

Washtenaw County Immigrant Health Needs Assessment

2023-2024



Demographics & Methods



Key Demographics & Data

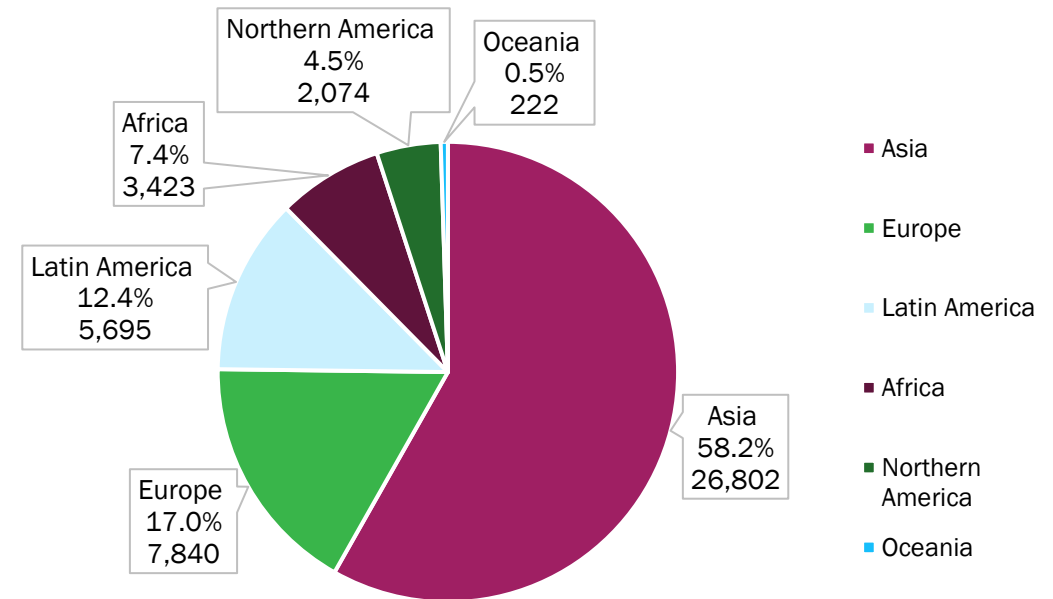
Second highest immigrant population in Michigan by percentage
(2022 ACS 5-year estimates, S0501)

12.4% foreign born population
(2022 ACS 5-year estimates, B05002)

