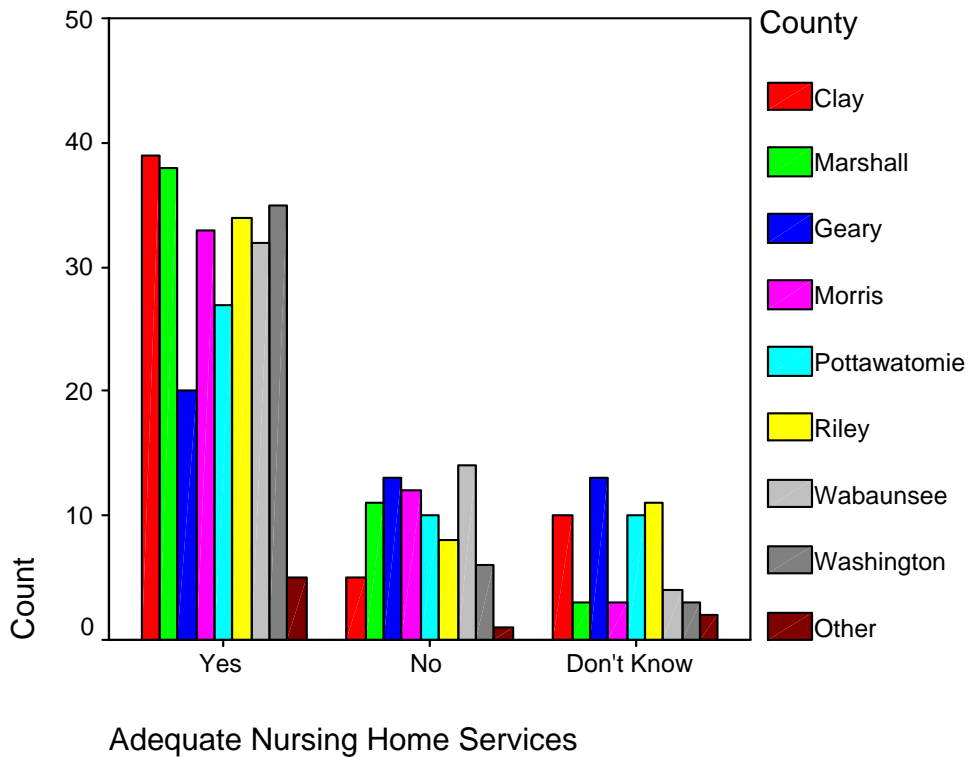
Graph 23: Adequate Home Health Services by County



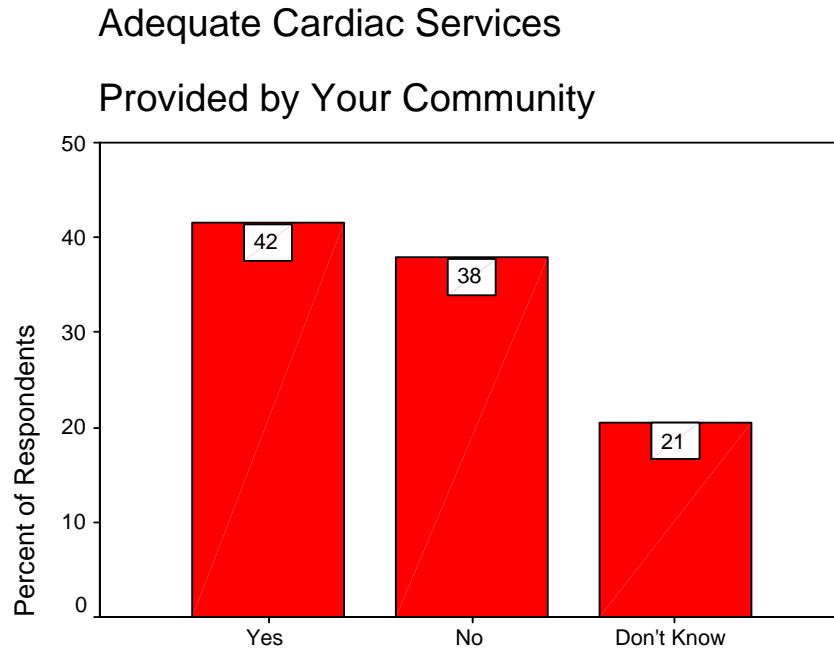
Graph 24: Adequate Nursing Home Services



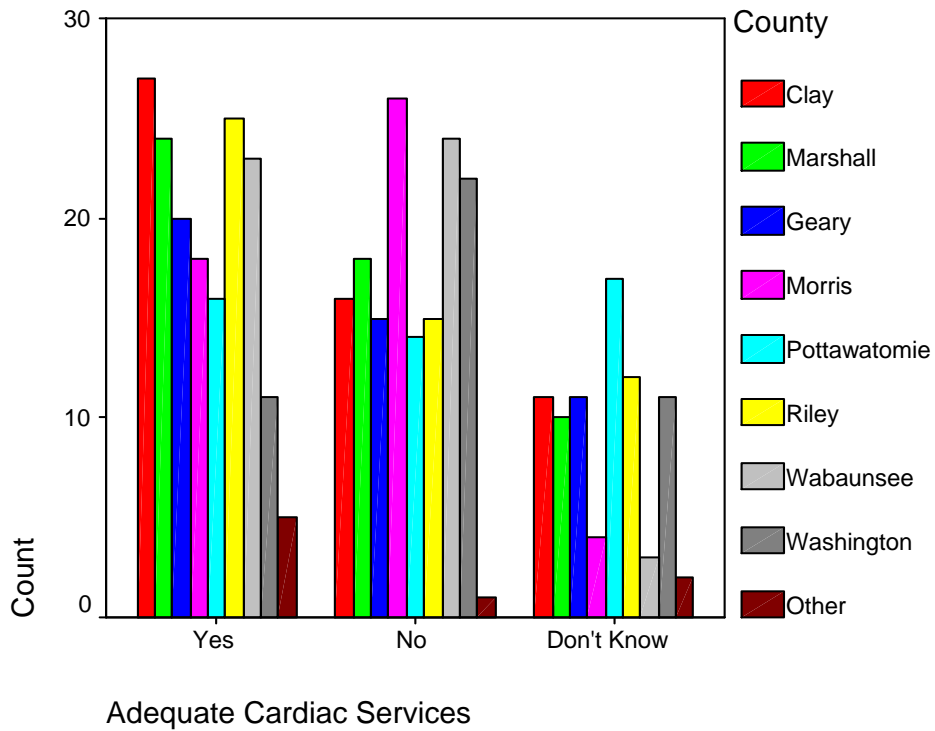
Graph 25: Adequate Nursing Home Services by County



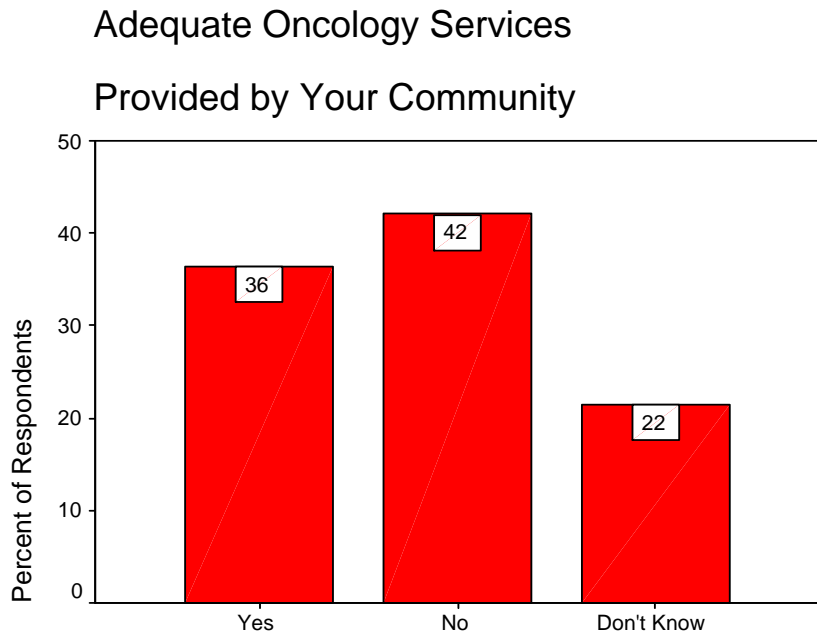
Graph 26: Adequate Cardiac Services



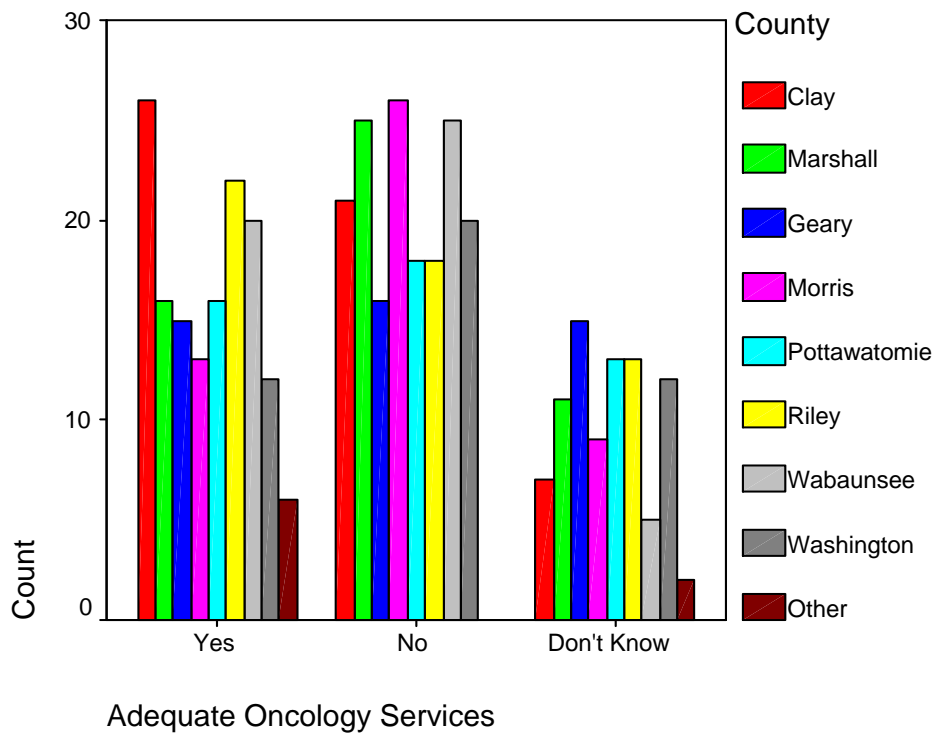
Graph 27: Adequate Cardiac Services by County



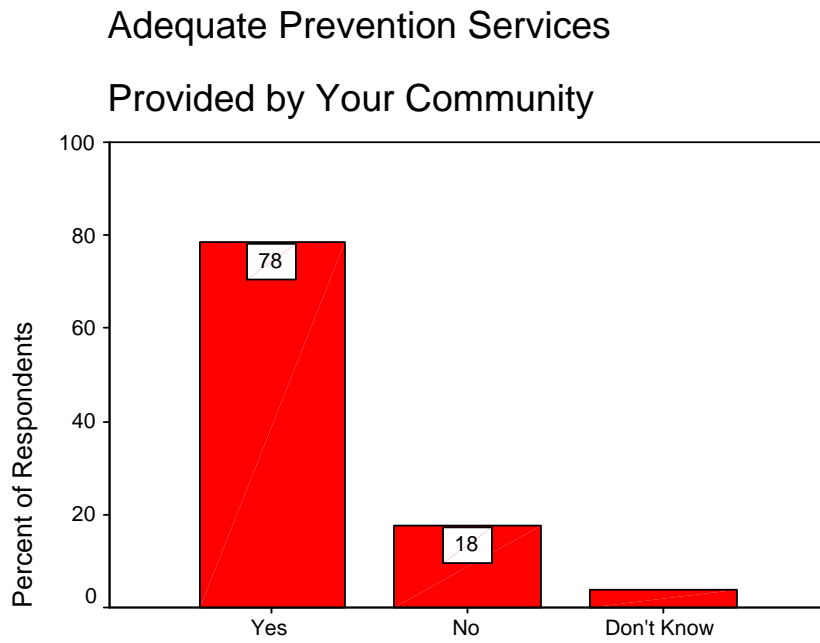
Graph 28: Adequate Oncology Services



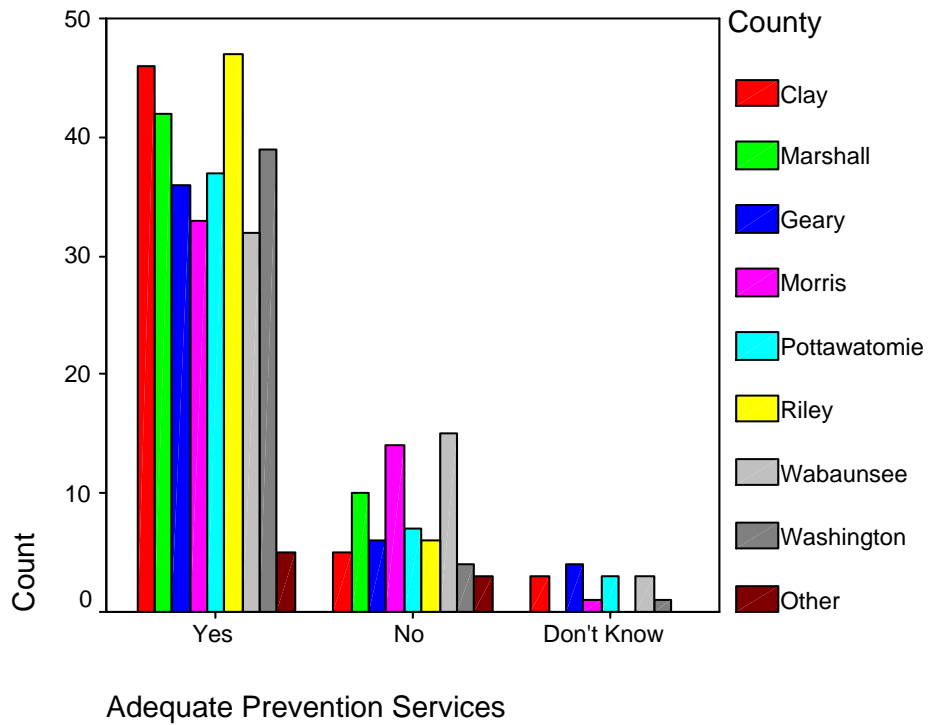
Graph 29: Adequate Oncology Services by County



