



Smoking Alternatives Survey of UK GPs and Pharmacists December 2018

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Background & Methodology

Online Survey with UK GPs & Pharmacists

- An online survey of GPs & Pharmacists was undertaken between the 14th and 21st December 2018
- The sample was drawn from Research Now SSI's proprietary healthcare panel and each participant took part in the survey



Executive Summary

Key Findings: Smoking Alternatives

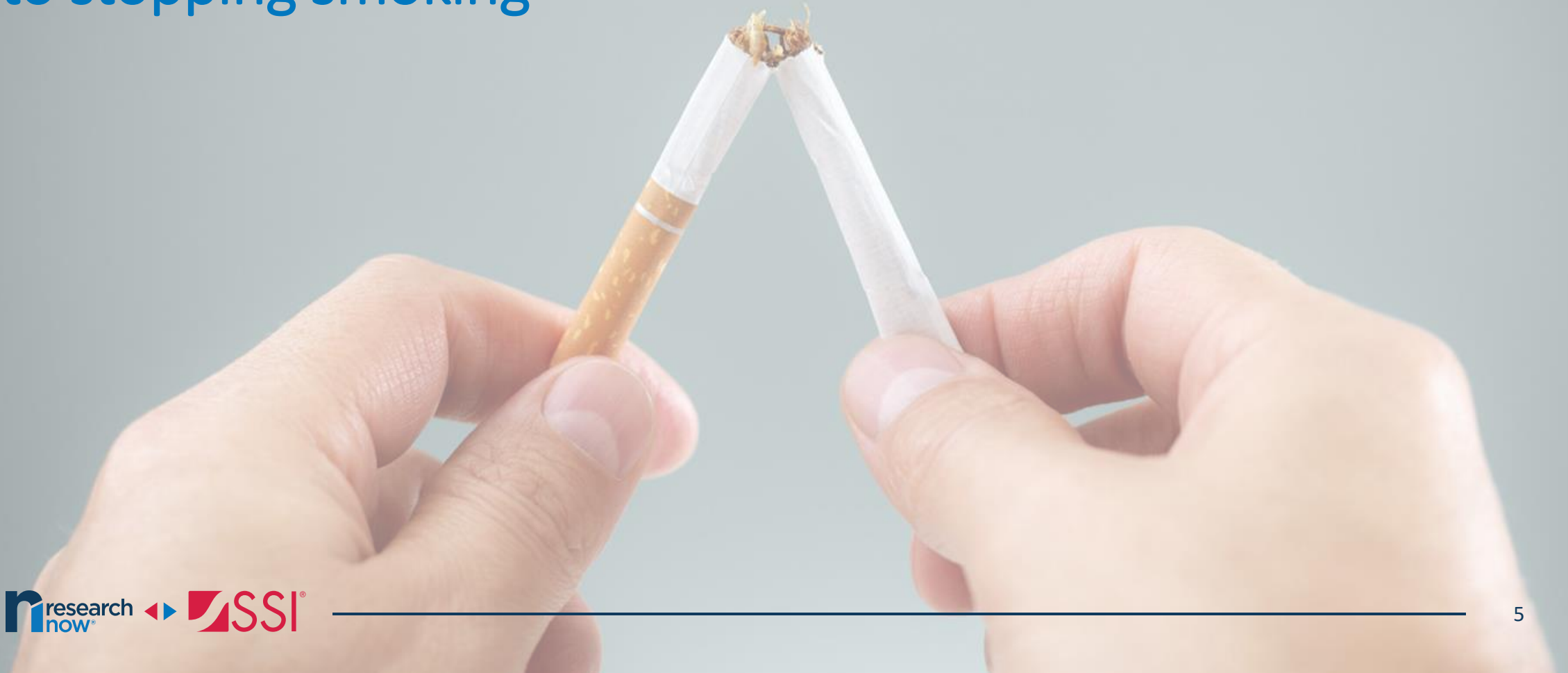
- Heat-not-burn tobacco products are relatively unknown, with GPs & Pharmacists unsure about their effectiveness (or harmfulness) as a smoking alternative. Consequently, both GPs & Pharmacists are very unlikely to recommend a Heat-not-burn product
- E-Cigarettes are seen by a third of survey participants as an effective alternative to smoking; however, they are not typically recommended by GPs or Pharmacists as a smoking alternative
- Nicotine Replacement Therapies, on the other hand, enjoy wide acceptance as the most effective smoking alternative and are perceived to be the least harmful. Pharmacists consider themselves particularly familiar with nicotine replacement therapies, and are more likely (than GPs) to recommend smokers consider trying a nicotine replacement therapy product