Washtenaw County has a very diverse pool of immigrants

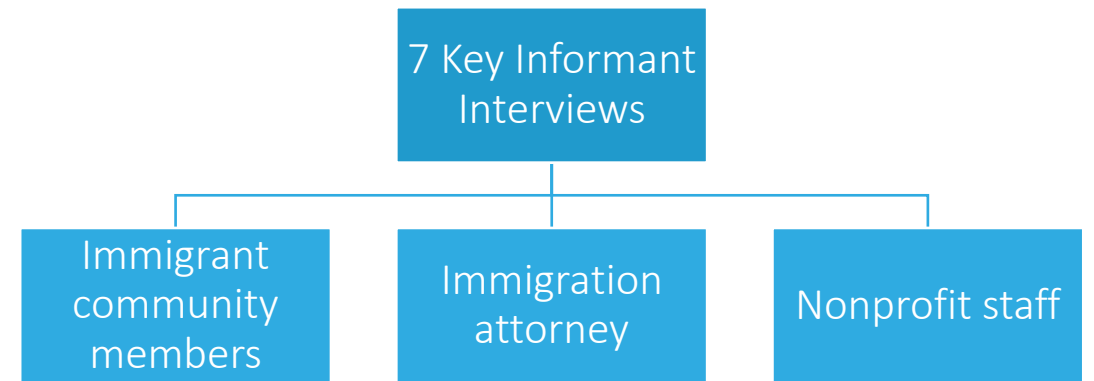
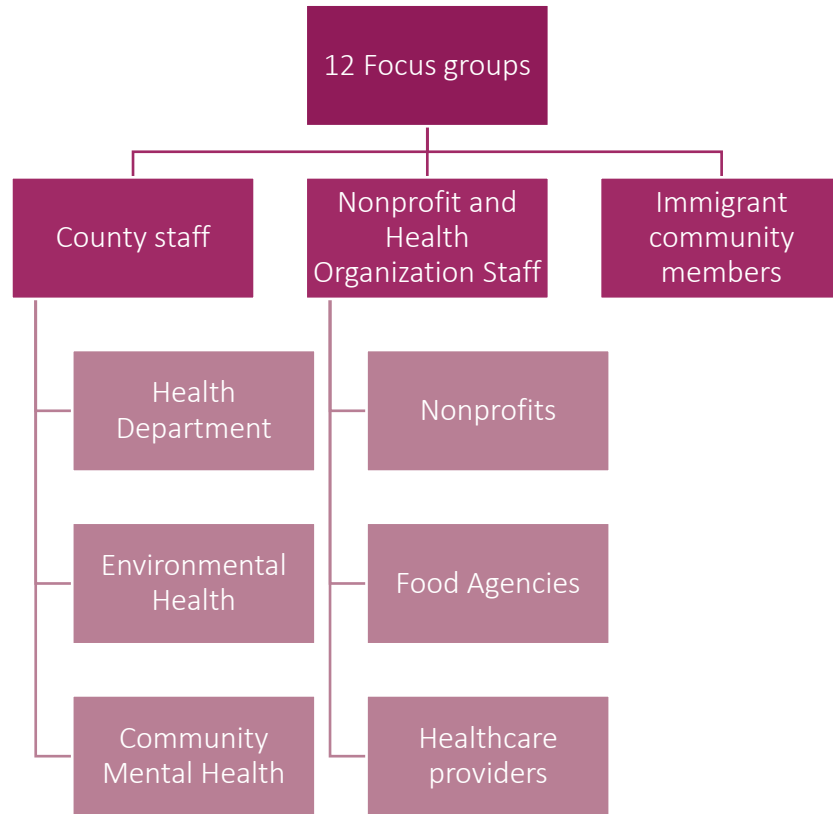
Top WCHD client languages: Spanish, Pashto, French, Arabic, Dari

Foreign Born Population in Washtenaw County by Region of Birth, 2022



Data source: 2022 ACS 1 Year Estimates, B05002

Qualitative Data Collection: Methods





Immigrant Strengths

Themes & Results





"[Of] my whole family, it was just me and my brother who could speak English. And my English wasn't good at all. So, my whole family relied on us. Translate everything. School meetings for my siblings I just had to attend because the teachers couldn't talk to my parents...Medical things – I heard stuff that I wasn't supposed to hear as a child, but I had to hear them and translate them because there's no other way around. It was very difficult."

- Immigrant from Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo

Language

“My husband was in an urgent care few years ago and the doctor in the US told me immediately in front of my husband...that he has colon cancer. That’s not our culture. In China, they will go to a comfort room or outside of the patient. America is straightforward that ‘you got a cancer.’ So, I was very shocked with it.”