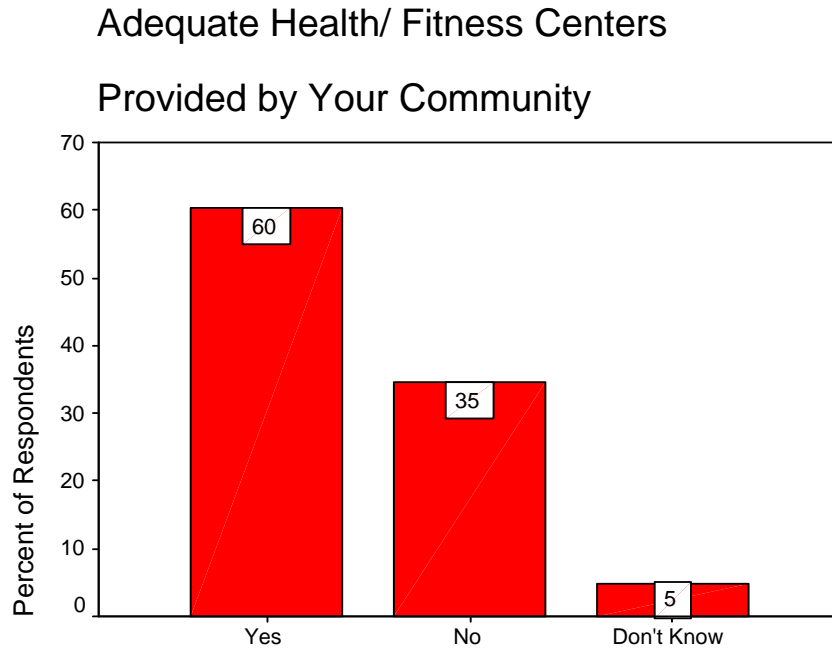
Graph 30: Adequate Prevention Services



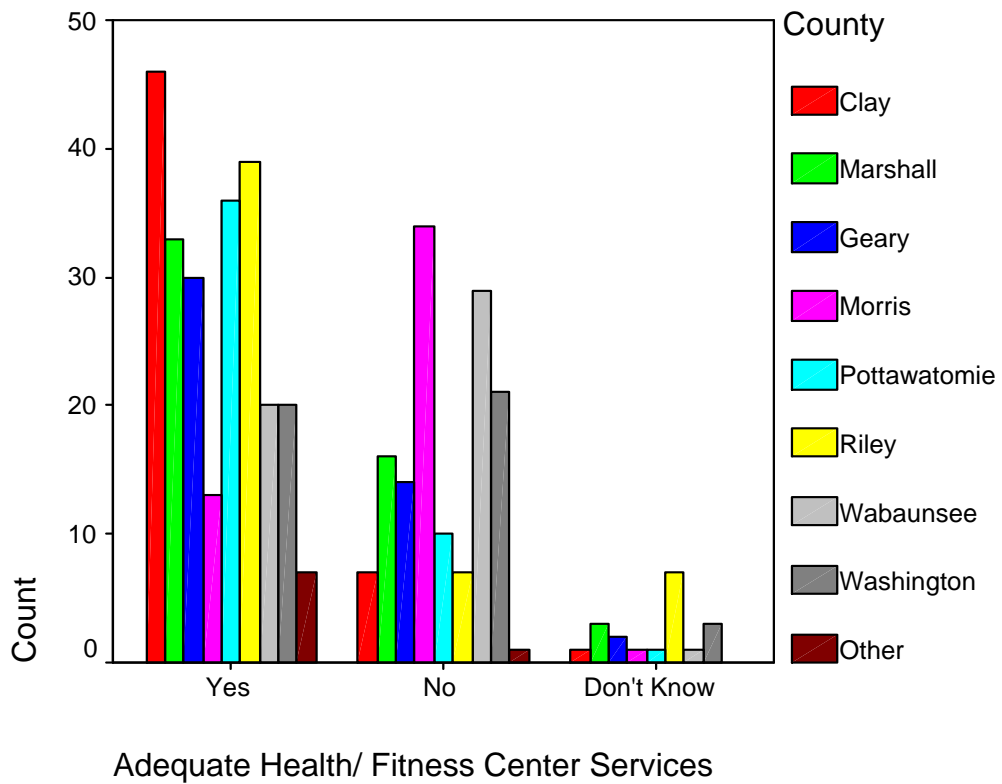
Graph 31: Adequate Prevention Services by County



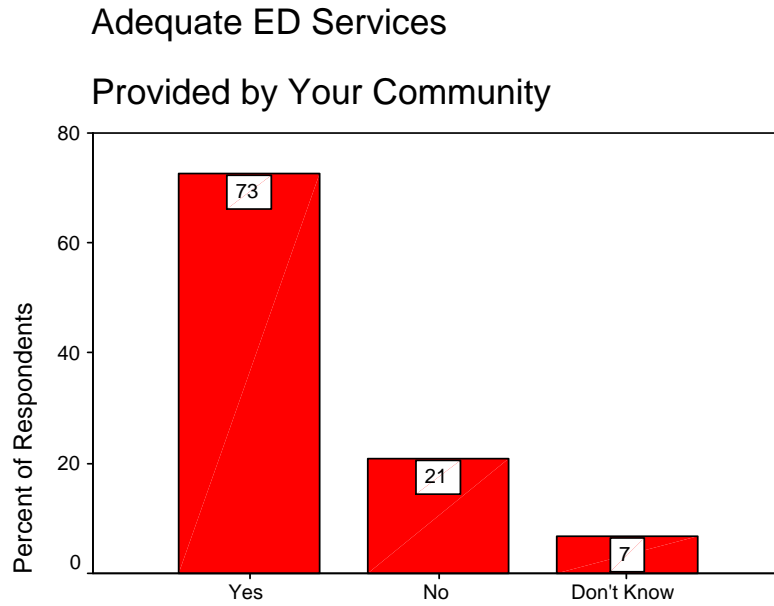
Graph 32: Adequate Health/Fitness Centers



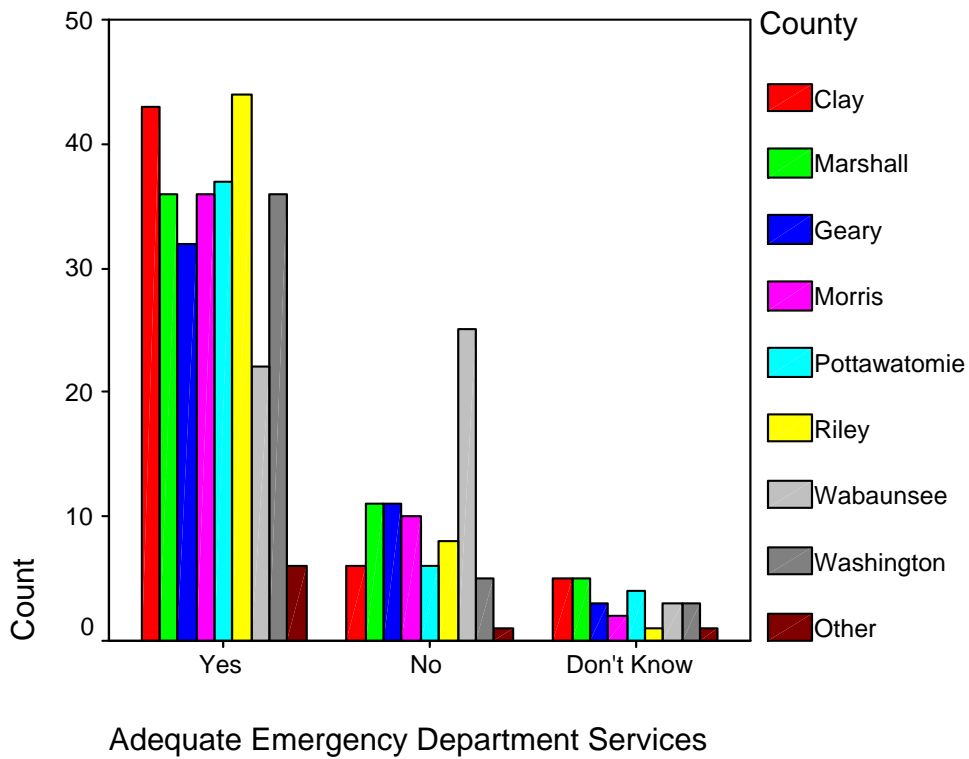
Graph 33: Adequate Health/Fitness Centers by County



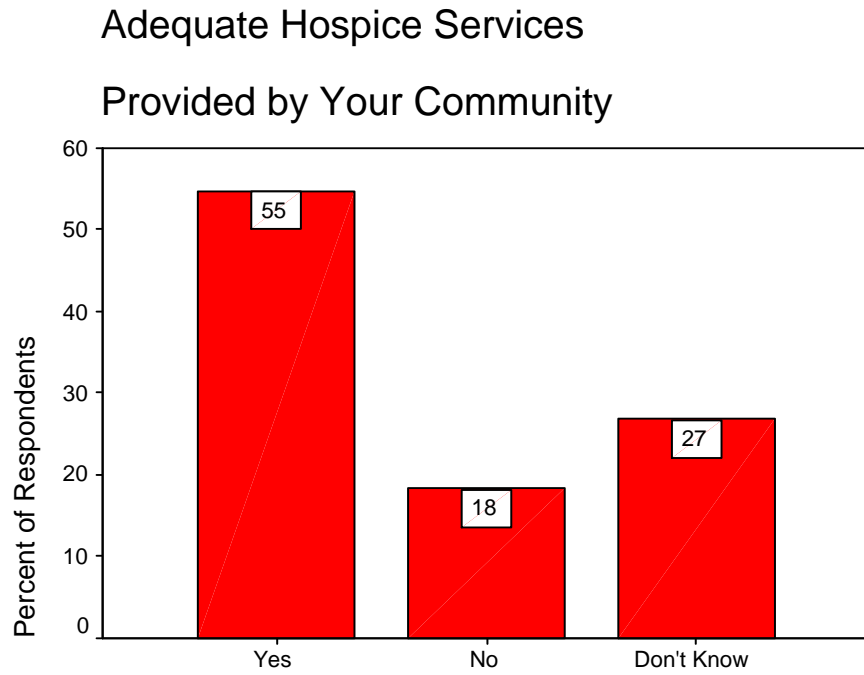
Graph 36: Adequate Emergency Department Services



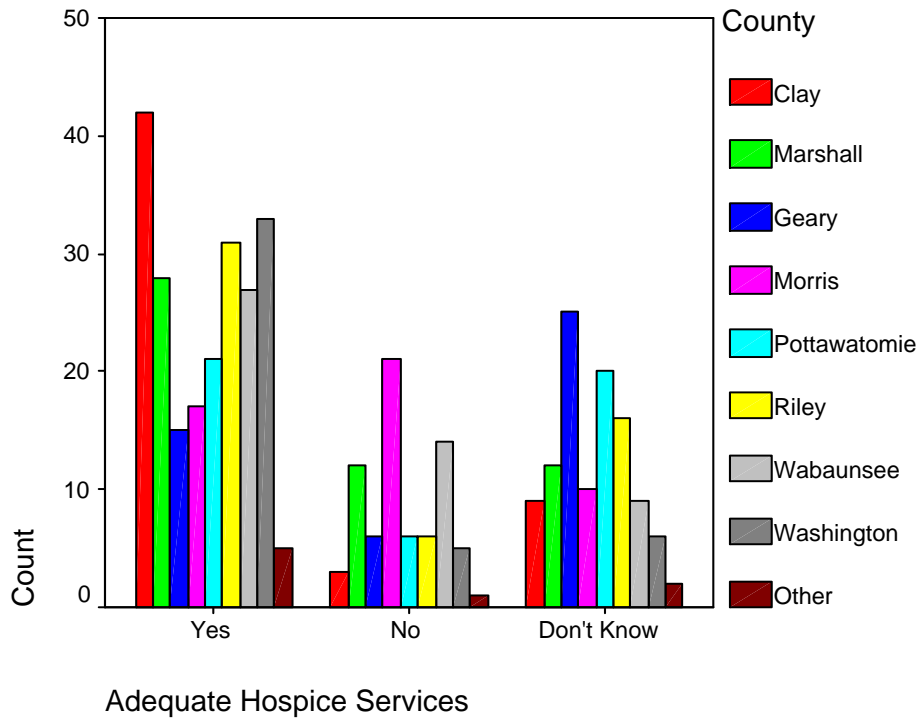
Graph 37: Adequate Emergency Department Services by County



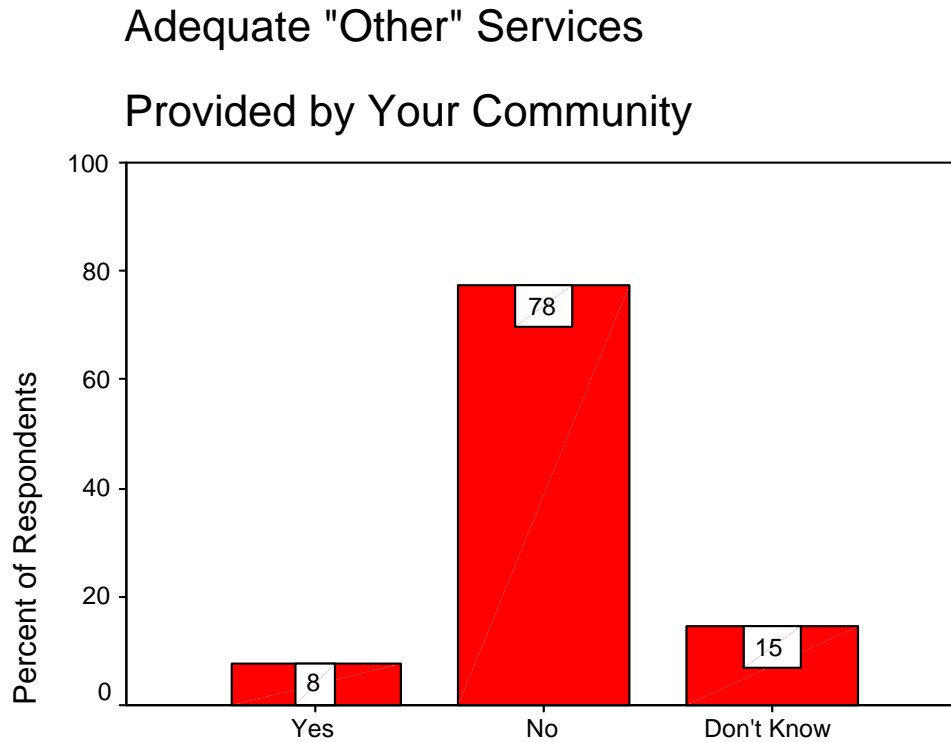
Graph 38: Adequate Hospice Services



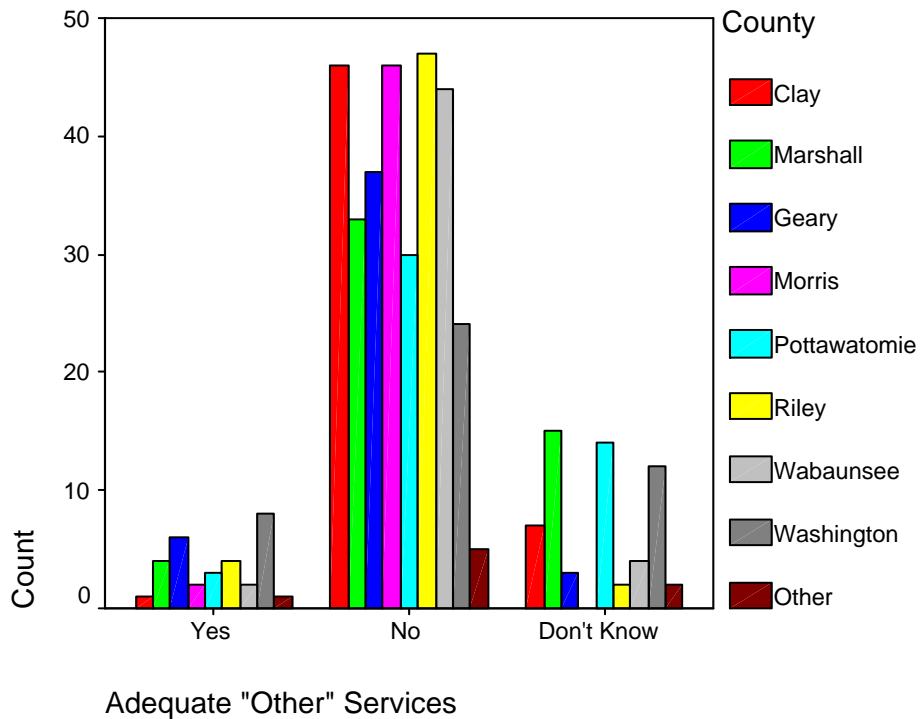
Graph 39: Adequate Hospice Services by County