Executive Summary

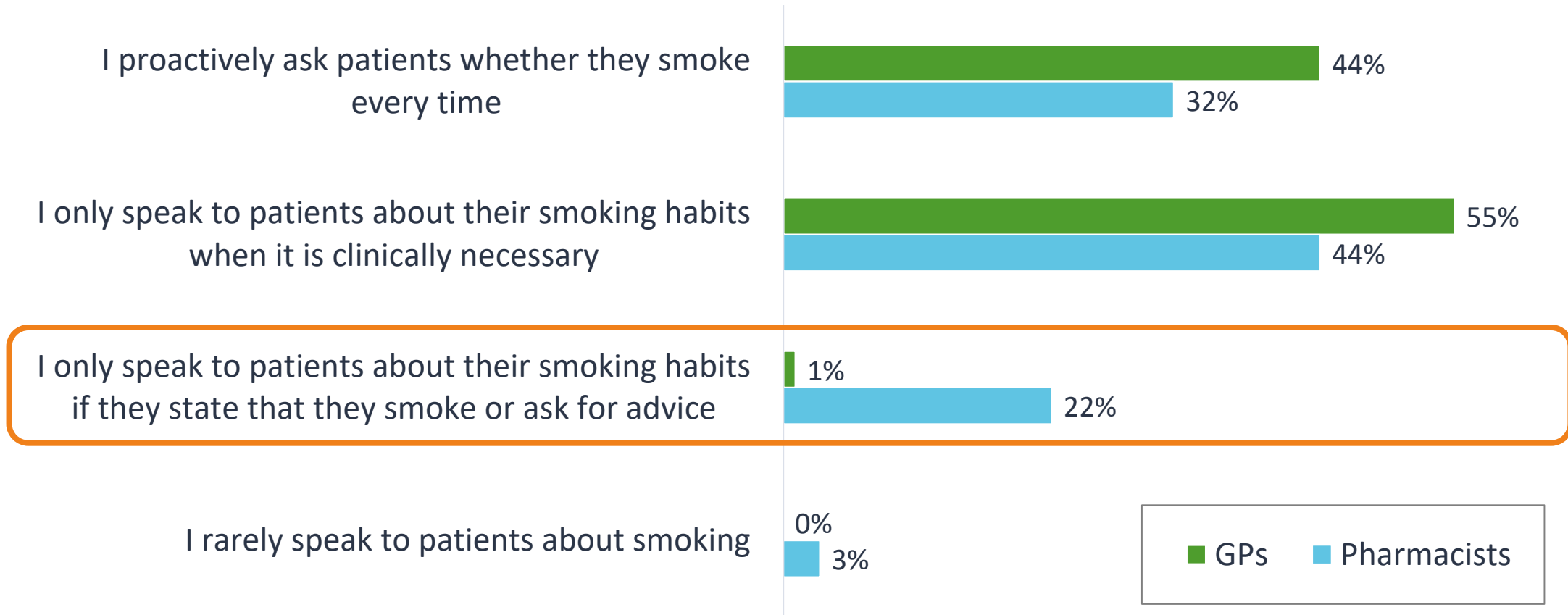
Key Findings: Typical Medical Advice & Government Guidance

- Although there is broad acceptance that the Government should encourage smokers to switch to an alternative such as e-Cigarettes/ Heat-not-burn tobacco products, very few GPs/ Pharmacists are familiar with the NICE guidelines on e-Cigarettes on reducing harm from smoking, and even fewer are familiar with PHE reports on e-Cigarettes & Heat-not-burn tobacco products. Unsurprisingly very few GPs/ Pharmacists are aware that the PHE report states that e-Cigarettes are at least 95% less harmful than normal cigarettes
- About a third of GPs/ Pharmacists participating in the survey think that e-Cigarettes and Heat-not-burn tobacco products be sold in hospitals and pharmacies, although a large majority believe that hospitals should not introduce a policy that allows people to use e-Cigarettes in areas where smoking is not allowed
- Doctors are more likely than Pharmacists to recommend stopping smoking, with Pharmacists less likely to proactively offer advice about stopping smoking to patients unless they are asked

