



What Do Your Patients Want? Expectations and Discrepancies in Patient-Centered Care (PCC) Between Infertility Patients and Physicians

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#P-399

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

- To effectively support infertility patients, it becomes essential to understand and identify what is most important to them¹
- In order to improve the quality of care provided to infertility patients by physicians and their team, alignment of the care process with patients' needs and values is vital to deliver PCC¹
- Van Empel et al. showed that patients valued PCC and identified it as a major nonmedical reason for changing fertility clinics. The results showed patients were more inclined to compromise higher pregnancy rates for patient-centeredness in exchange for a higher level of PCC than physicians (p<0.05)²
- Although the concept of PCC is not new, the alignment between the US clinicians' and patients' perception of PCC has not been evaluated
- The objective of the study was to compare the perception of different aspects of PCC between REI and infertility patients

MATERIAL & METHODS

- An electronic survey was completed by infertility patients and REIs from September 2023 to January 2024
- Infertility patients who had attended a new patient consult in any participating fertility clinic were eligible to participate in the survey
- Both the patients and the REIs ranked the importance of PCC in the following four categories: Fertility clinic and procedures, Physician, Clinic staff Members, and Financial process
- REIs completed the survey based on their perception of their patients' preferences, not their own
- Patients completed the survey based on their own preferences
- Patients and REIs ranked each attribute in each of the four categories with 1 being the most and 5 being the least important attribute
- Differences in attributes that were ranked the most and slightly important between patients and REIs were evaluated using chi-square statistics

RESULTS

- A total of 1500 patients and 37 REIs completed the survey, and their responses were compared
- For Fertility Clinic and procedures and Physician attributes, patients and REIs selected the common top 4 attributes, but they differed in ranking of importance

IMPACT STATEMENT

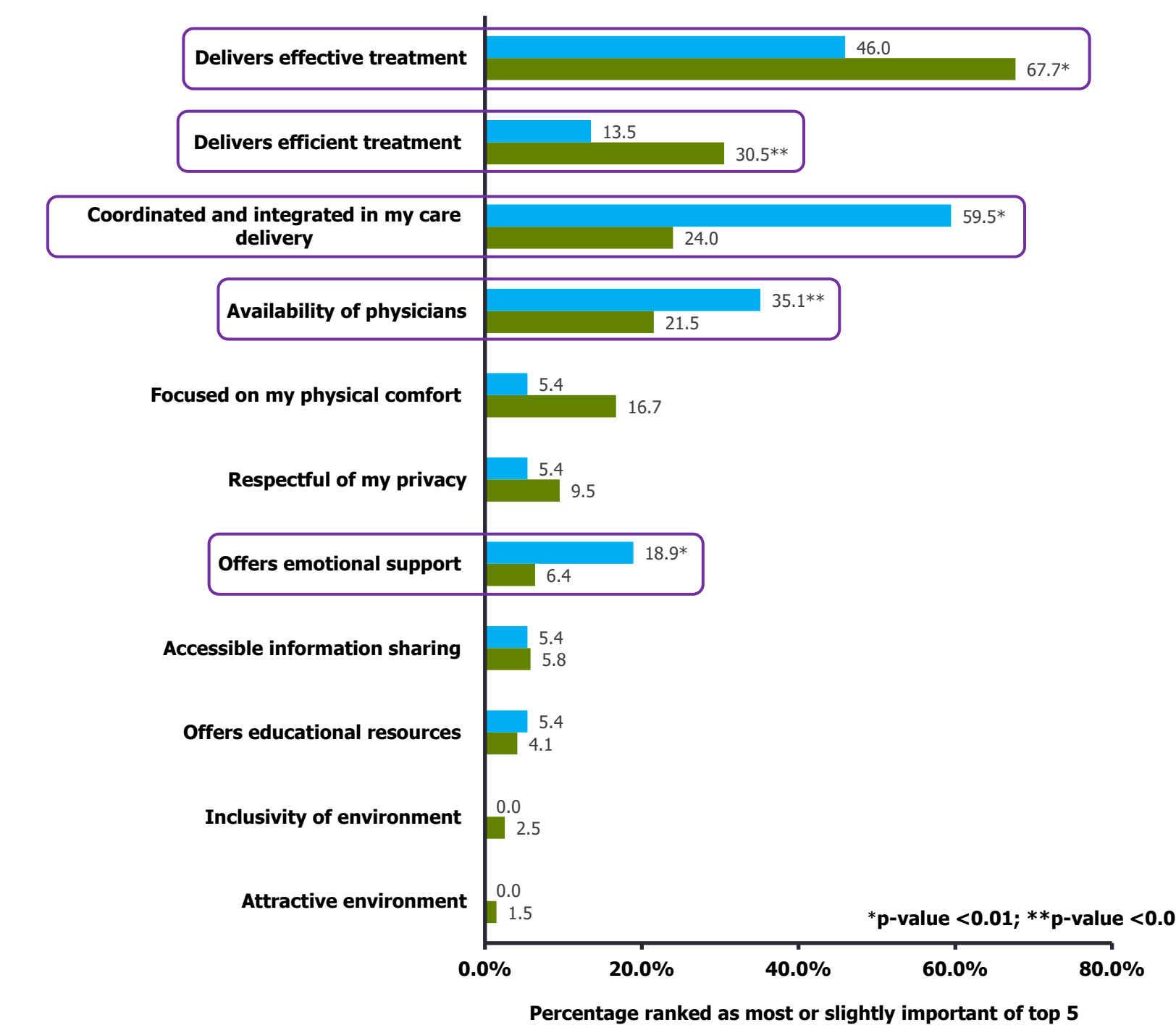
There are significant differences between patient and clinician perceptions of what constitutes PCC.

