

Introduction

Recent NICE guidance on the treatment of insomnia¹ called for research on the best ways to provide information to sufferers about insomnia and its treatment. This is a questionnaire study involving patients who have sought help for their insomnia and have been referred to specialist sleep clinics for treatment.

Aim

To evaluate patient satisfaction with information about insomnia received from various sources.

Method

Questionnaires were mailed to all people who completed a psychological treatment course to help them manage their insomnia (the Burden insomnia group) between 1999 and 2005² and to insomnia patients attending the only the Psychopharmacology Clinic in the last 4 years. Respondents were asked to evaluate different aspects of the information they had received and to rate the different sources of information according to: the amount of information they had received, its usefulness, and its reliability.

Results

Questionnaires were sent to 92 people who attended the insomnia group for the full course and to 66 people who had attended the clinic because of insomnia. Fifty-one questionnaires were returned by people who had been to groups (55%) and 17 (26%) by people who had only been to the clinic: that is, of 158 questionnaires distributed, 68 (43%) were completed.

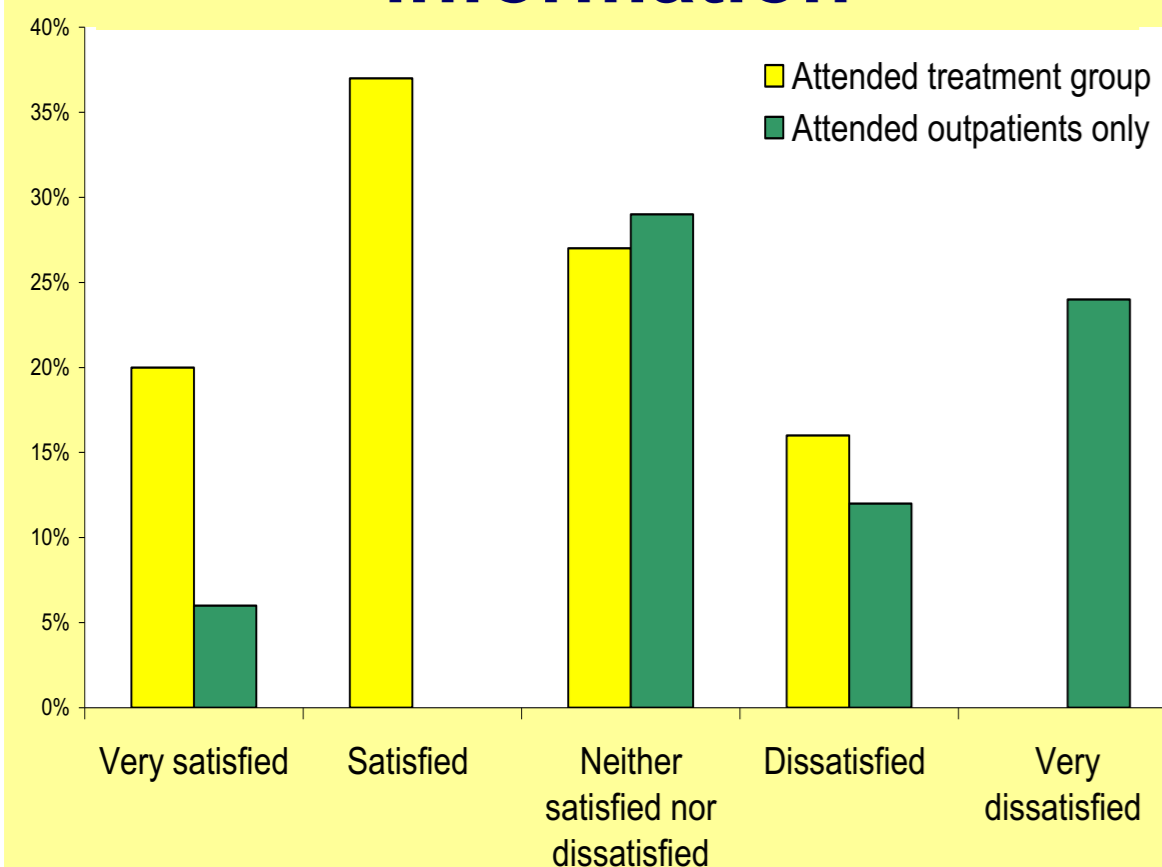
Demographics

The ratio of female to male respondents was 3:1

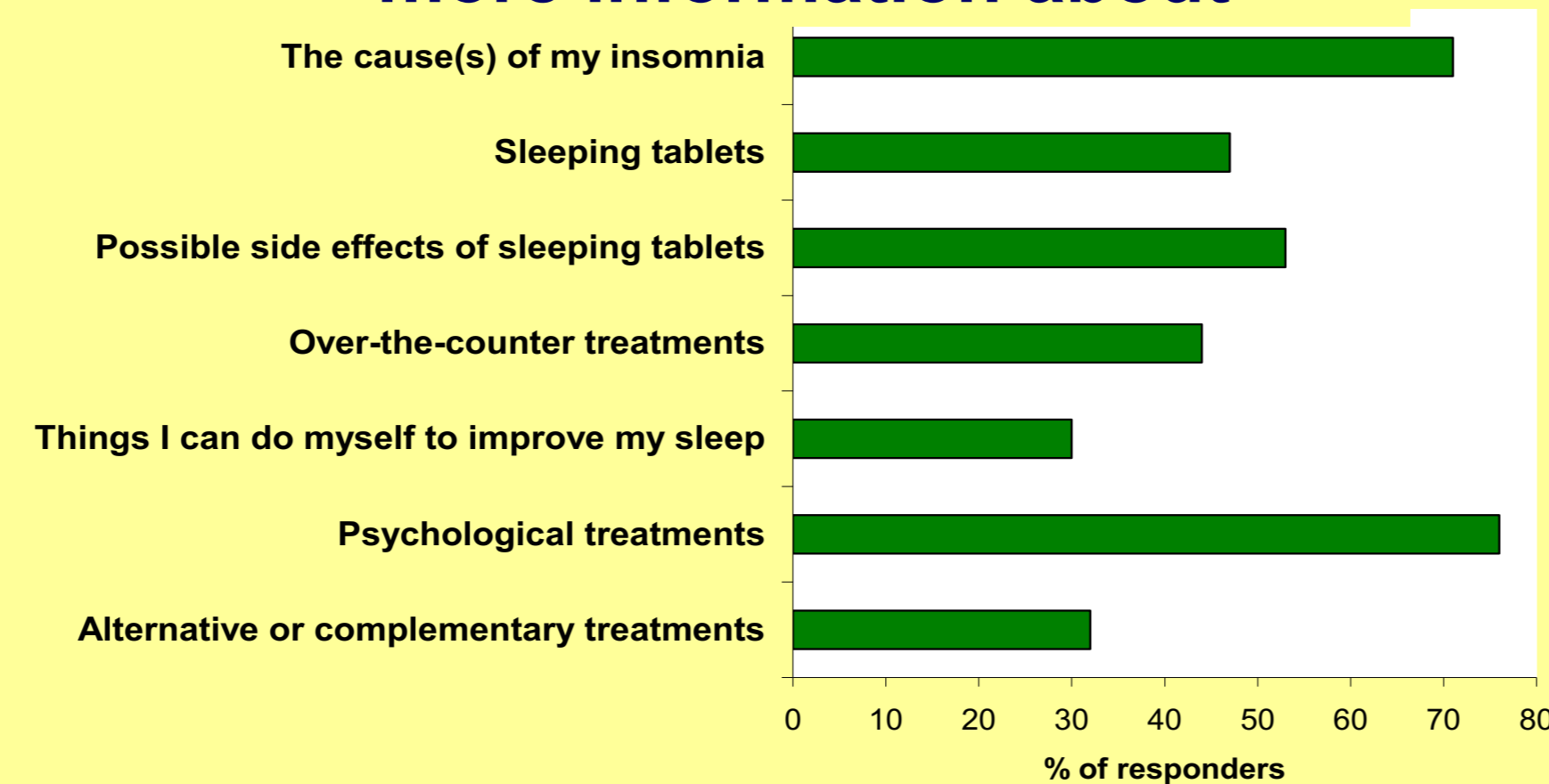
| Age | | |
|---------|-----|-----|
| <30 | N=4 | 6% |
| 31 - 40 | 10 | 15% |
| 41 - 50 | 11 | 16% |
| 51 - 60 | 28 | 41% |
| 61 - 70 | 13 | 18% |
| >70 | 3 | 4% |

| Duration of sleep difficulties | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|
| <2 years | N=1 | 1% |
| 3 - 5 years | 12 | 18% |
| 6 - 10 years | 15 | 22% |
| 11 -20 years | 23 | 34% |
| >20 years | 17 | 25% |