GPs & Pharmacist Approach to stopping smoking



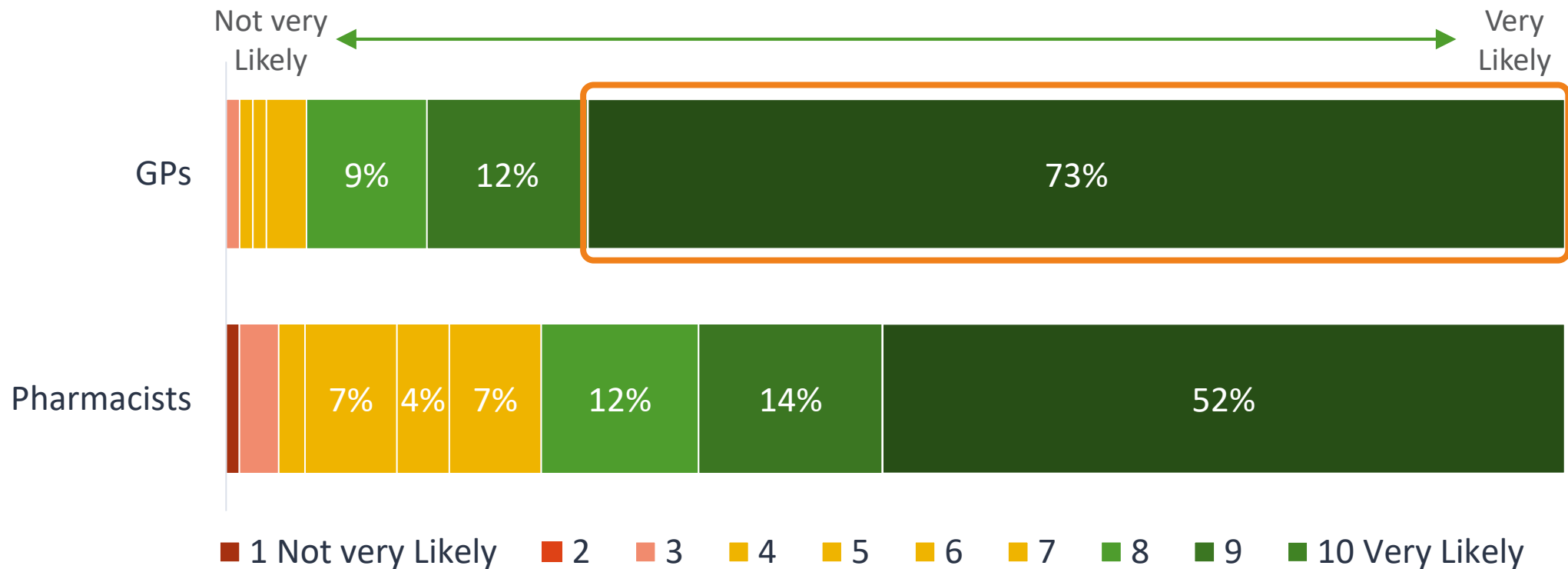
Pharmacists are less likely than GPs to proactively offer advice about stopping smoking, preferring to speak to patients about their smoking habits only if they say they smoke or ask for advice



Q2 Which statement best describes your approach to conversations with patients about smoking
Base: All GP survey participants (n=300); All Pharmacist survey participants (n=200)

Furthermore, Doctors are far more likely than Pharmacists to advise patients who smoke to stop smoking

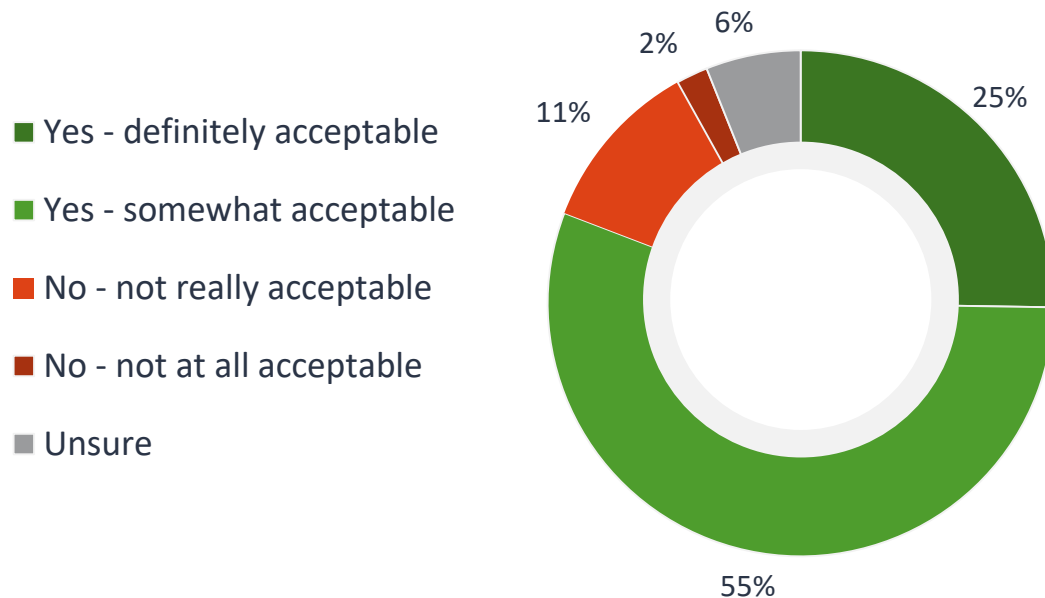
Likelihood to advise patients to quit smoking:



Q4r1 When speaking to patients about their smoking habits how likely are you to advise them to...Quit smoking
Base: All GP survey participants (n=300); All Pharmacist survey participants (n=200)