RESULTS

Fertility clinic and procedures

- Figure 1** indicates that REIs selected "Coordinated and integrated in my care delivery" as the most important attribute, and significantly more often than patients (59.5% vs. 24.0%, p<.01)
- Notably, "Physicians' availability" (35.1% vs. 21.5%, p<.05) and "Offers emotional support" (18.9% vs. 6.4%, p<.01) were significantly more selected by REIs than patients
- In contrast, "Delivers effective treatment" (67.7% vs. 46.0%, p<.01) followed by "Delivers efficient treatment" (30.5% vs. 13.5%, p<.05) were significantly more important for patients than REIs

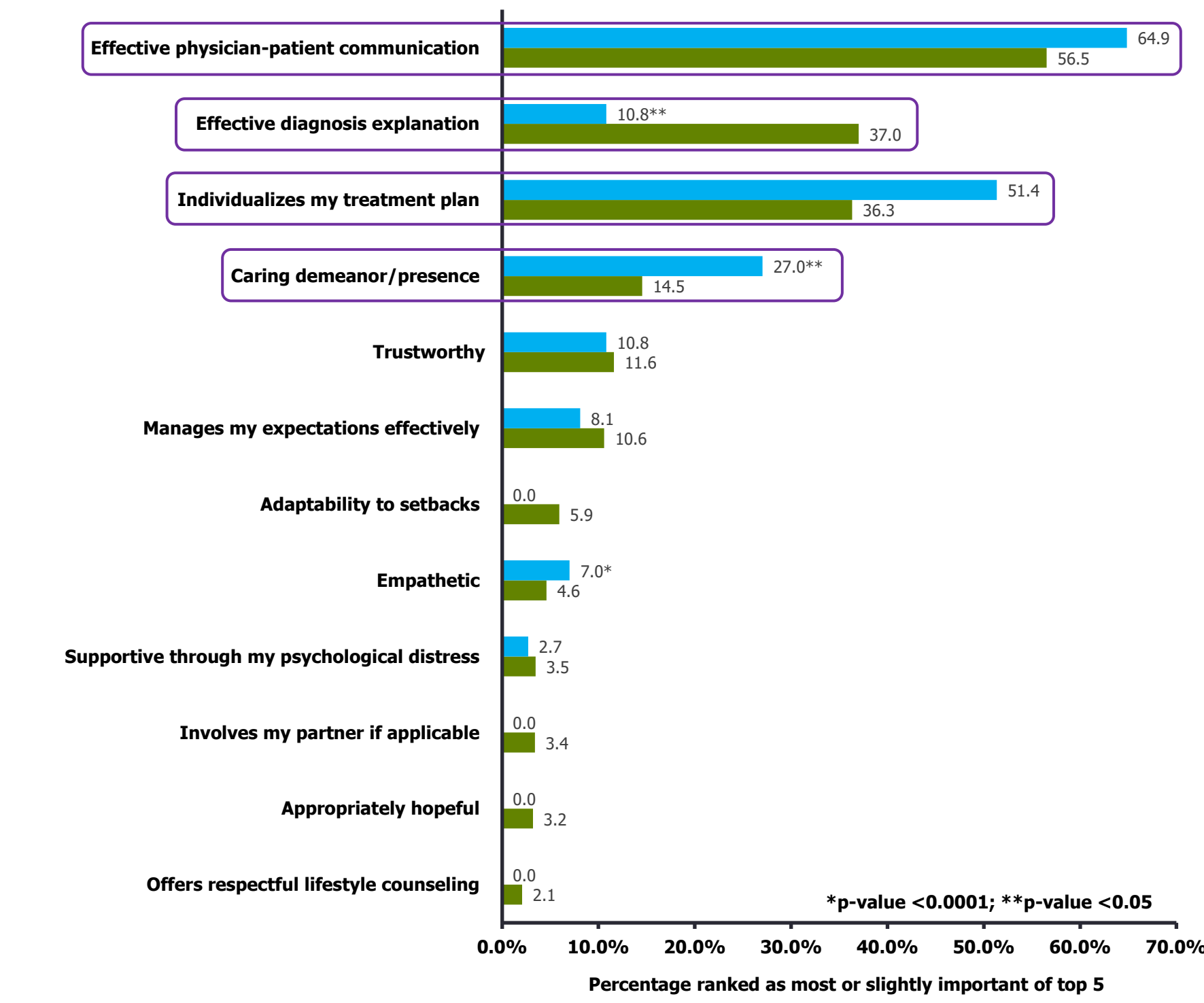
Figure 1: Percentage of attributes related to Fertility clinics and procedures that were ranked as most or slightly important of the top 5 by physicians and patients