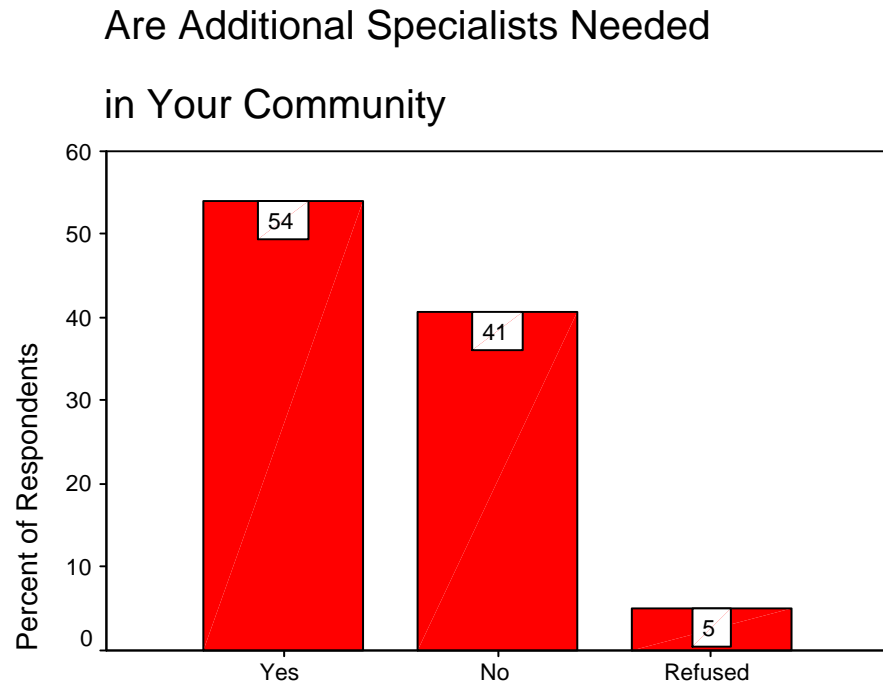
Graph 40: Adequate "Other" Services



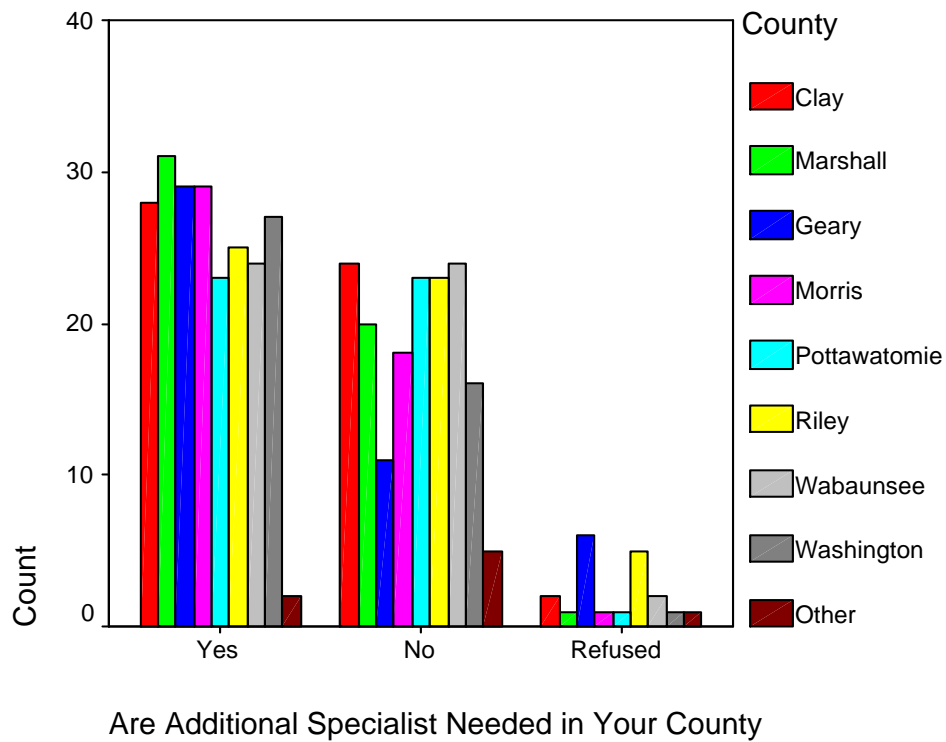
Graph 41: Adequate "Other" Services by County



Graph 42: Are Additional Specialists Needed in Your Community

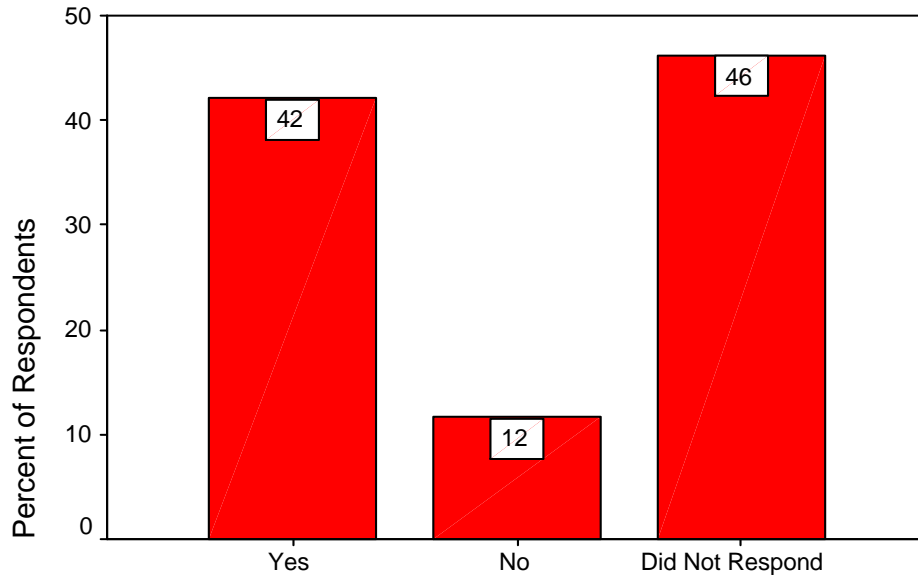


Graph 43: Are Additional Specialists Needed in Your Community by County

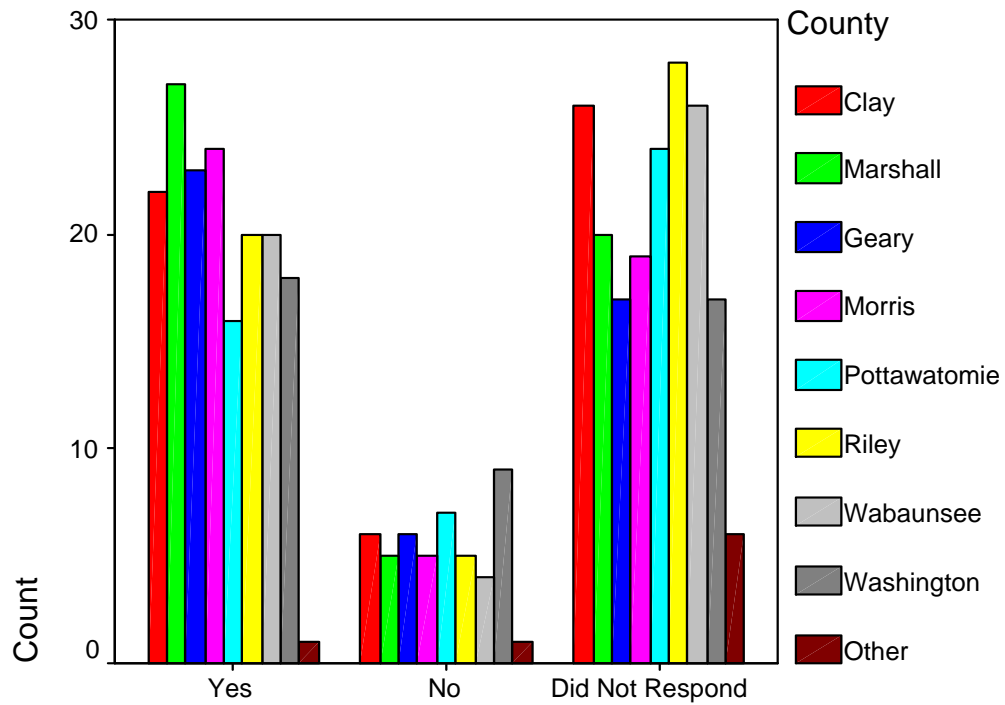


Graph 44: Are Cardiovascular Specialists Needed in Your Community

Are Cardiovascular Specialists Needed in Your Community



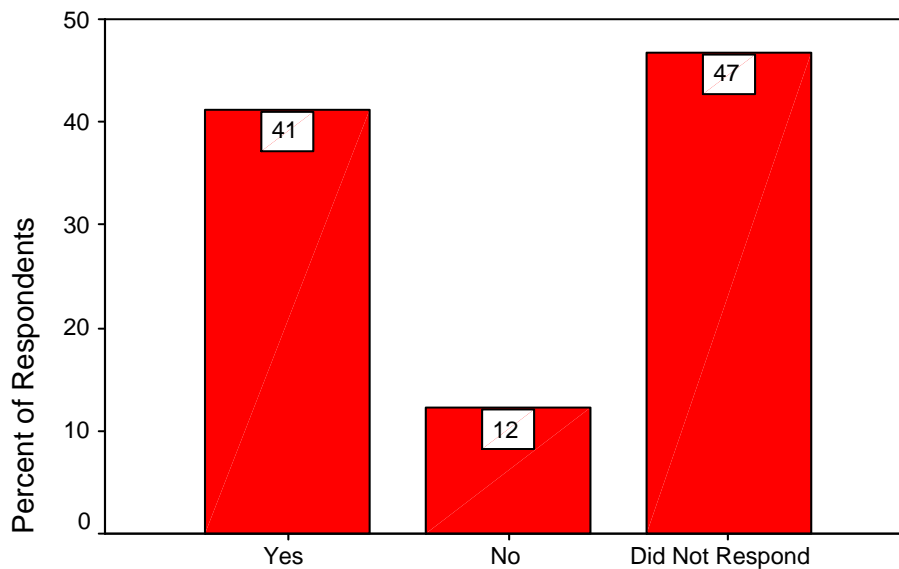
Graph 45: Are Cardiovascular Specialists Needed in Your Community by County



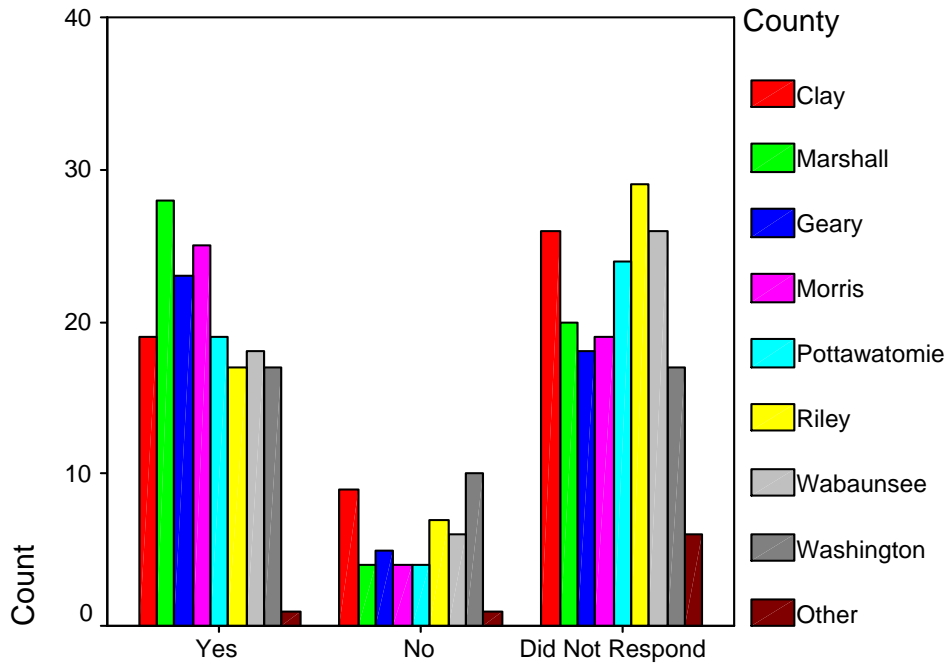
Are Cardiovascular Specialists Needed in Your County

Graph 46: Are Oncology Specialists Needed in Your Community

Are Oncology Specialists Needed
in Your Community



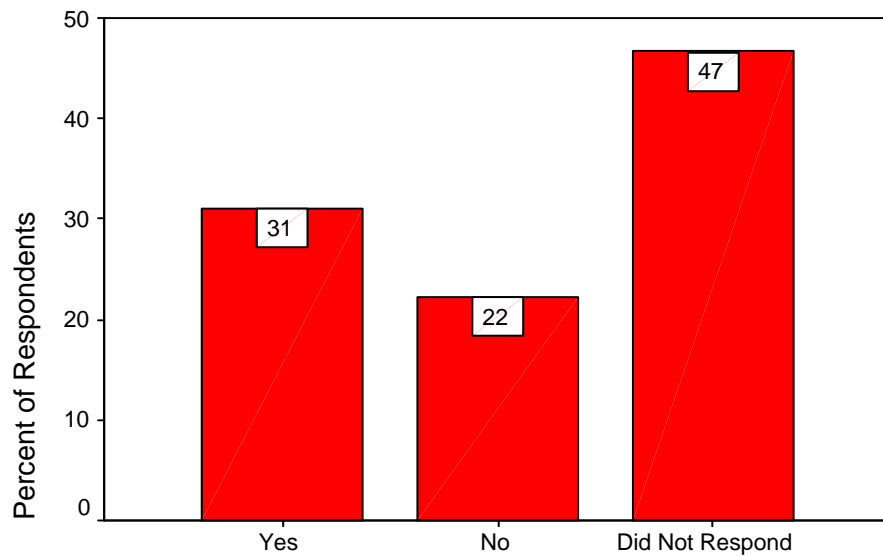
Graph 47: Are Oncology Specialists Needed in Your Community by County