Awareness of Government Policy and Guidelines

There is broad acceptance that the Government should encourage smokers to switch to an alternative such as e-Cigarettes/ Heat-not-burn tobacco products



32%

About a third of GPs/ Pharmacists participating in the survey think that e-cigarettes and heat-not-burn tobacco products be sold in hospitals and pharmacies

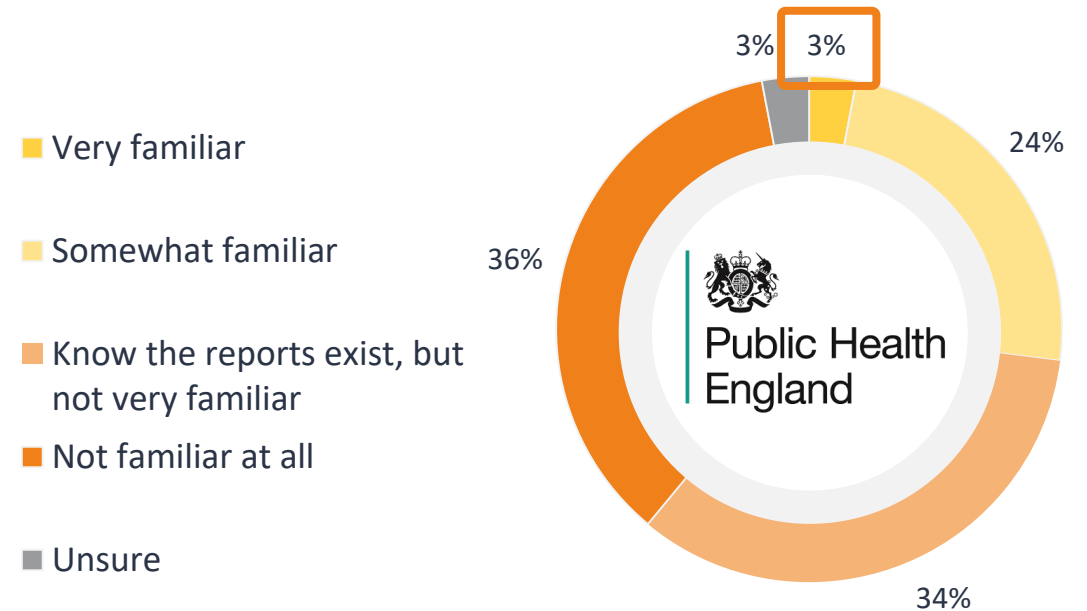
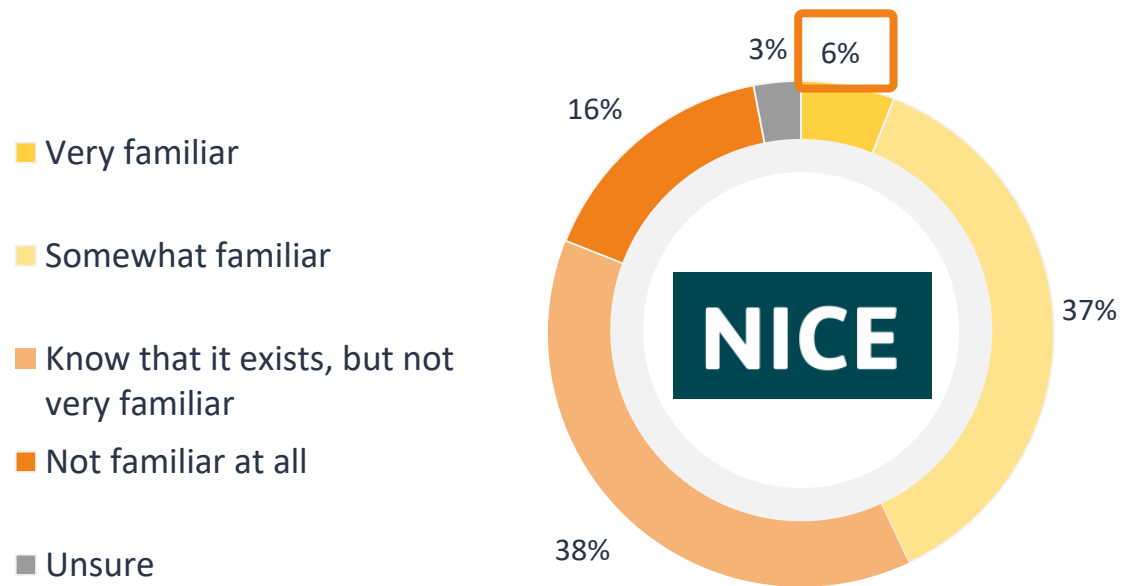
72%

A large majority believe that hospitals should not introduce a policy that allows people to use e-cigarettes in areas where smoking is not allowed

Q14 For smokers who do not want to quit smoking cigarettes, or have difficulty quitting, would you find it acceptable if the government also encouraged them to switch to alternative products like e-cigarettes and heat-not-burn tobacco products? Q21 Should e-cigarettes and heat-not-burn tobacco products be sold in hospitals and pharmacies? Q22 Should hospitals introduce a policy that allows people to use e-cigarettes in areas where smoking is not allowed?