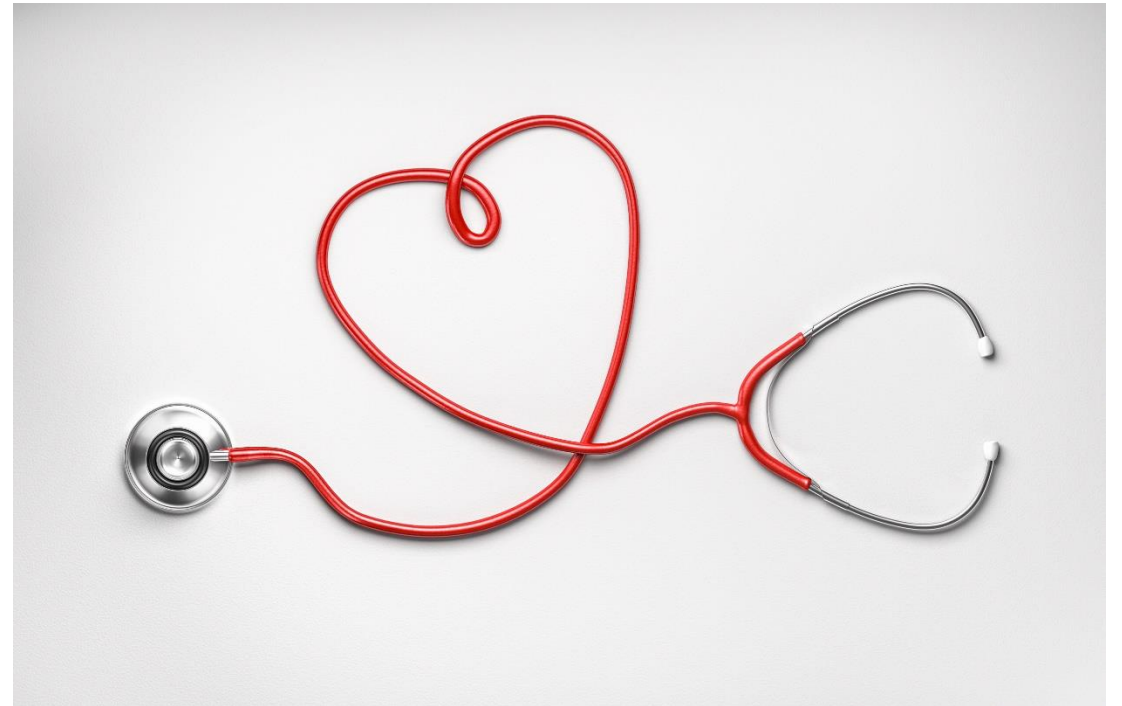
- Immigrant from China



Health Care Access & Navigation

Health Care Access & Navigation

- US healthcare system is unique
- Knowledge of the US healthcare system & navigation
 - Appointments & referrals
 - Defining routine care
 - Relationships with providers
 - Prescriptions & pharmacies



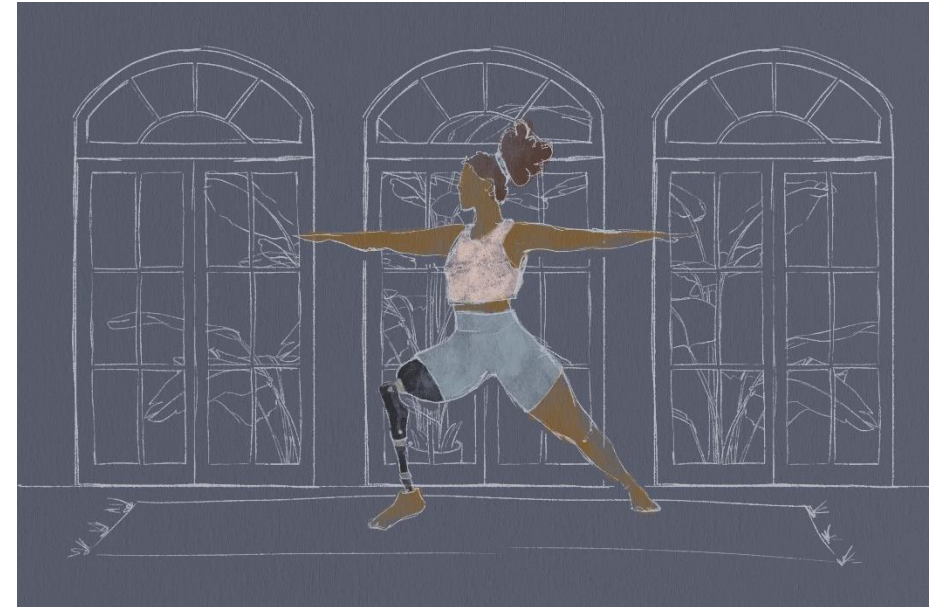
Health Care Access & Navigation

- Insurance navigation & knowledge
 - Coverage, eligibility, payment
 - Impact of lack of documentation
 - Application process assistance
 - Affordability of services



Health Care Access & Navigation

- Cultural norms affecting access
 - Gender norms
 - Fear
- Disabilities
 - Fear of social repercussions
 - Intersection of immigration status & disability



“Then I look to overseas and I see everything happening in Palestine and Lebanon and in my home countries. They’re dying, and it comes with a guilt of, I live here a comfortable life, then additionally the trauma... All these little things add up and it becomes a very heavy weight, and at times it can seem crushing. I can barely lift my head. And then that brings on more guilt that I’m failing them.”