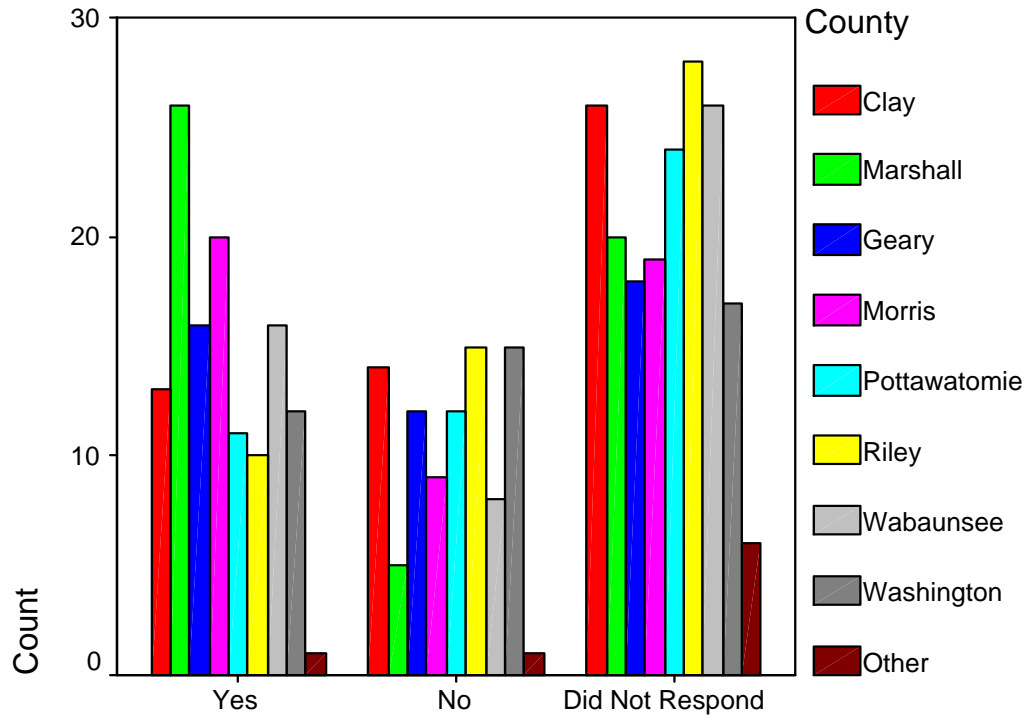
Are Oncology Specialists Needed in Your Community

Graph 48: Are Orthopedic Specialists Needed in Your Community

Are Orthopedic Specialists Needed
in Your Community

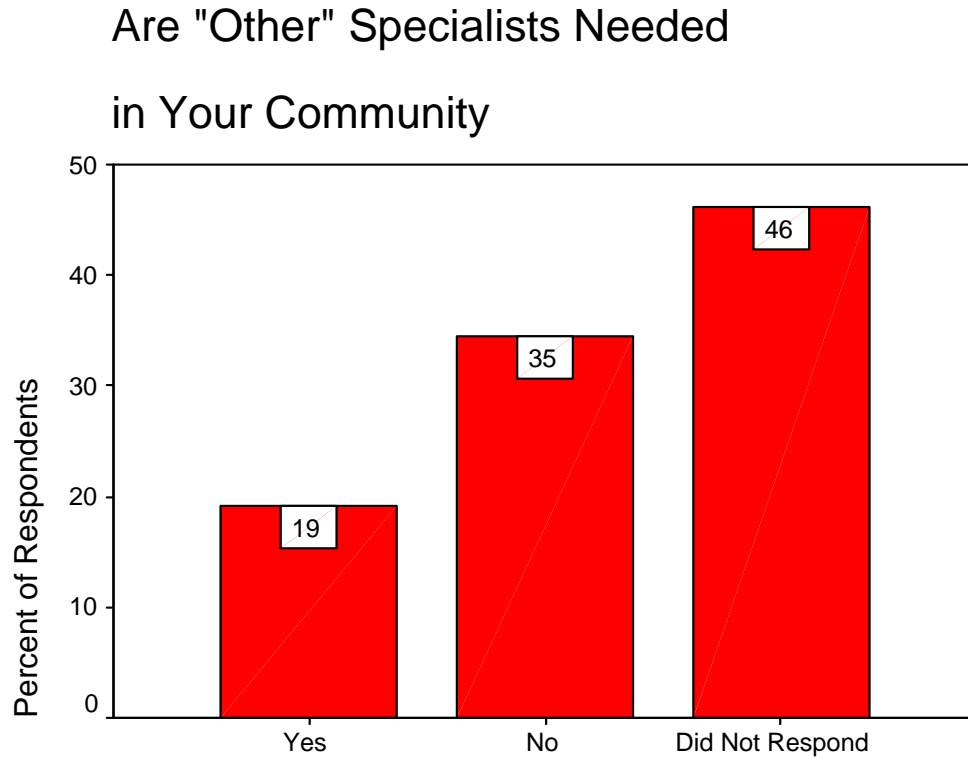


Graph 49: Are Orthopedic Specialists Needed in Your Community by County

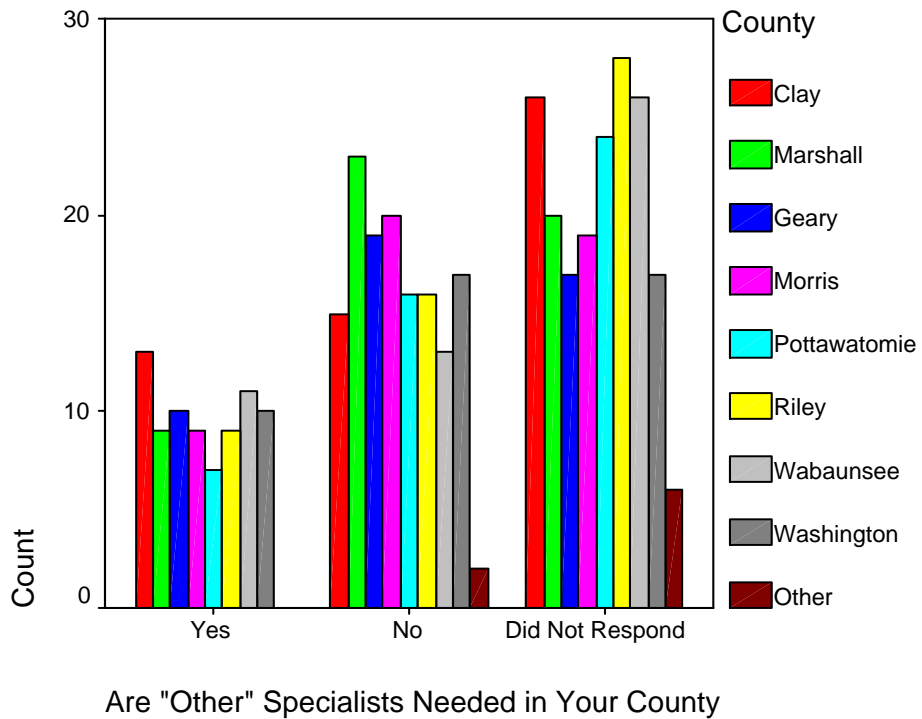


Are Orthopedic Specialists Needed in Your County

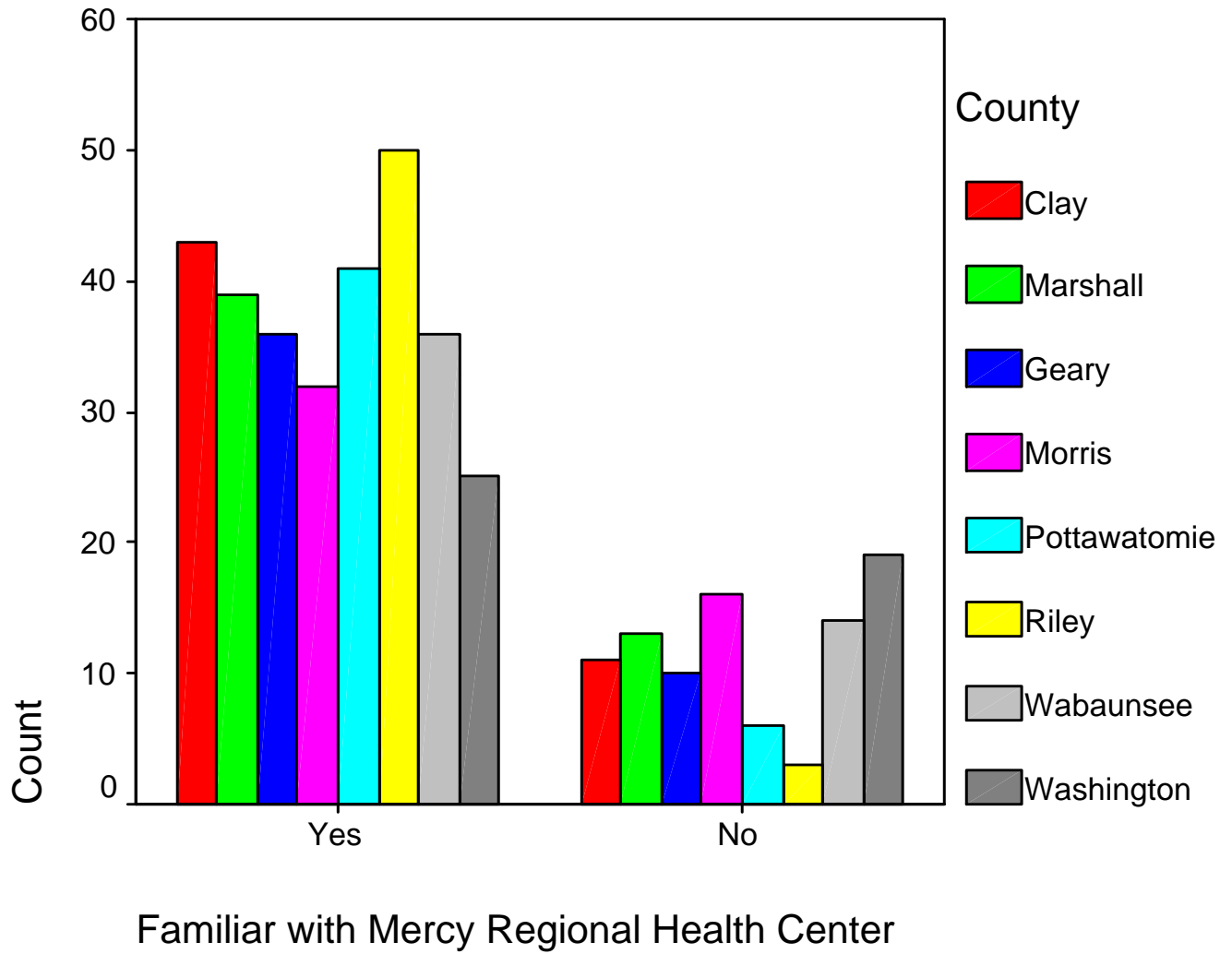
Graph 50: Are Other Specialists Needed in Your Community



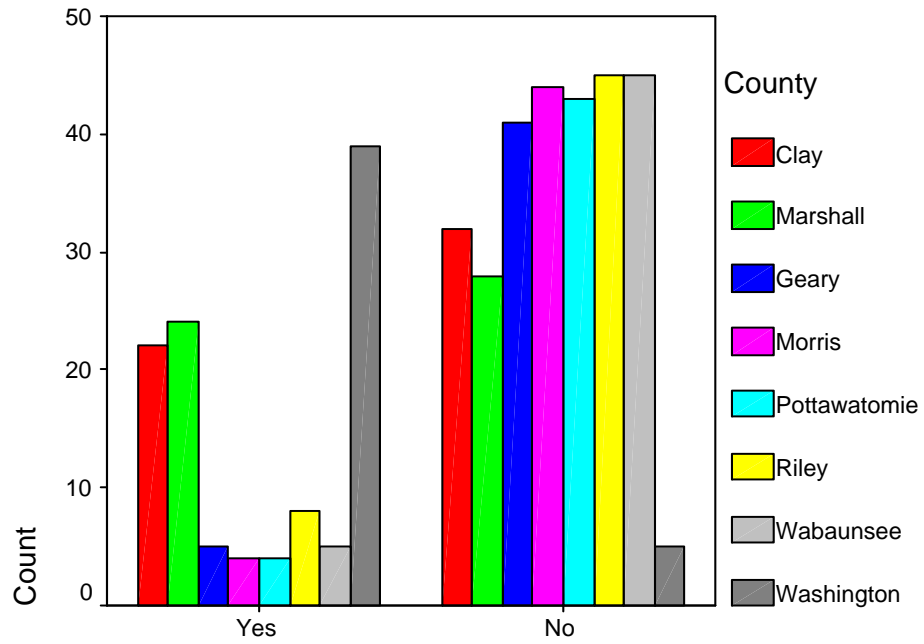
Graph 51: Are Other Specialists Needed in Your Community by County



Graph 52: Familiar with Mercy Regional Health Center

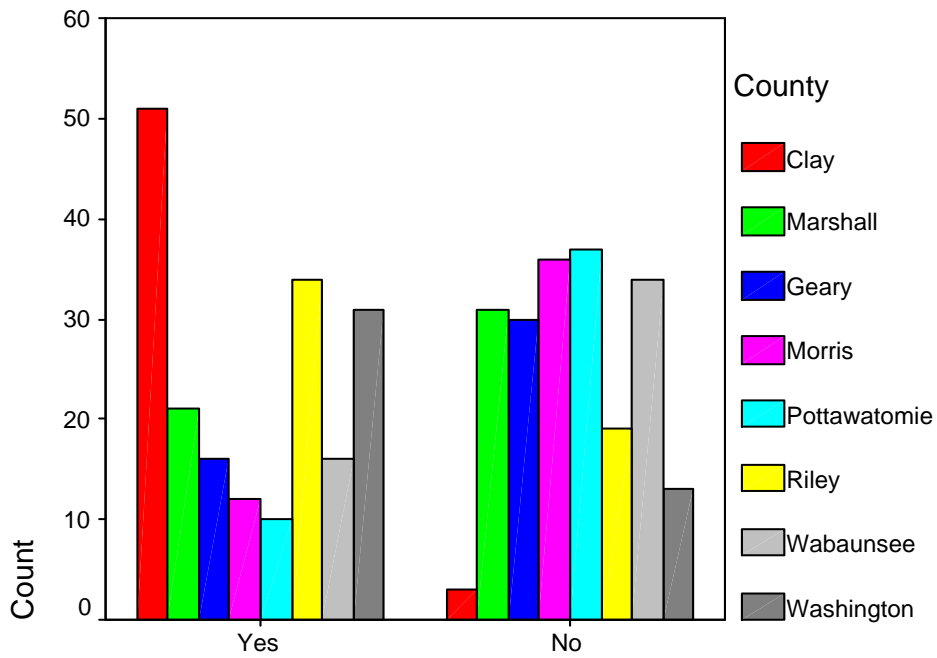


Graph 53: Familiar with Washington County Hospital



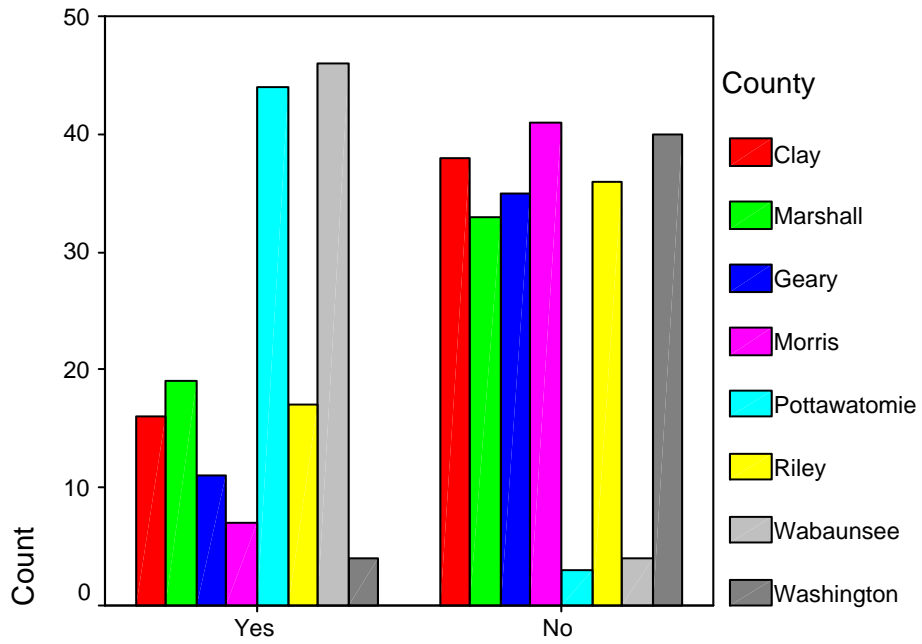
Familiar with Washington County Hospital