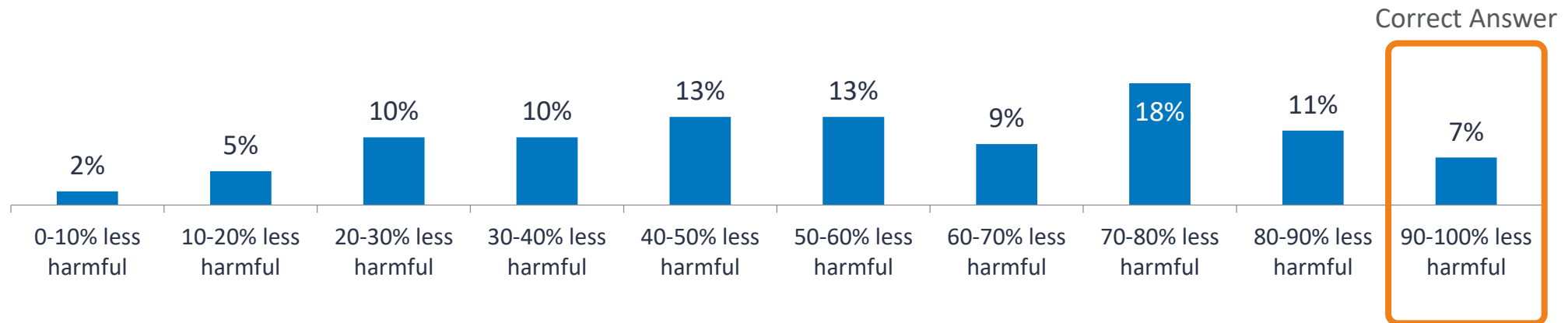
Base: : All survey participants (n=500)

Very few GP/Pharmacists are very familiar with the NICE guidelines on e-Cigarettes or smoking harm reduction, and even fewer are familiar with PHE reports on e-Cigarettes & Heat-not-burn tobacco products



Q17 How familiar are you with NICE's guidance on e-cigarettes or smoking harm reduction? Q18 And, how familiar are you with Public Health England's recent reports on e-cigarettes and heat-not-burn tobacco products?
Base: All survey participants (n=500)

Very few GPs/ Pharmacists are aware that the PHE report states that e-Cigarettes are at least 95% less harmful than normal cigarettes



Professor John Newton, Director for Health Improvement at PHE said:

*“Our new review reinforces the finding that vaping is a fraction of the risk of smoking, **at least 95% less harmful**, and of negligible risk to bystanders. Yet over half of smokers either falsely believe that vaping is as harmful as smoking or just don’t know.”*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/phe-publishes-independent-expert-e-cigarettes-evidence-review>

Q20 What level of harm, in comparison to cigarettes, do you believe Public Health England has attributed to the use of e-cigarettes? E-cigarettes are likely to be X% less harmful than cigarettes.
Base: All survey participants (n=500)

Heat-not-Burn Tobacco Products

With Heat-not-burn tobacco products are still relatively unknown amongst GPs & Pharmacists, it is not surprising that few know how harmful or effective they are

79%

of GPs & Pharmacists are unaware of heat-not-burn tobacco products

21% of GPs & Pharmacists are aware of heat-not-burn tobacco products

66%

of GPs/ Pharmacists survey participants **don't know how effective heat-not-burn tobacco products are** at helping a smoker quit smoking