Physicians

- Figure 2** indicates that "Effective diagnosis explanation" was significantly more important from patient's perspective (37.0% vs. 10.8%, p<.05). In contrast, REIs selected "Caring demeanor" significantly more often than patients (27.0% vs. 14.5%, p<.05)
- Remarkably, "Individualizes my treatment plan" was selected more frequently as most or slightly important attribute by REIs than patients
- "Effective physician-patient communication" and "Individualizes my treatment plan" were selected as the first and second most important attributes by REIs, and as the first and third attributes most frequently selected by patients, respectively

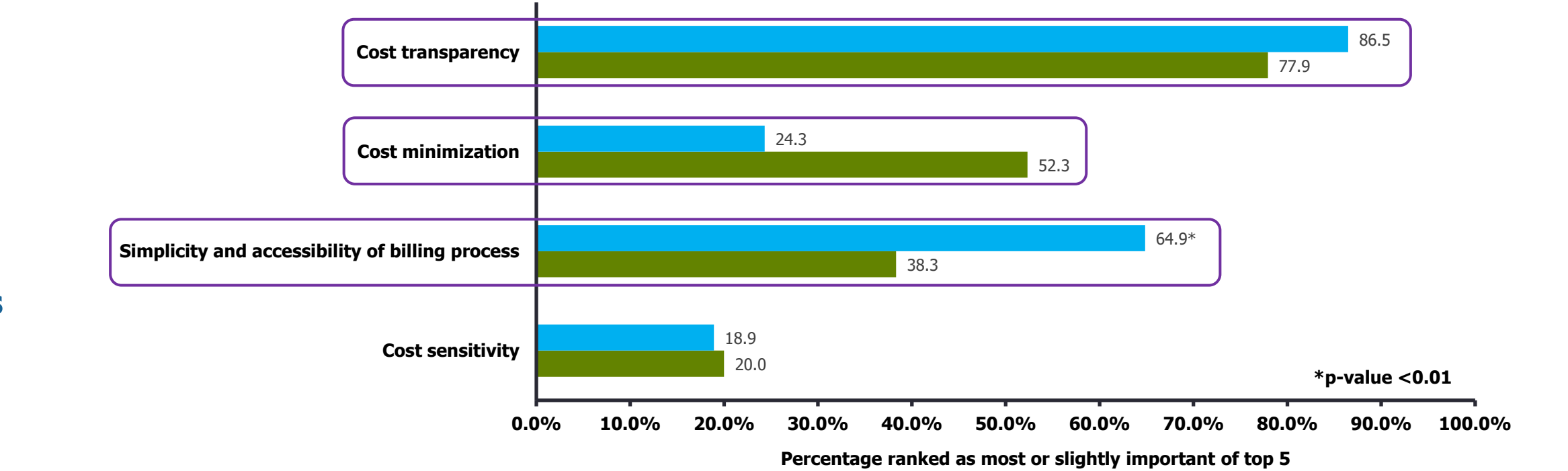
Figure 2: Frequency of an attribute of Physicians ranked as most or slightly important importance as reported by physicians and patients