- Immigrant nonprofit staff person from Lebanon



Mental Health

Mental Health

- **Trauma**

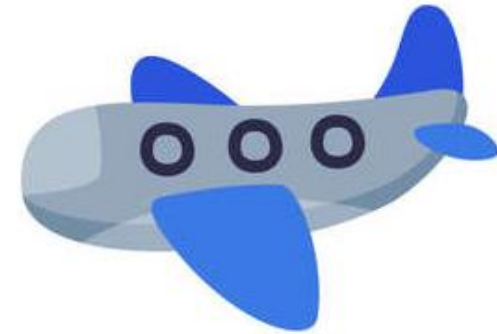
- War, immigration narrative, abuse, discrimination, acculturation

- **Stress**

- Leaving family behind, worrying about them
- Financial stress

- **Legal concerns**

- Immigration status & deportation
- Lack of driver's license & lack of own mode of transportation



Mental Health

- **Cultural Differences**
 - Treatment methods, diagnoses criteria, medications
- **Stigma**



Mental Health

- Community & isolation
 - Finding and building community
 - Loneliness
 - Older adults, especially without transportation access
 - Refugees





“Bring in food that someone hasn’t tried for three months, being in a hotel, and if you bring in something from their country that might just make their day and [make] them happy.”

- Nonprofit staff person and immigrant from Colombia

Access to Healthy Food



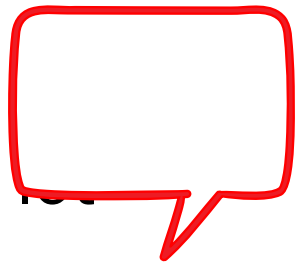
Access to Healthy Food: Barriers

- How to access SNAP benefits, if eligible
- Culturally diverse foods
- Increase in immigrants served recently for some local food pantries
 - Many immigrant groups have low English literacy



“Winning an asylum claim when you don't have access to a lot of resources to pay for counsel, or even just to put together your application or know what to expect, like the odds are stacked against you. The immigration system is stacked against people. The goal of our system is inherently to ensure white dominance in many ways. And, and so the way the law kind of plays out is, again, the cards are stacked against you, and you have to do a stellar job of presenting your case. If you can do that, then you get to win and stay. If not, then you don't...”

-- Immigration attorney



Other Themes

Other Themes

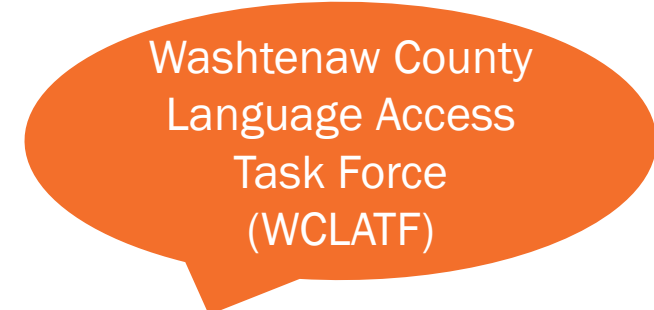
- The US is expensive and people back home don't understand that!
- The immigration system is complicated
- Cultural and gender norms are different (Intimate partner violence!)



Recommendations



Recommendations: What's Next For Us



- Alignment with Washtenaw County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)
- Supporting Welcoming Washtenaw
 - Partnerships
 - Immigrant advisory committee
- Participation & advocacy through local Language Access Task Force



Recommendations: Language

- Utilizing more graphics
- Simplified English (grade 6 max)
- Trialing video interpretation and in-person interpretation
- Supporting the hiring of staff fluent in other languages



Recommendations: Health Care Access & Navigation

- Multilingual staff — identify ways to pay a premium for fluency in desired languages
- Staff training
 - When and how to use interpretation services
 - Cultural sensitivity & appropriate care

Recommendations: Mental Health

- Staff training
 - Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR): [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network | \(nctsn.org\)](http://nctsn.org)
 - Expect trauma histories
- Provision of mental health providers who are culturally sensitive and provide culturally appropriate treatment
 - Can speak languages other than English



Recommendations: Access to Healthy Food

- Using more graphics for food items
- Providing more food delivery options from food pantries
- Providing more diverse food options
- Education
 - Using SNAP benefits
 - Financial planning for groceries



We Are Not Alone

- Many organizations are having these concerns about immigrants
- The challenge is to engage others so we can find some solutions
- "Solutions" may look different in different places.



Questions?