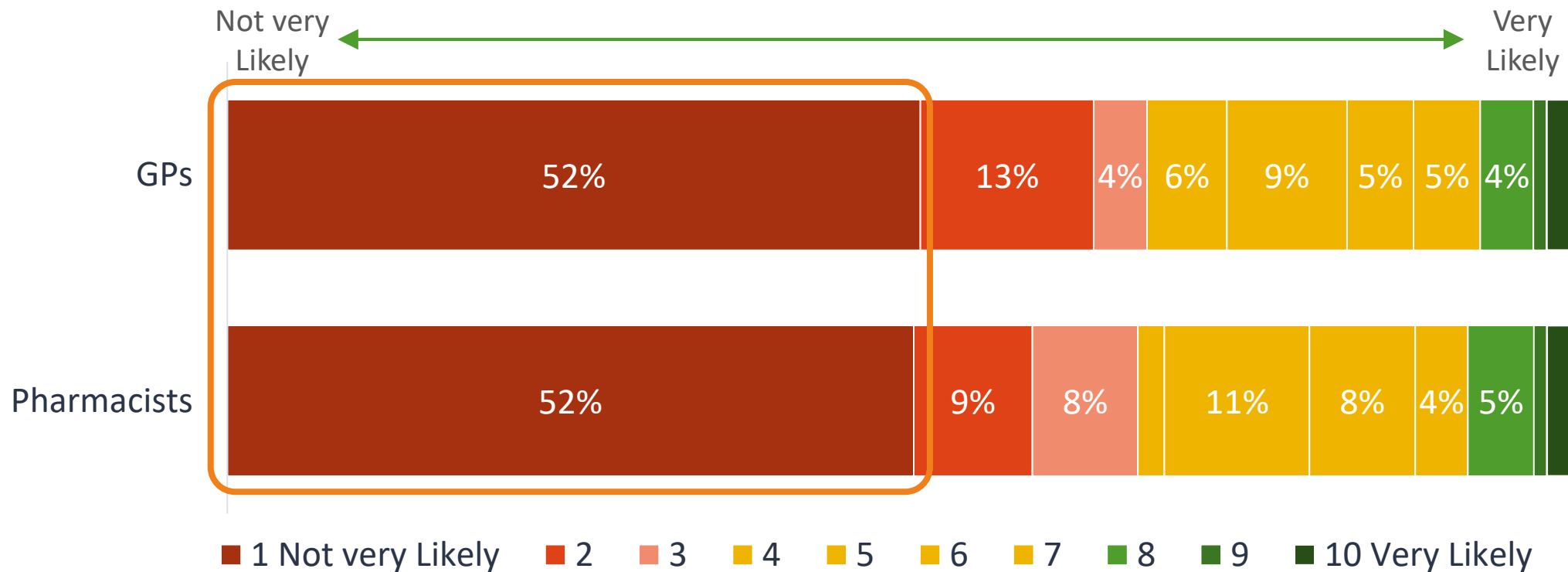
63%

of GPs/ Pharmacists survey participants **don't know how harmful heat-not-burn tobacco products are** to those that use them

Q7 Prior to this survey, have you ever heard of products that heat tobacco instead of burning it, also referred to as a heat-not-burn tobacco product? Q11 Which of the following do you think is the most effective way to get a smoker to quit smoking? Q12 Using the scale below, please indicate the extent to which you feel each product is harmful to the person using it. Base: All survey participants (n=500)

As a consequence of this lack of awareness and knowledge, neither GPs nor Pharmacists are very likely to advise patients to try Heat-not-burn tobacco products

Likelihood to advise patients to consider trying Heat-not-burn tobacco products:



Q4r6 When speaking to patients about their smoking habits how likely are you to advise them to...consider trying heat-not-burn tobacco products
Base: All GP survey participants (n=300); All Pharmacist survey participants (n=200)

E-Cigarettes

E-Cigarettes are known by almost everyone and are seen by just under a third of survey participants as a very effective alternative to smoking

99% of GP/ Pharmacists survey participants **are aware of e-Cigarettes**

29% of GP/ Pharmacists survey participants **believe e-Cigarettes to be very effective** at helping a smoker quit smoking (8-10)

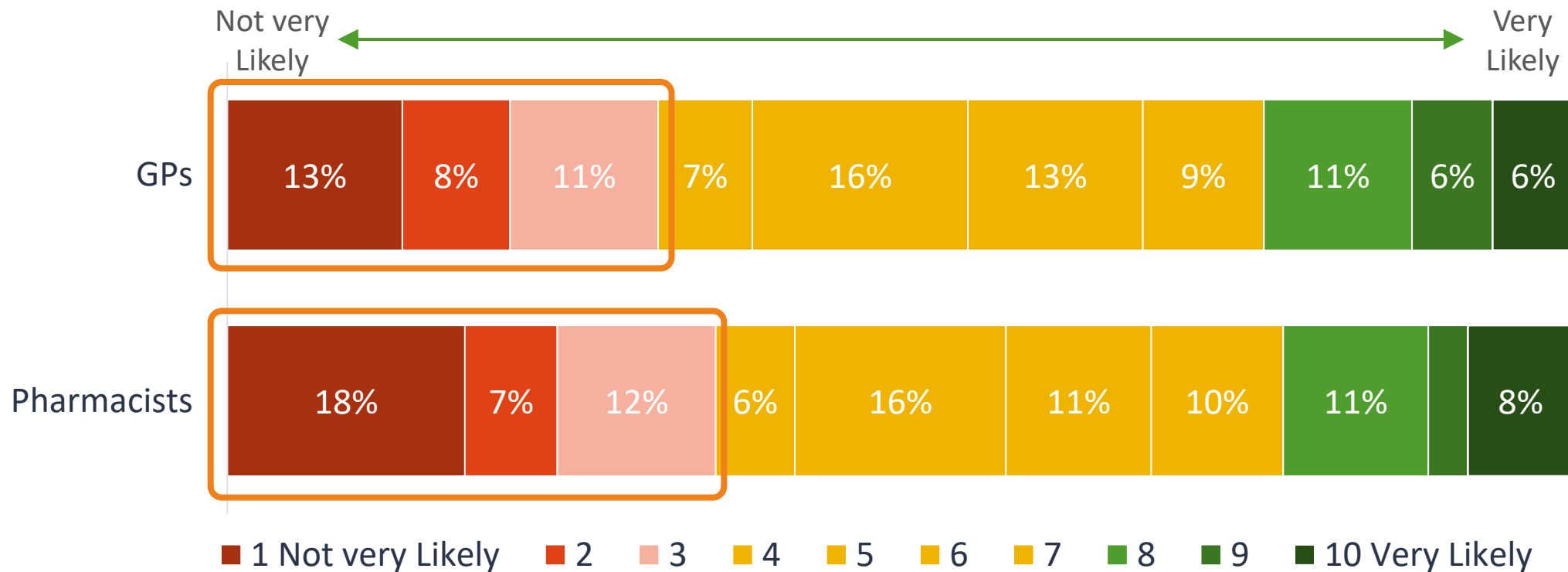
98% of GP/ Pharmacists survey participants **claim to have some familiarity with e-Cigarettes**