Graph 54: Familiar with Clay Center Hospital



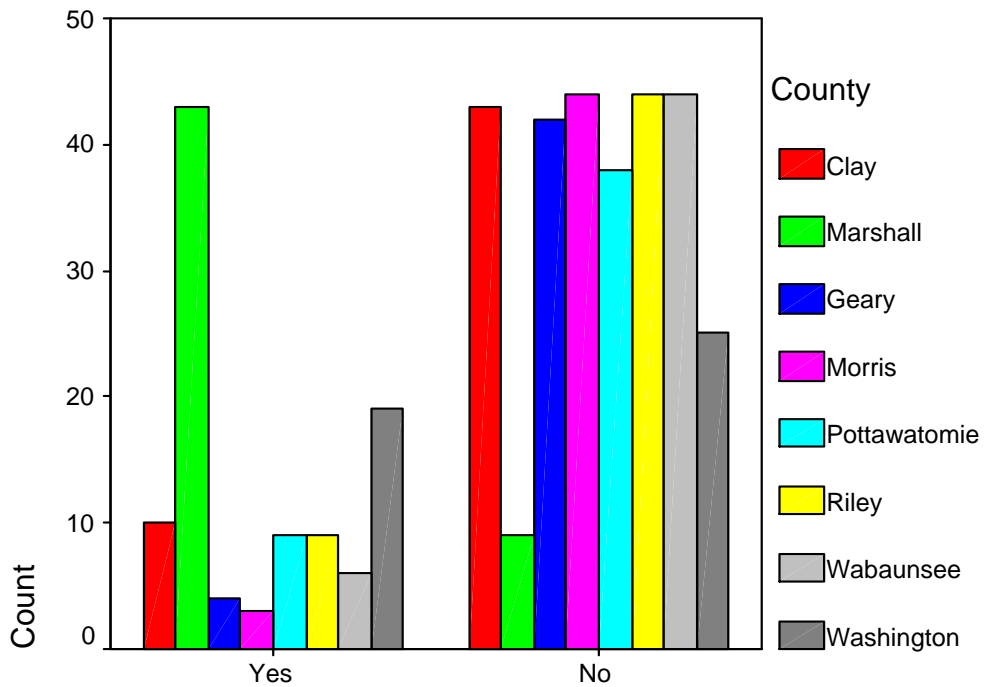
Familiar with Clay Center

Graph 55: Familiar with Wamego City Hospital



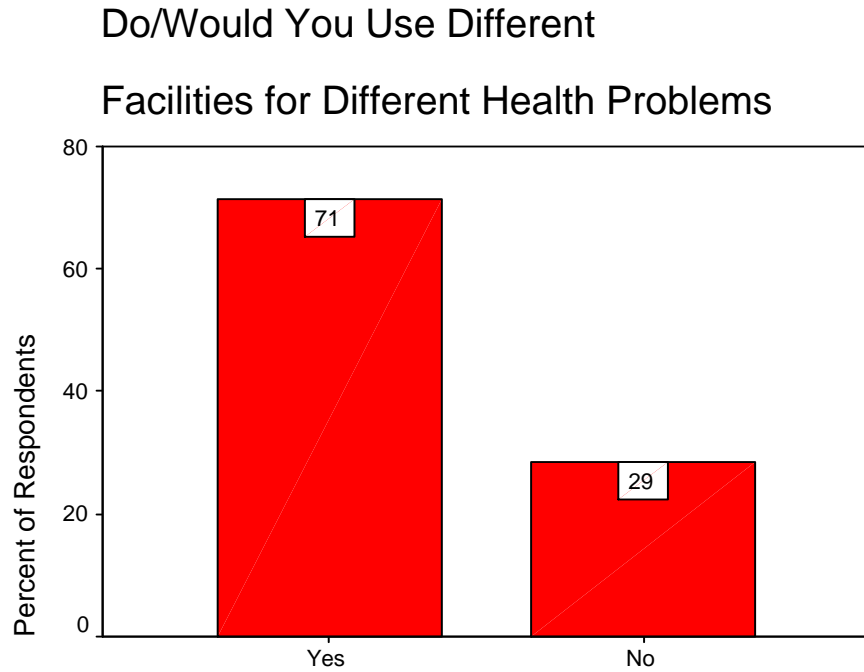
Familiar with Wamego City Hospital

Graph 56: Familiar with Community Memorial Health Center

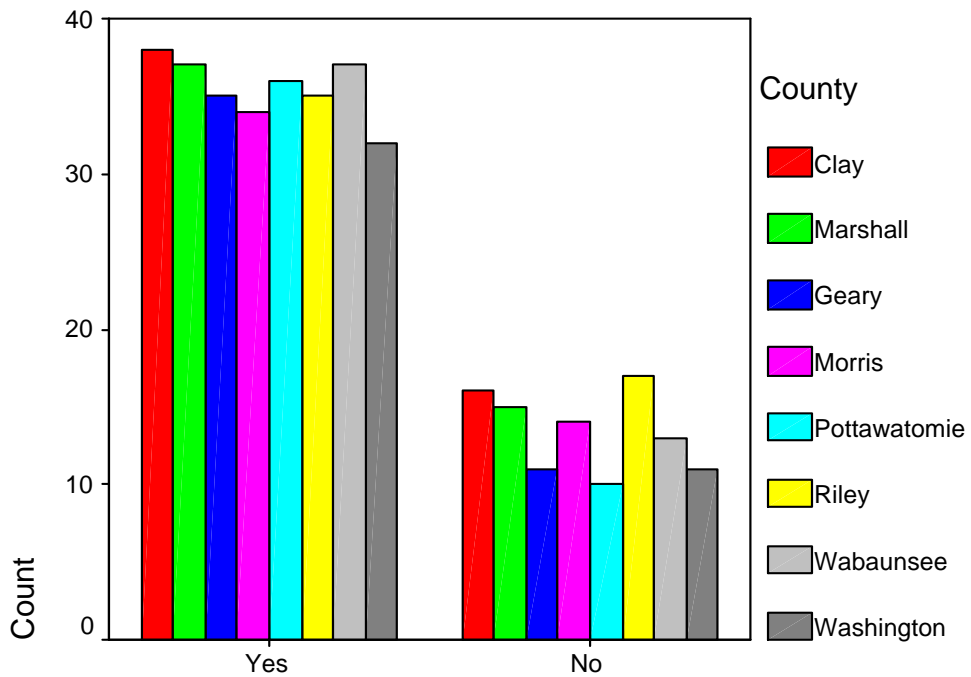


Familiar with Community Memorial Health Center

Graph 57: Do/Would You Use Different Facilities for Different Health Problems

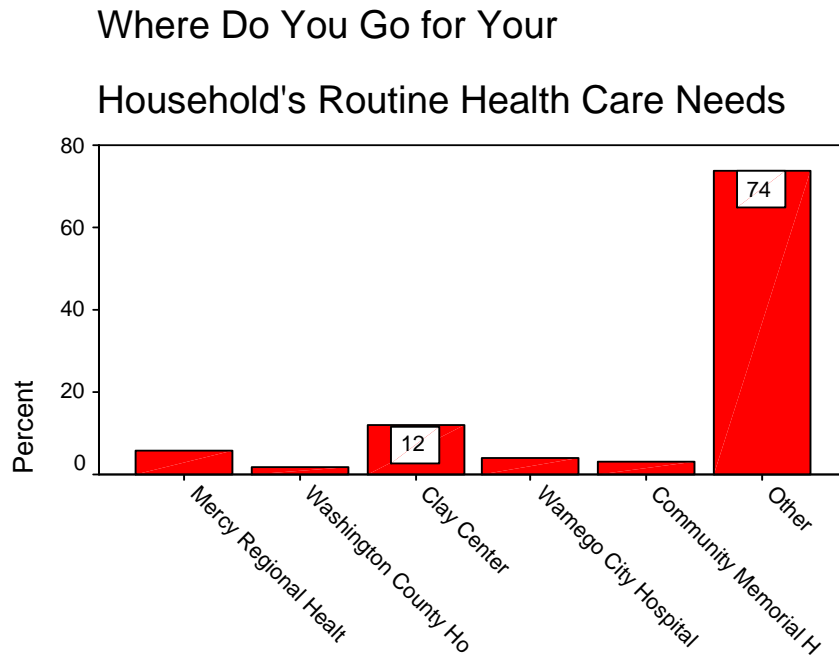


Graph 58: Do/Would You Use Different Facilities for Different Health Problems by County

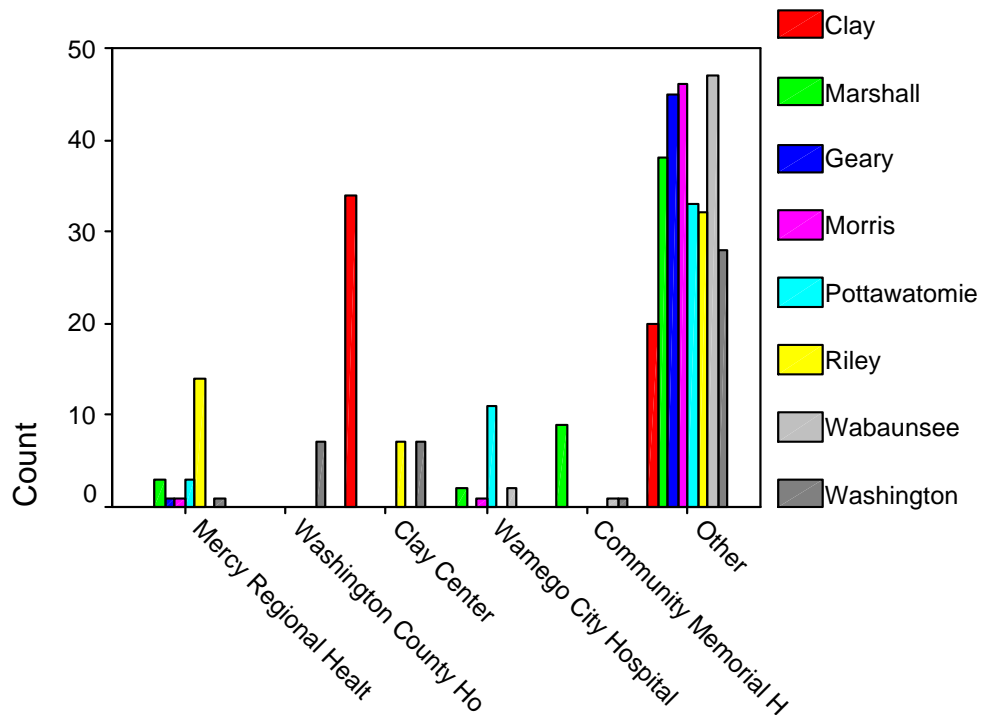


Use Different Facilities for Different Health Problems

Graph 59: Where Do You Go for Your Household’s Routine Health Care Needs

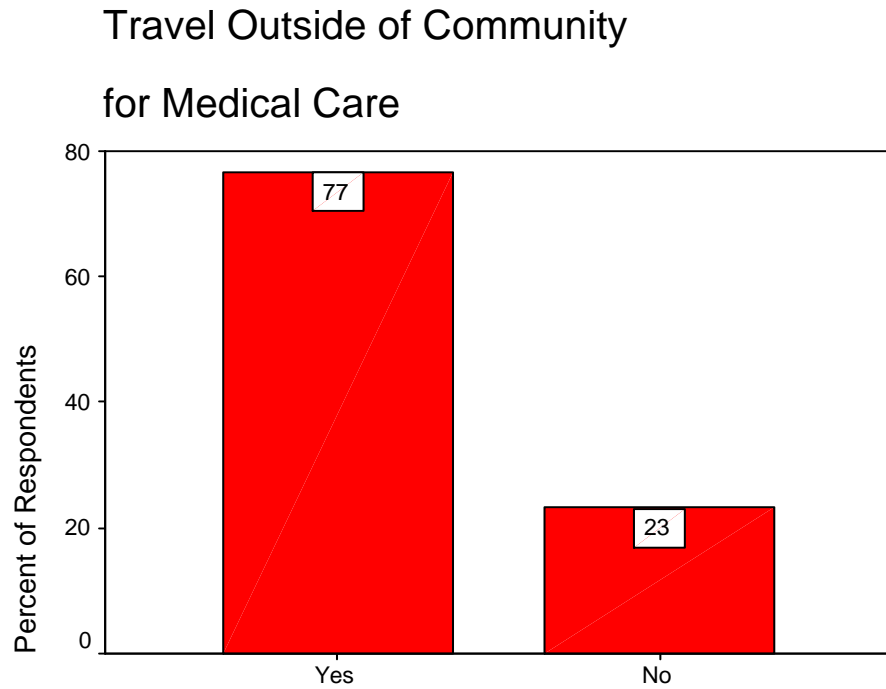


Graph 60: Where Do You Go for Your Household’s Routine Health Care Needs by County