Financial process

- Figure 3** shows that "Cost transparency" was the most important attribute across both groups; however, REIs placed a significantly higher emphasis on the "Simplicity and accessibility of the billing process" compared to patients (64.9% vs. 38.3%, p<.01) and as the second most important attribute in this category
- "Cost minimization" was ranked as the second most important attribute for patients

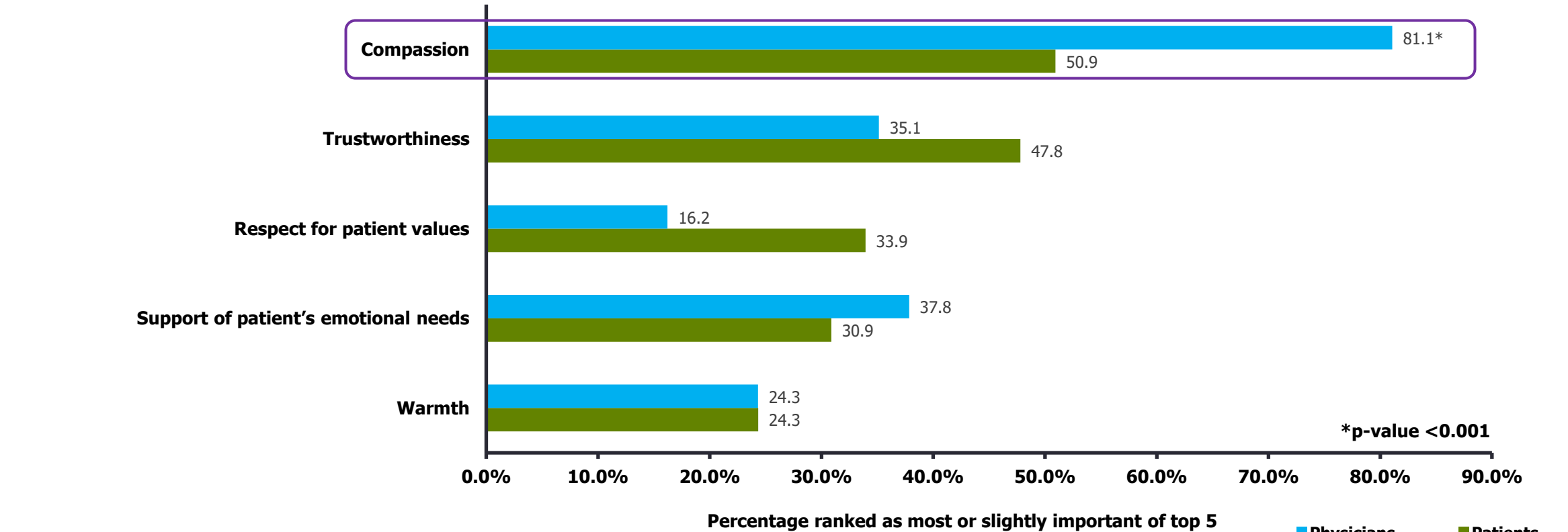
Figure 3: Percentage of attributes of the Financial process ranked as most or slightly important of the top 5 by physicians and patients



Clinic staff members

- Figure 4** shows that "Compassion" was the top clinical staff member attribute most frequently selected by both groups; however, REIs chose "Compassion" as the most important attribute significantly more often than patients (81.1% vs 50.9%, p<.001)

Figure 4: Percentage of attributes of Clinic staff members ranked as most or slightly important of top 5 by physicians and patients



CONCLUSIONS

- This study revealed significant differences between the PCC needs reported by patients and those perceived by REIs
- Notably, REIs selected emotional support during fertility clinic and procedures, caring demeanor of physicians and compassionate clinic staff members more often than patients
- Therefore, caring for patients may not translate into knowing precisely how to provide optimal care. This emphasizes the importance of designing care delivery systems considering patient needs to achieve PCC

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ABBREVIATIONS

PCC, Patient-Centered Care; REI, Reproductive Endocrinologists and Infertility; US, United States

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DISCLOSURES

Allison Catherino and Kelly Wirka are employees of EMD Serono, Rockland, MA, USA. Kathleen Deering and Victoria Kulbokas are employees of EPI-Q, Inc which received funding from EMD Serono to analyze the data. Alice Domar and Amber Mendoza do not have anything to disclose.

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