19% of GP/ Pharmacists survey participants **consider e-Cigarettes to be very harmful** (1-3)

Q5 Prior to this survey, have you ever heard of products that heat tobacco instead of burning it, also referred to as a heat-not-burn tobacco product? Q6 Please indicate how familiar you are with e-cigarettes. Q11 Which of the following do you think is the most effective way to get a smoker to quit smoking? Q12 Using the scale below, please indicate the extent to which you feel each product is harmful to the person using it. Base: All survey participants (n=500)

Despite this GPs and Pharmacists are still somewhat reluctant to advise patients to consider trying e-Cigarettes as an alternative to smoking

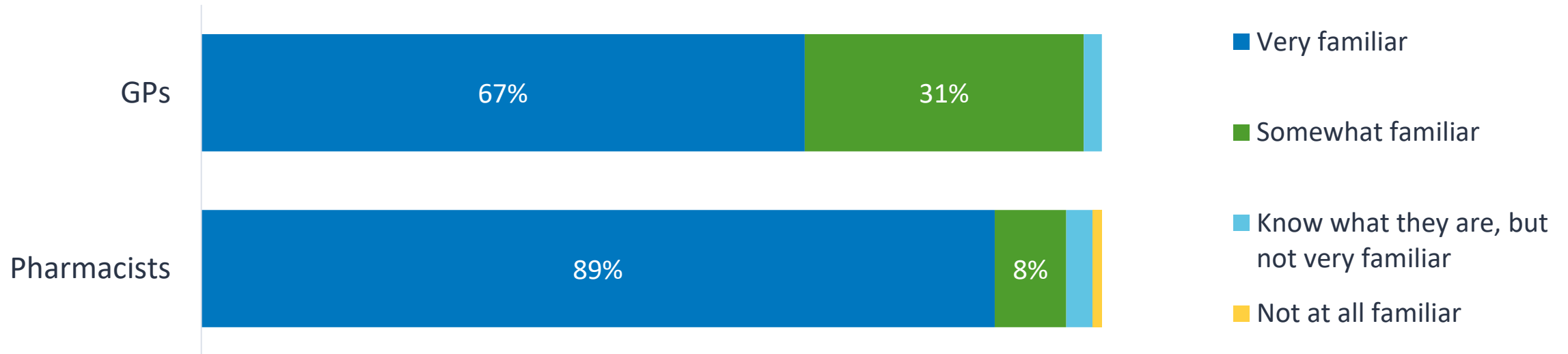
Likelihood to advise patients to consider trying e-Cigarettes:



Q4r5 When speaking to patients about their smoking habits how likely are you to advise them to...Consider trying an E-Cigarette
Base: All GP survey participants (n=300); All Pharmacist survey participants (n=200)

Nicotine Replacement Therapies

Pharmacists are more familiar with nicotine replacement therapy products than GPs and they are widely accepted by both groups to be the most effective and least harmful smoking alternative



59%

of GP/ Pharmacists survey participants
believe nicotine replacement therapies
to be very effective (8-10)