Overall satisfaction with information

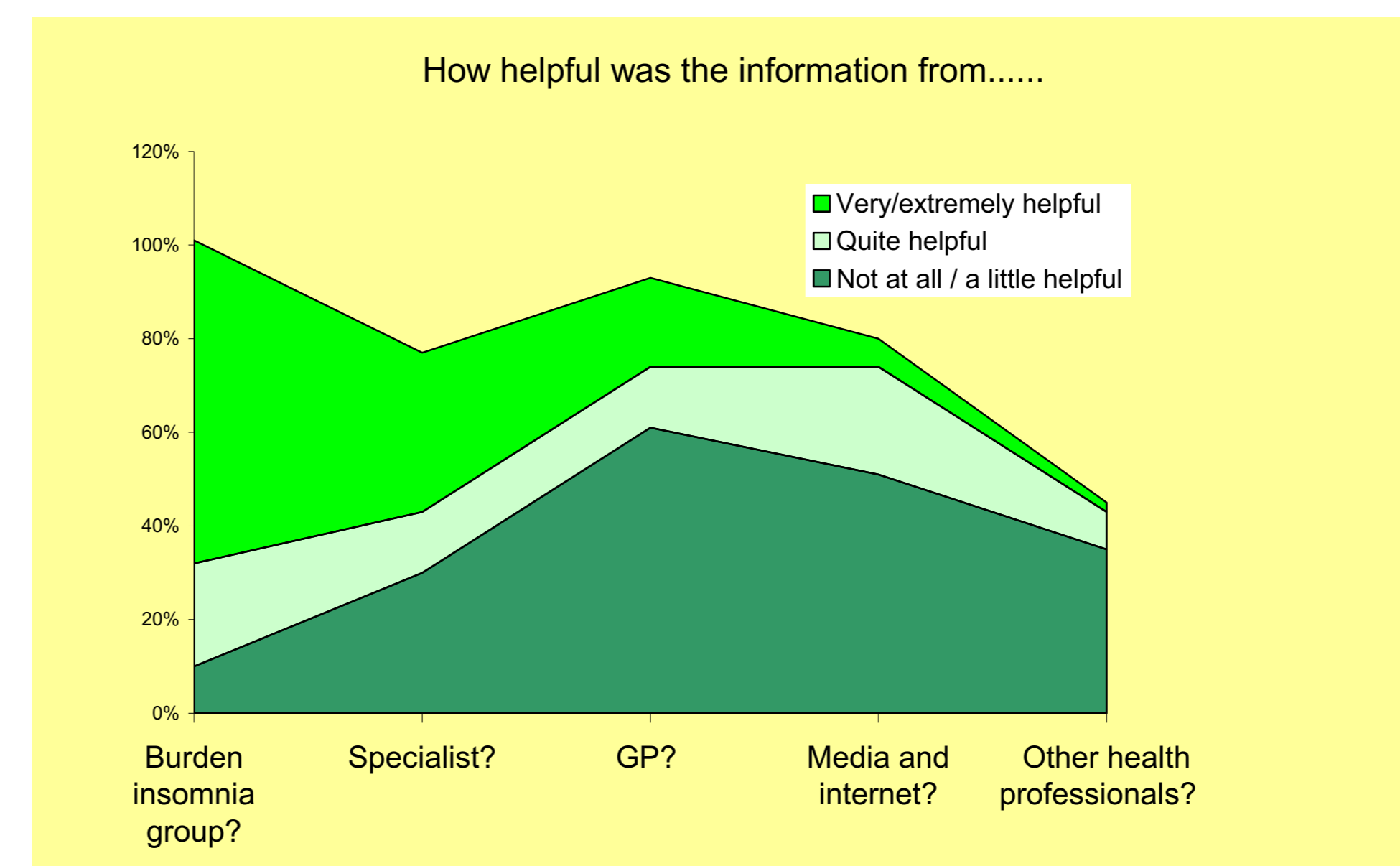


Things that people would like more information about



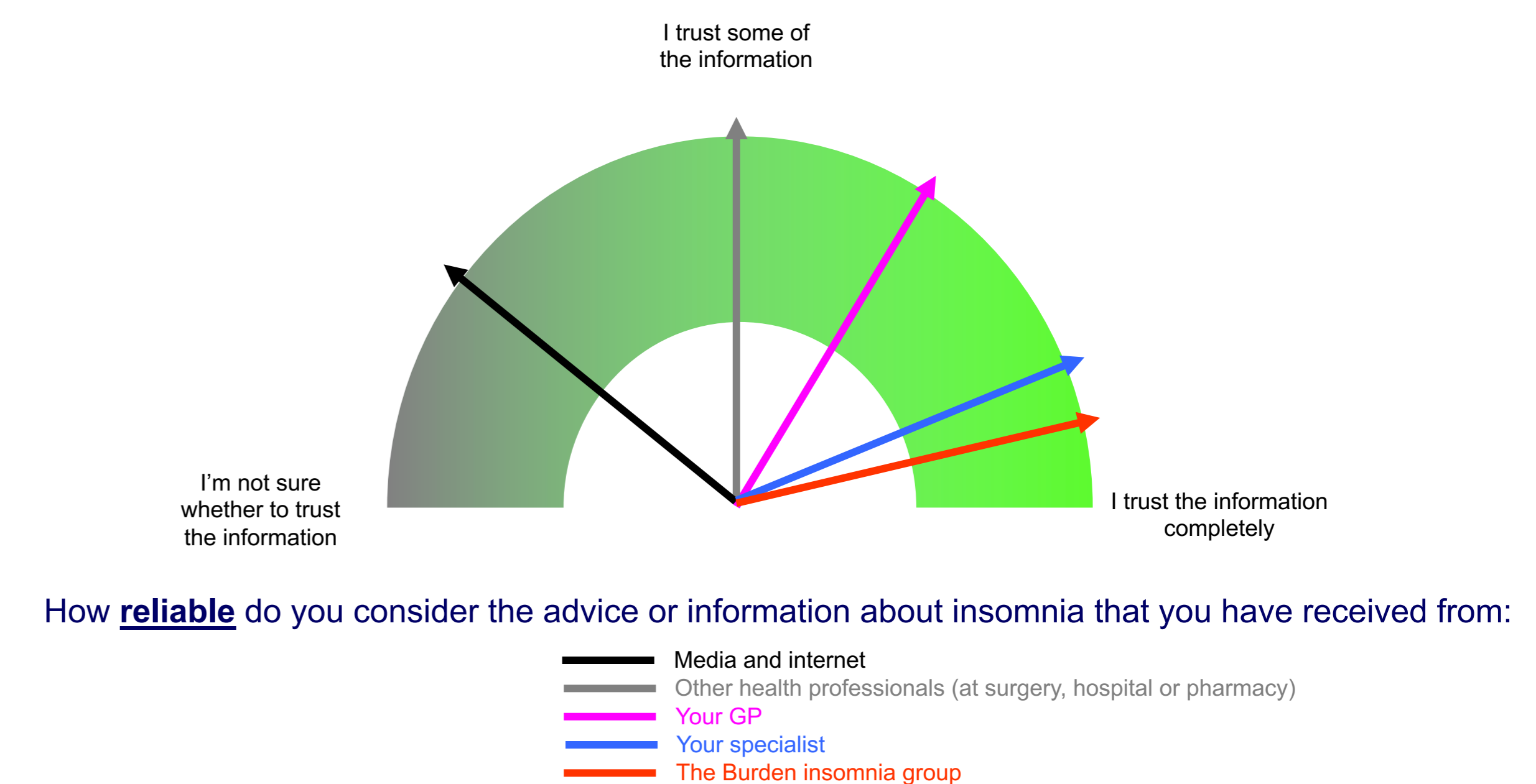
Amount of information received

| How much information have you received from: | Percentage of patients | | | | |
|--|------------------------|----------|------|-------|-----|
| | None | A little | Some | A lot | n/a |
| Your GP | 18 | 47 | 25 | 4 | 6 |
| Other health centre staff | 47 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 43 |
| Specialist | 10 | 13 | 34 | 31 | 10 |
| Other hospital staff | 38 | 10 | 10 | 4 | 37 |
| Pharmacist | 51 | 15 | 7 | 0 | 26 |
| Media | 16 | 35 | 31 | 9 | 9 |
| Internet | 19 | 26 | 21 | 15 | 19 |
| Family and friends | 38 | 31 | 12 | 1 | 18 |
| Insomnia treatment group | 6 | 3 | 24 | 49 | 19 |



Helpfulness of information

Reliability of information



Discussion

•The sample represents people with access to the best available information and naturally excludes those likely to be most satisfied with their GP.

•Results show that it is possible to provide satisfactory information to patients with insomnia, although there is still some room for improvement.

•The challenge is to provide the same specialist information more widely, more economically and at primary care level.