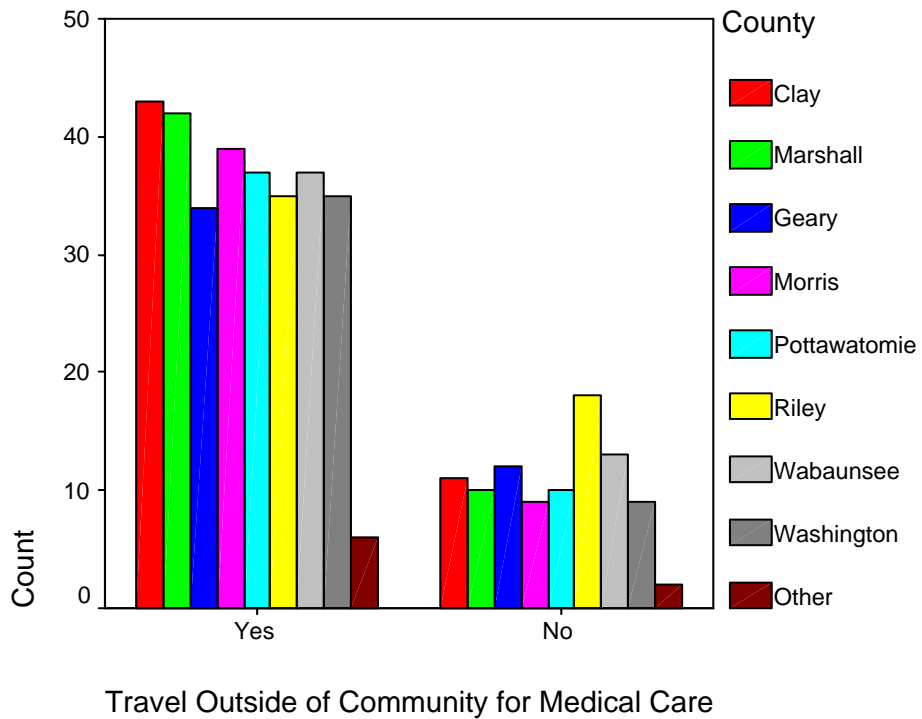


Where Go for Household's Routine Health Care

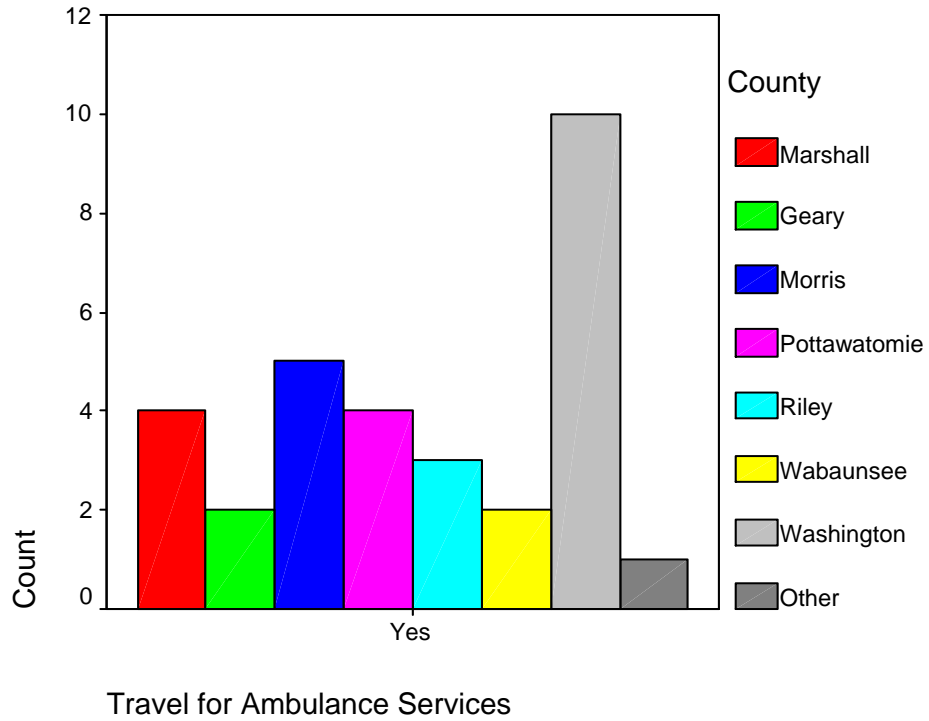
Graph 61: Travel Outside Community to Receive Medical Services



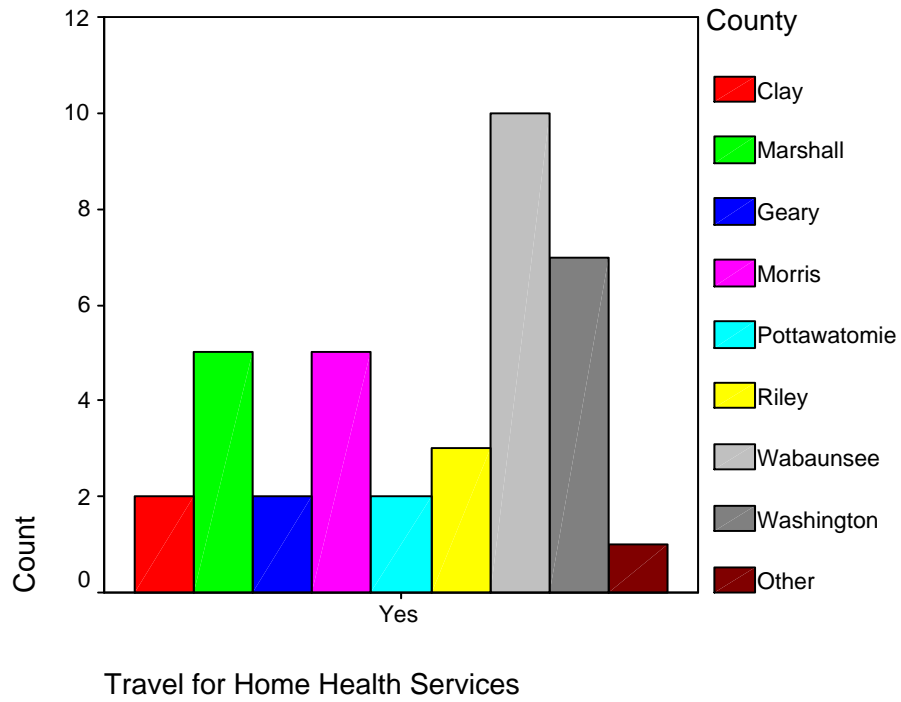
Graph 62: Travel Outside Community to Receive Medical Services by County



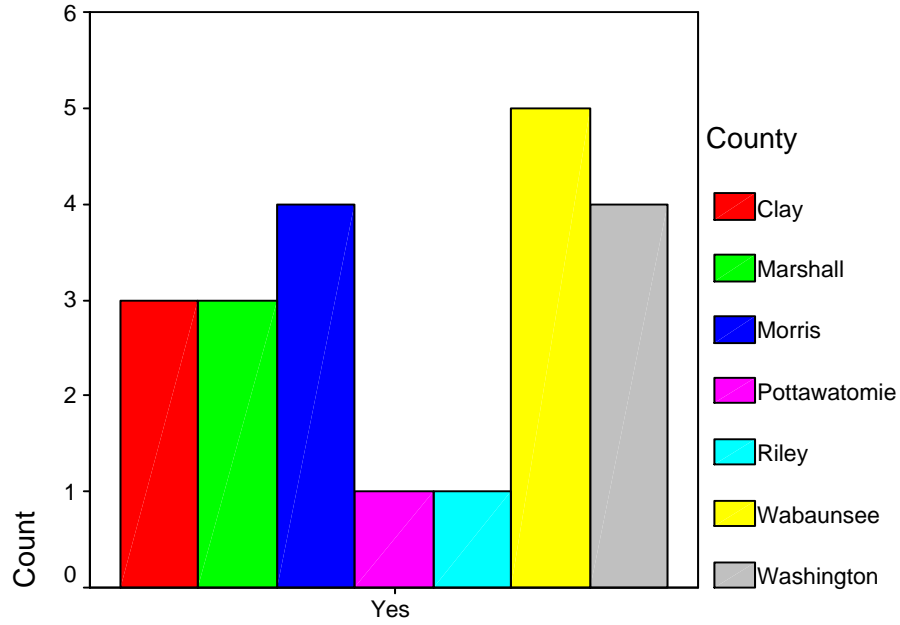
Graph 63: Travel for Ambulance Services by County



Graph 64: Travel for Home Health Services by County

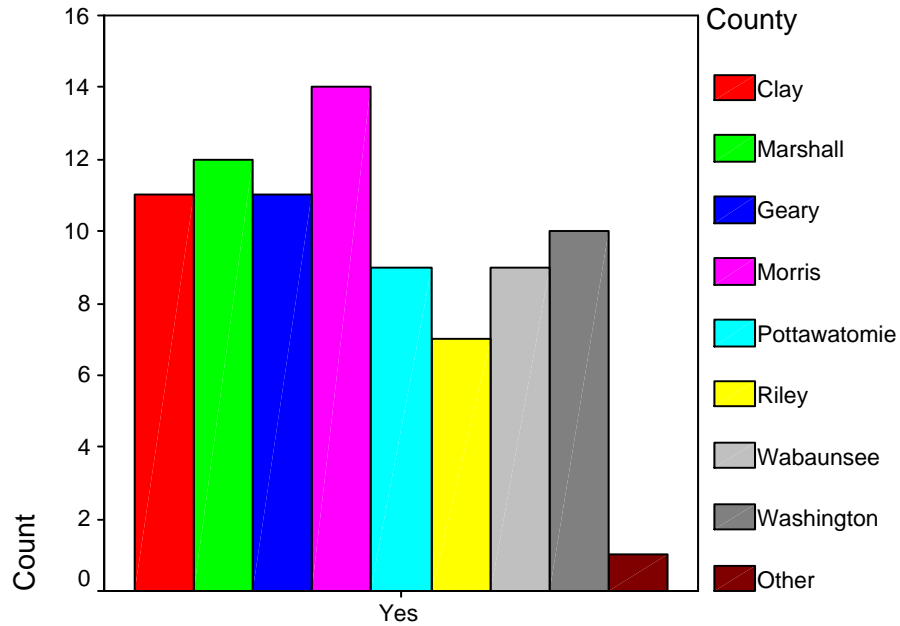


Graph 65: Travel for Nursing Home Services by County



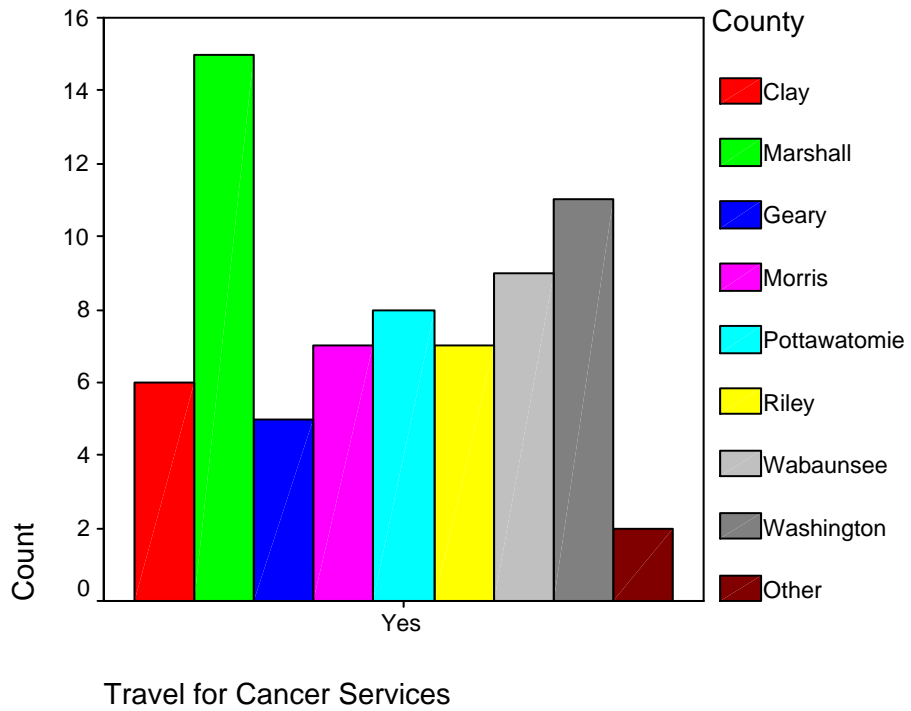
Travel for Nursing Home Services

Graph 66: Travel for Cardiac Services by County

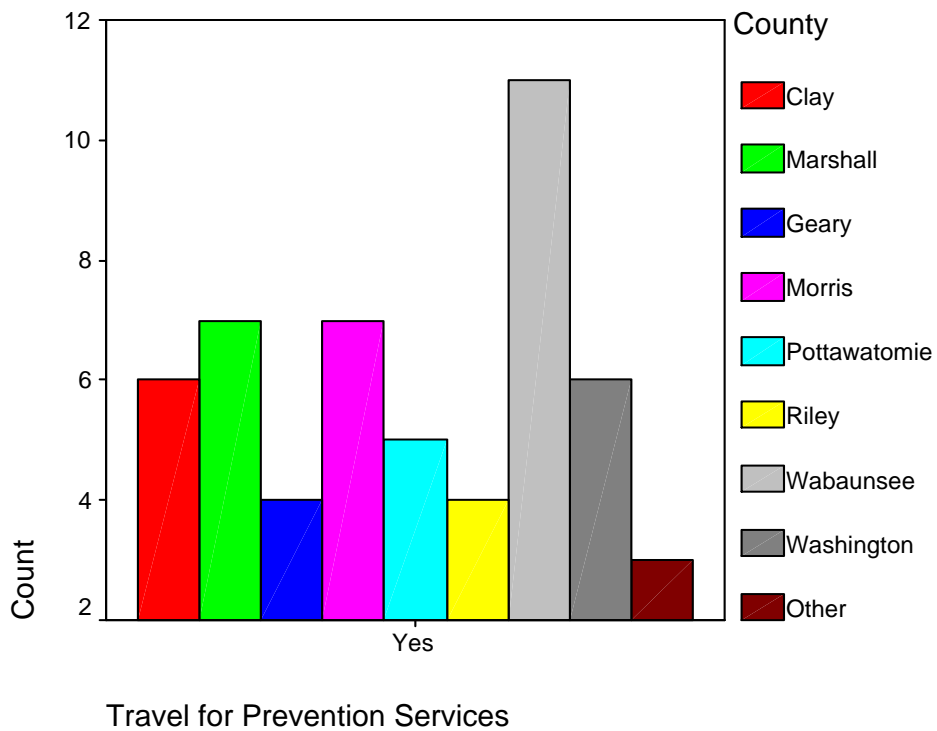


Travel for Cardiac Services

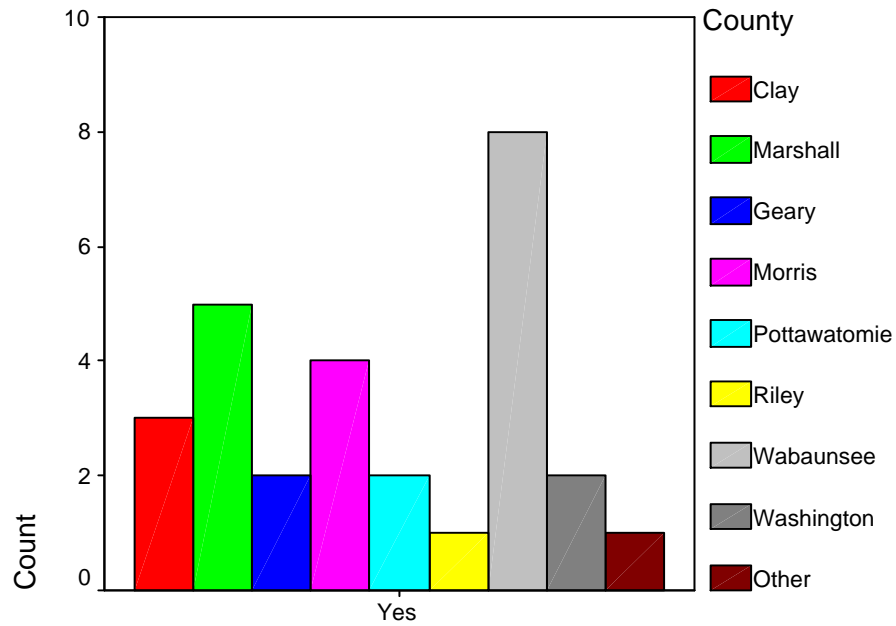
Graph 67: Travel for Cancer Services by County