66%

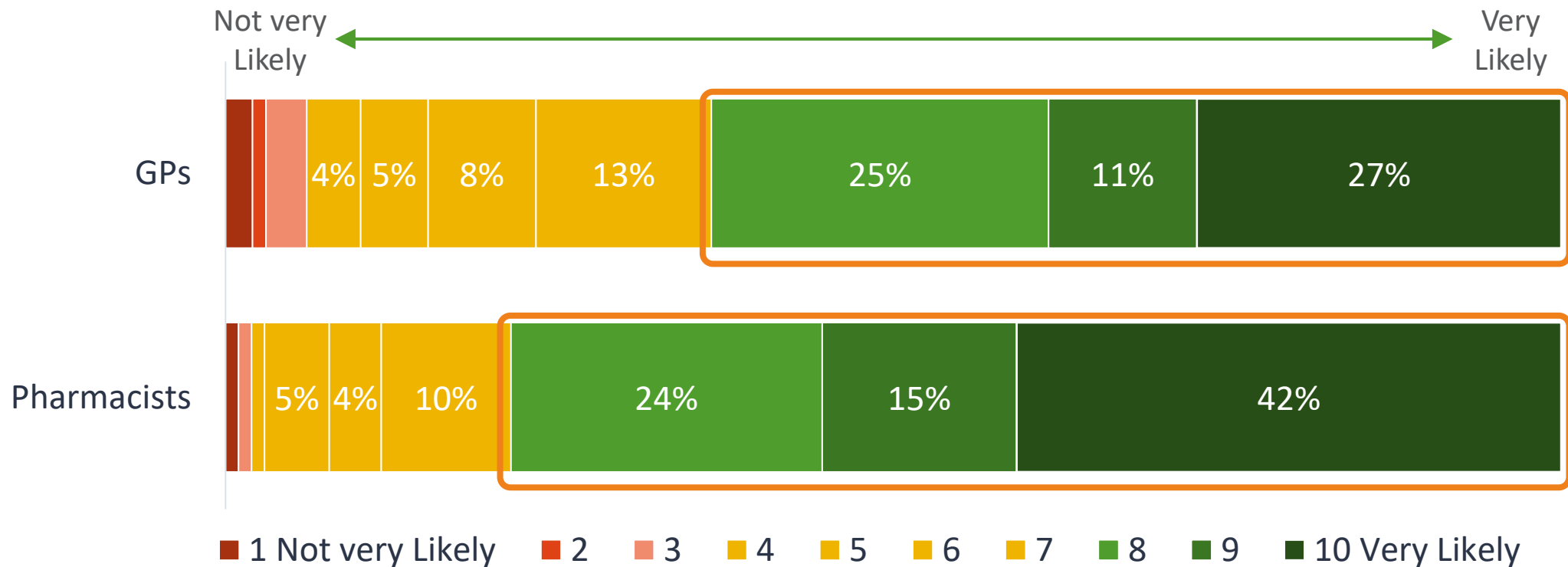
of GP/ Pharmacists survey participants
believe nicotine replacement therapies
are not very harmful to the use (1-3)

Q10 Please indicate how familiar you are with nicotine replacement therapies. Q11 Which of the following do you think is the most effective way to get a smoker to quit smoking? Q12 Using the scale below, please indicate the extent to which you feel each product is harmful to the person using it.

Base: All survey participants (n=500) ;All GP survey participants (n=300); All Pharmacist survey participants (n=200)

Pharmacists are more likely (than GPs) to recommend smokers consider trying a nicotine replacement therapy product

Likelihood to advise patients to consider trying nicotine replacement therapies:



Q4r4 When speaking to patients about their smoking habits how likely are you to advise them to...Consider trying a Nicotine Replacement Therapy product
Base: All GP survey participants (n=300); All Pharmacist survey participants (n=200)

GP & Pharmacist Participants

Why not acceptable to encourage smokers to switch to an alternative

"Alternative products have not been fully tested and may be as harmful to their health as cigarettes"

Pharmacist

"Not enough long term clinical evidence to suggest that these products are actually safe."

GP

"It is encouraging another activity that has still some harm and it is addictive."

GP

"Quitting is the best long term option."

GP

"I guess it's better than smoking so perhaps an acceptable way to 'encourage' would be to tax them less than cigarettes. But to encourage by means of actually subsidising an alternative habit would sit uncomfortably with me as a taxpayer."

Pharmacist

"I don't think the government should recommend a product with uncertain risks and unknown long term safety profile. However as an alternative to smoking it could be considered as a less risky option with more data."

GP

"Inhaling the aerosols or carrier oils present in e cigarettes cause popcorn lung and may cause other as yet undiscovered problems"

Pharmacist

Vape products are not proven to be safe long term and the liquid they contain is dangerous if misused. For most addictions, abstinence is the most effective way to reduce harm long term.

Pharmacist

Q15 Why do you believe it is not acceptable to encourage smokers to switch to alternative products if they do not quit smoking? Base: All survey participants who think it is not acceptable to encourage smokers to switch to an alternative product (n=67)