Graph 68: Travel for Prevention Services by County

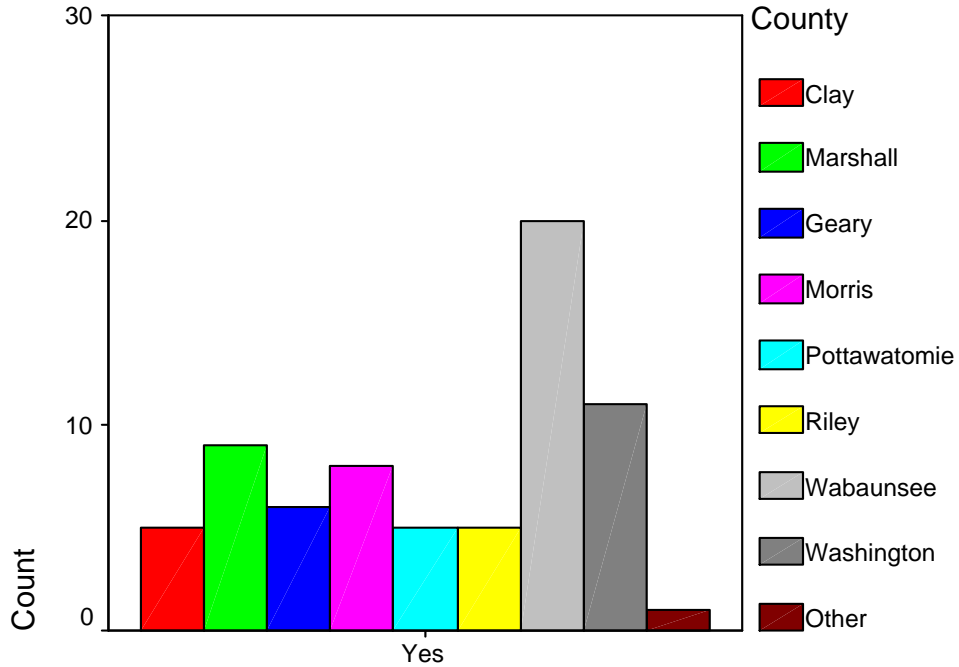


Graph 69: Travel for Health/Fitness Center Services by County



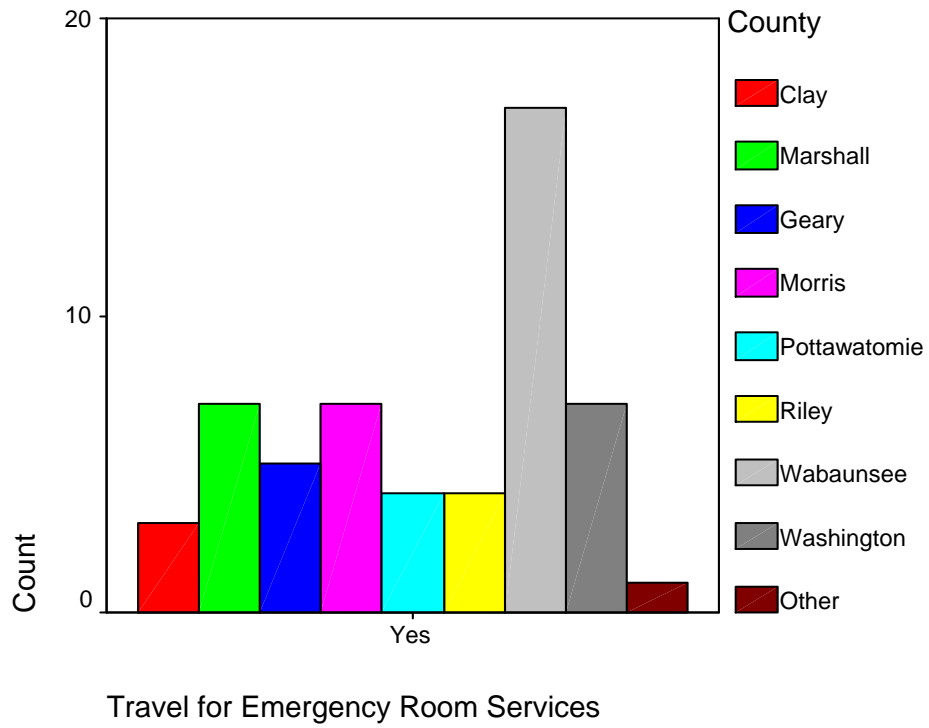
Travel for Health/ Fitness Center Services

Graph 70: Travel for Dental Services by County

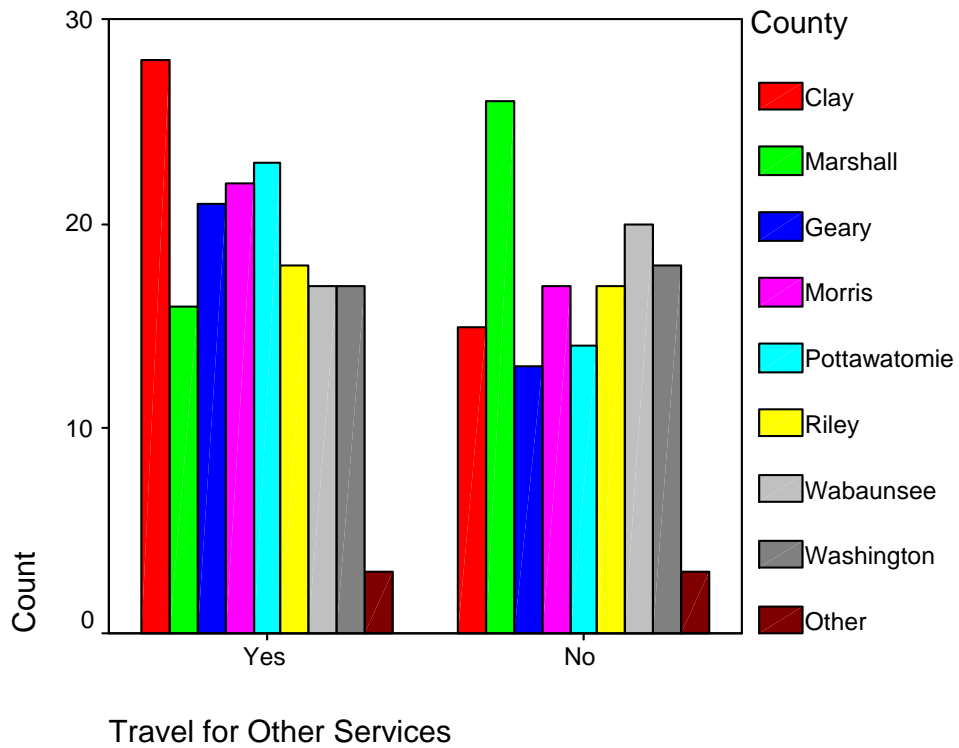


Travel for Dental Services

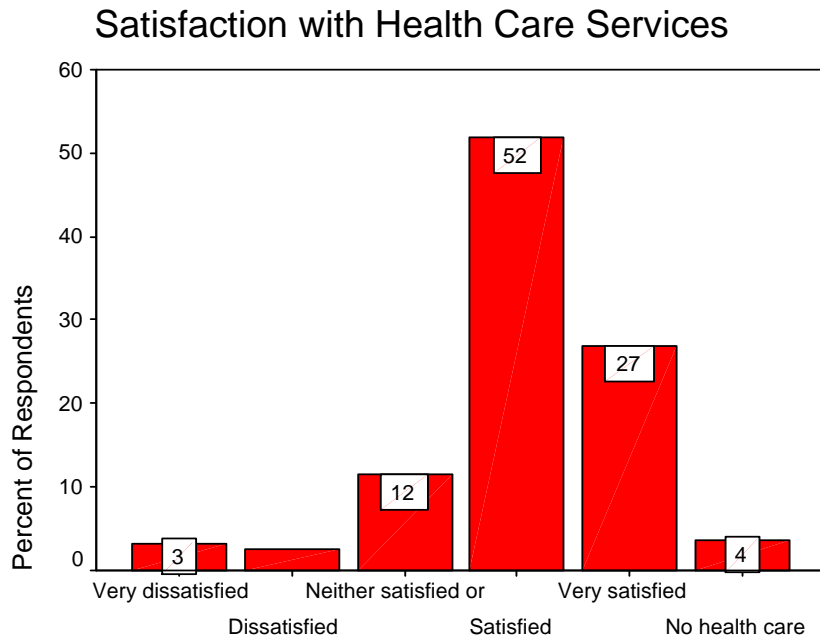
Graph 71: Travel for Emergency Room Services by County



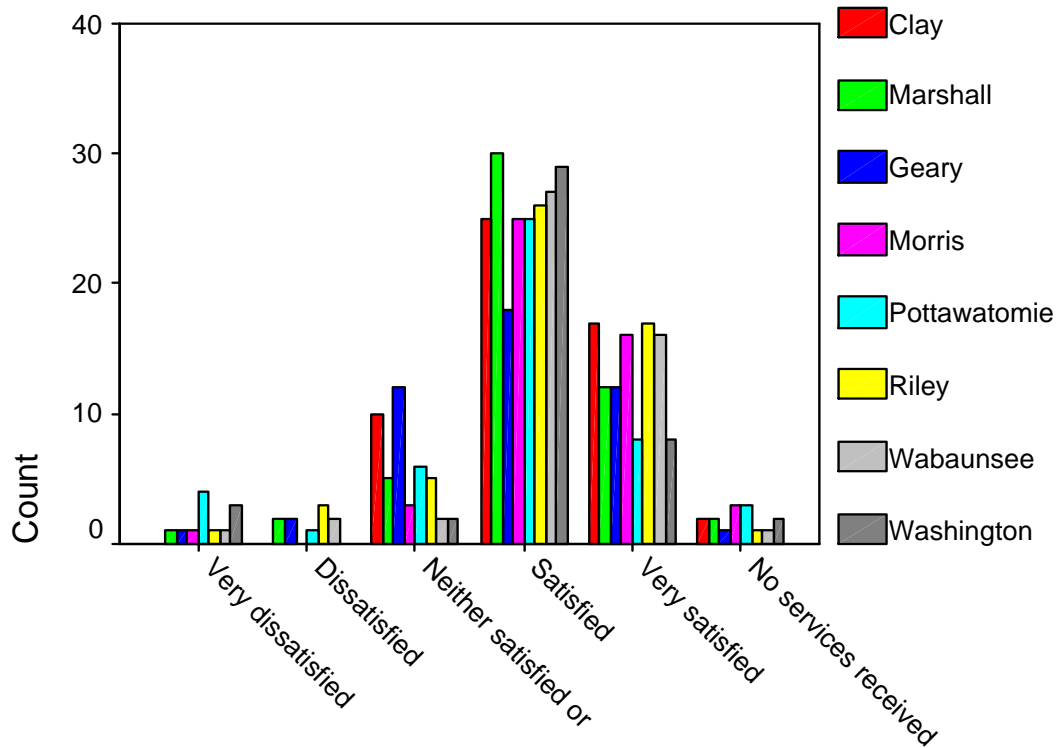
Graph 72: Travel for Other Services by County



Graph 73: Satisfaction with Health Care Services

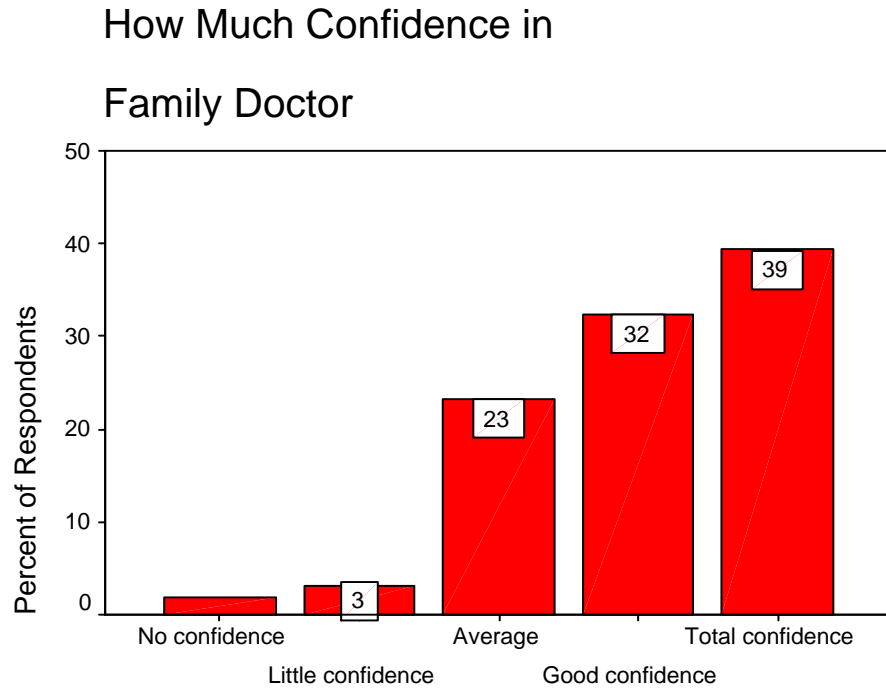


Graph 74: Satisfaction with Health Care Services by County

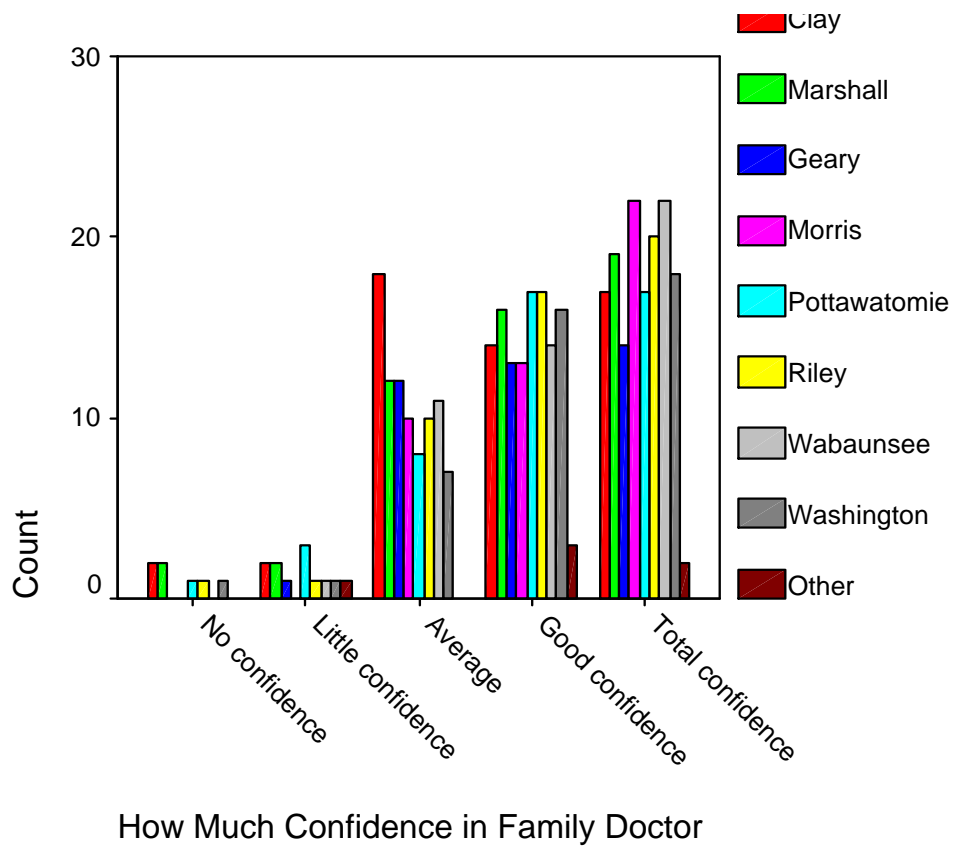


Satisfaction with Health Care Services in Past Year

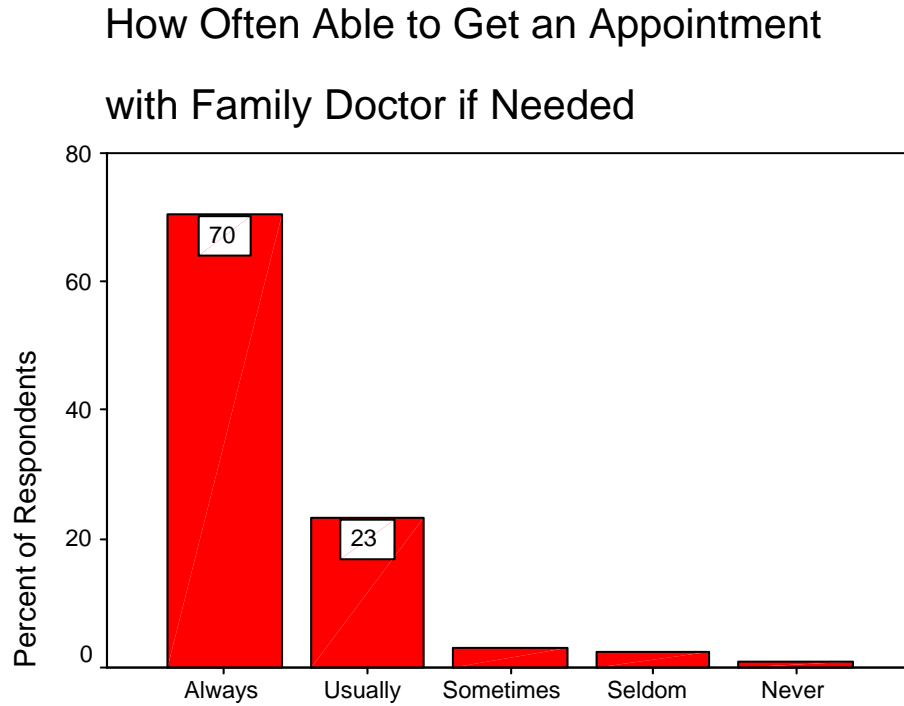
Graph 75: How Much Confidence Do You Have in Your Family Doctor



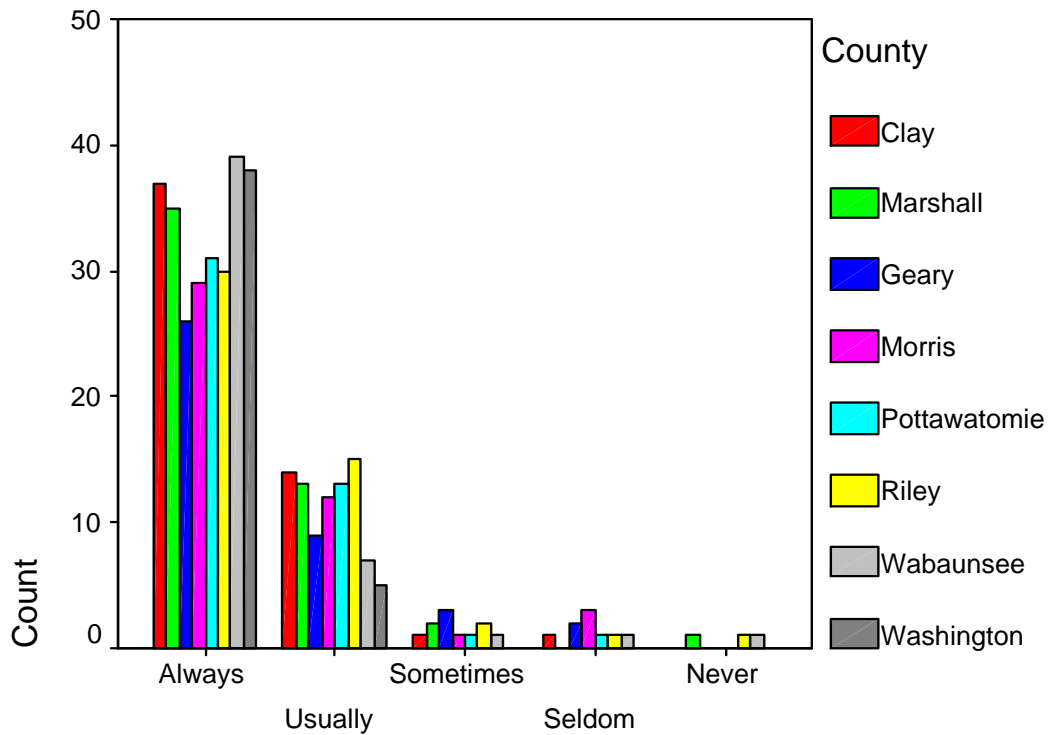
Graph 76: How Much Confidence Do You Have in Your Family Doctor by County



Graph 77: How Often Able to Get an Appointment with Family Doctor if Needed

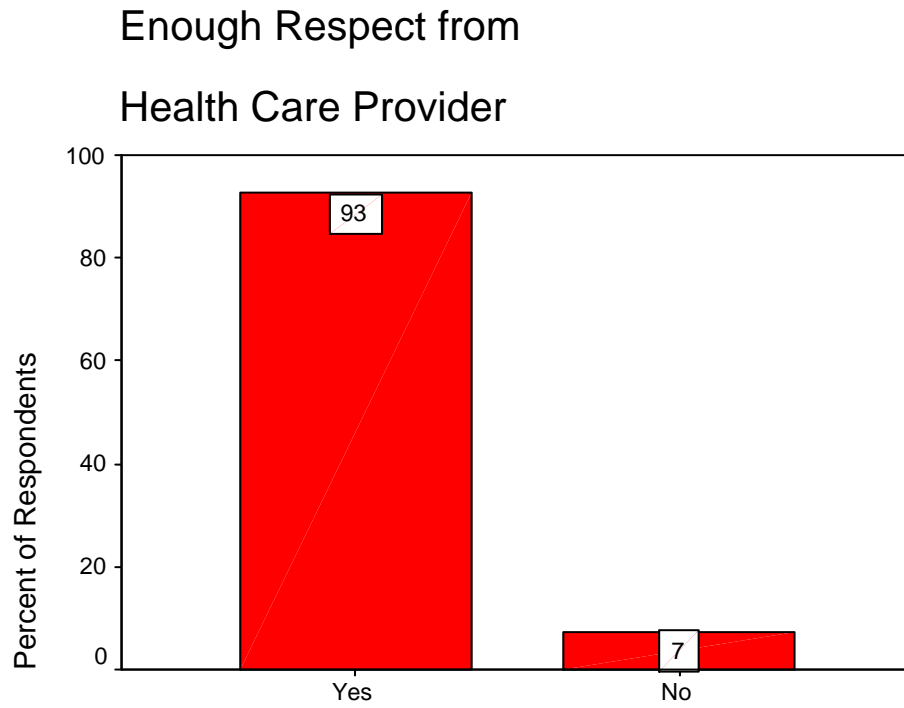


Graph 78: How Often Able to Get an Appointment with Family Doctor if Needed by County

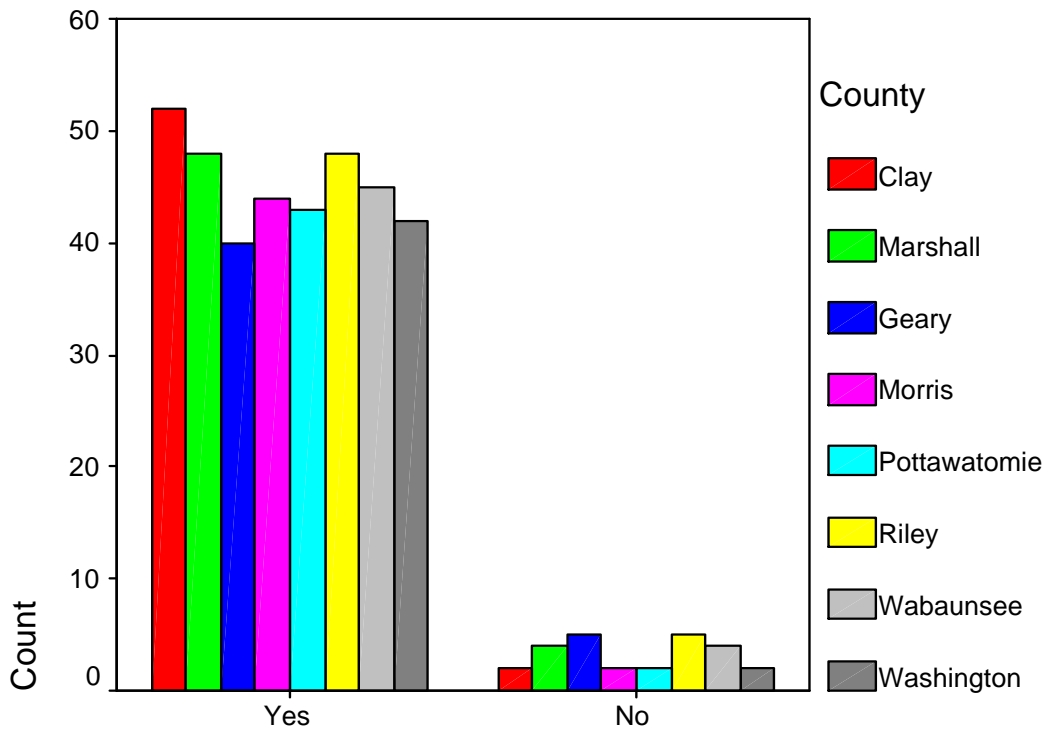


How Often Able to Get Appointment with Family Doctor

Graph 79: Enough Respect from Health Care Provider



Graph 80: Enough Respect from Health Care Provider by County



Get Enough Respect from your Health Care Providers

Appendix 1
Community Health Care Service Usage
Telephone Survey

Preamble: (Speaking to adult who is 18 years or older.) “Hello. My name is _____, and I am calling from Wichita State University. I am not selling anything. We are trying to improve health care in the state of Kansas. Would you be willing to take __ minutes to answer a few questions? Please feel free to not answer any of the questions I ask you...”

1. Overall, how would you rate our present health care system in Kansas? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor?

5=Excellent
 4=Good
 3=Fair
 2=Poor
 1=Very Poor
 8=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
 9=REFUSED

2. How do you feel about this statement: All my family's medical needs are being met within my community? Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?

4=Strongly agree
 3=Agree
 2=Disagree
 1=Strongly disagree
 8=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
 9=REFUSED

3. Do you believe that the services provided by your community are adequate in the following areas:

- | | Yes | No | Don't Know |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----|----|------------|
| a. Ambulance service | | | |
| b. Home health | | | |
| c. Nursing homes | | | |
| d. Heart or cardiac service | | | |
| e. Cancer service | | | |
| f. Prevention services (check-ups or screenings) | | | |
| g. Health and fitness centers | | | |
| h. Dental services | | | |
| i. Emergency room services | | | |
| j. Hospice | | | |
| k. Other services (be specific) | | | |

4. Are there other services you think your community needs? If so, what are they?

5. Have you or any member of your family had to travel outside of your community for medical care? Yes/ No
 - a. If so, for what services? (do not prompt)
 - i. Ambulance service
 - ii. Home health
 - iii. Nursing homes
 - iv. Heart cardiac service
 - v. Cancer service
 - vi. Prevention services (check ups or screenings)
 - vii. Health and fitness centers
 - viii. Dental services
 - ix. Emergency room services
 - x. Other (be specific)

6. What would make you go to a facility further than one in your community?

7. Do you think that additional specialist doctors are needed in your county? Yes/ No
 - a. If so, in what specialty areas?
 - i. Cardiovascular
 - ii. Cancer, oncology
 - iii. Orthopedic
 - iv. Other

8. Do you use a family doctor for most of your routine health care? Yes/ No

9. How much confidence do you have in your family doctor? Would you say you have no confidence, little confidence, average, good confidence, or total confidence?

1=No confidence
2=Little confidence
3=Average
4=Good confidence
5=Total confidence
8=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
9=REFUSE

10. How often are you able to get an appointment with your family doctor when you need one?
Would you say always, usually, sometimes, seldom, or never?

- 1=Always
- 2=Usually
- 3=Sometimes
- 4=Seldom
- 5=Never
- 8=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 9=REFUSE

11. Where do you go for your household's routine health care needs (do not prompt)?

- Mercy Regional Health Center
- Washington County Hospital
- Clay Center
- Wamego City Hospital
- Community Memorial Health Care
- Other _____ (be specific)

12. Do/ would you use different facilities for different health problems? Y N

13. Are you familiar with these health care facilities?

- Mercy Regional Health Center Y/ N
- Washington County Hospital
- Clay Center
- Wamego City Hospital
- Community Memorial Health Care

14. Thinking of all the health care services you used in the past 12 months, how satisfied are you with them overall? Would you say you are very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

- 5=Very satisfied
- 4=Satisfied
- 3=Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 2=Dissatisfied
- 1=Very dissatisfied
- 7=HAS NOT RECEIVED HEALTH CARE IN PAST 12 MONTHS

8=DON'T KNOW

9=REFUSED

15. Do you feel you get enough respect from your health care providers? Y/ N

16. What concerns you most about health care in your community?

17. About how long has it been since you last visited a doctor for a routine checkup?

[CONVERT RESPONSE TO YEARS WITH 00=<1 YEAR]

997=NEVER

998=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE

999=REFUSED

18. How much is the cost of health care a barrier for you or your family members to seek service from local health care facilities? Would you say it is very much, somewhat, or not a barrier?

1=Very much

2=Somewhat

3=Not

98=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE

99=REFUSED

19. Would you say that, in general, your health is excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor?

5=Excellent

4=Good

3=Fair

2=Poor

1=Very poor

8=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE

9=REFUSED

20. If you have a problem or need help, do you have a friend or relative who you can rely on to help, like for transportation?

1=YES

2=NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 28]

8=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE [SKIP TO QUESTION 28]

9=REFUSED [SKIP TO QUESTION 28]

21. Do you mind if I ask how old you are? [RECORD IN YEARS]

99=REFUSED

22. What is your current marital status? (do not prompt)

1=Married/ Living with someone

2=Widowed/ Separated/ Divorced

3=Single/Never married

9=REFUSED

23. Do you have ...

1=A High School diploma

2=A GED

3=Some vocational training or college

4=A college degree

7=None of the above

9=REFUSED

24. What county do you live in? (do not prompt)

1=Clay

2=Marshall

3=Geary

4=Morris

5=Pottawatomie

6=Riley

7=Wabaunsee

8=Washington

9=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE

10=REFUSED

11=OTHER (specify)

25. How long have you lived in this county? (do not prompt)

1= Less than one year

2= 1-4 years

3= 5-9 years

4= 10-19 years

5= 20 or more years

26. Which of the following best describes your employment situation now...

- 1=Employed full-time
- 2=Employed part-time or half-time
- 3=Homemaker
- 4=Retired/Disabled or sick
- 5=Unemployed
- 9=REFUSED

27. Do you consider your household income adequate to cover you and your family's health care needs?

- Yes/ No
- 8=DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 9=REFUSED

28. How would you describe your race/ethnicity? (do not prompt)

- 1=White, not Hispanic
- 2=Black or African American
- 3=Hispanic origin
- 4=Asian or Pacific Islander
- 5=Native American
- 6=Other [SPECIFY]
- 9=REFUSED

FOR THE INTERVIEWER TO COMPLETE: [IMMEDIATELY AFTER EACH INTERVIEW]

29. Gender

30. Date of interview [MONTH/DAY/YEAR]