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Participatory modalities as a new service model:

Resettlement agencies and refugee-run groups as partners for social services

Jado NDARUHUYE

Refugee public health community engagement coordinator

Walk in refugee's shoes Icebreaker.



Institutions within refugee resettlement

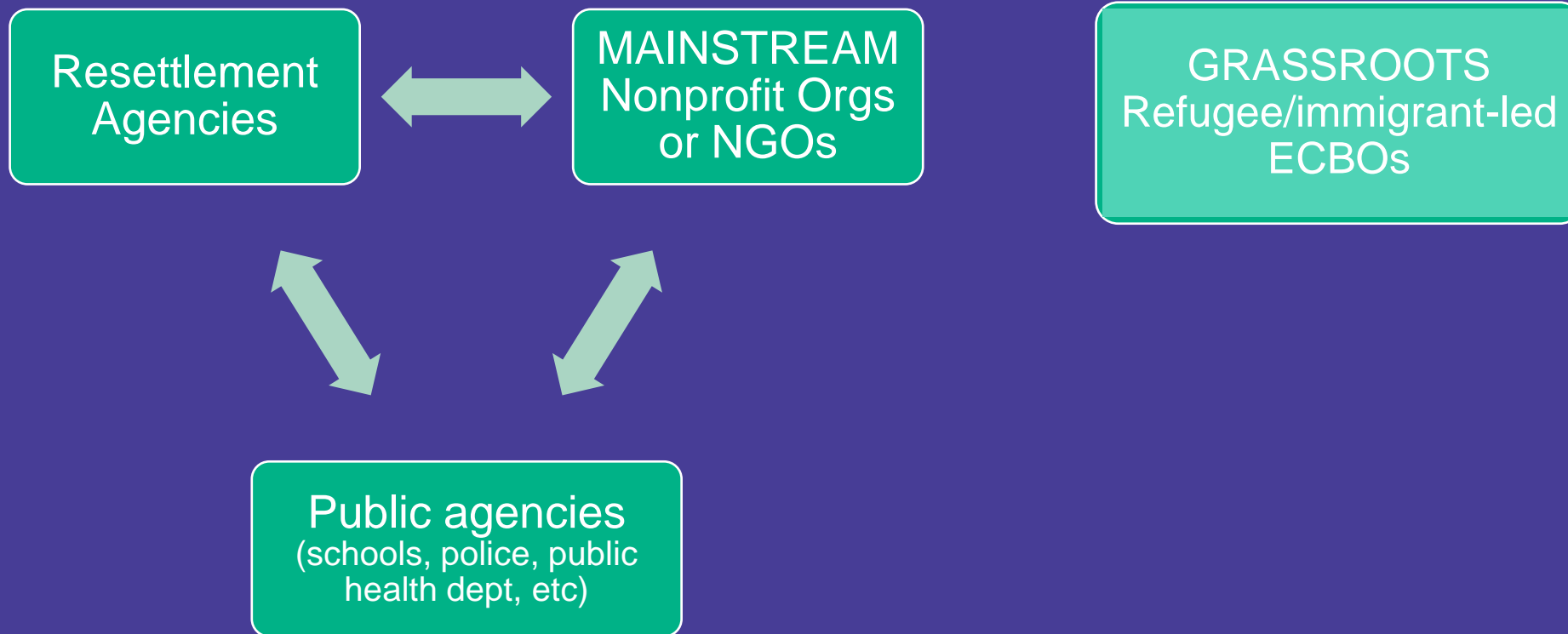
Resettlement Agencies

MAINSTREAM
Nonprofit Orgs
or NGOs

Public agencies
(schools, police, public
health dept, etc)



Institutions within refugee resettlement



Services and Activities of Refugee-led CBOs

Case Mgmt, Crisis Mgmt: Access to services + resources, translation, interpretation

Outreach Events: Informational, Educational, Social media COVID: sharing vaccination information

Targeted Sustained Programs: classes on ESL, citizenship, for parents, older adults

Cultural and Social Events: Religious events, recreation (soccer) tournaments, music events



Case study: Housing training program

- **Institutions involved:**
 - - Leadership of 1 resettlement agency
 - - Collaboration with 2 cultural navigators from 2 support NGOs
 - - Consultation with 2 Congolese refugee-led CBOs

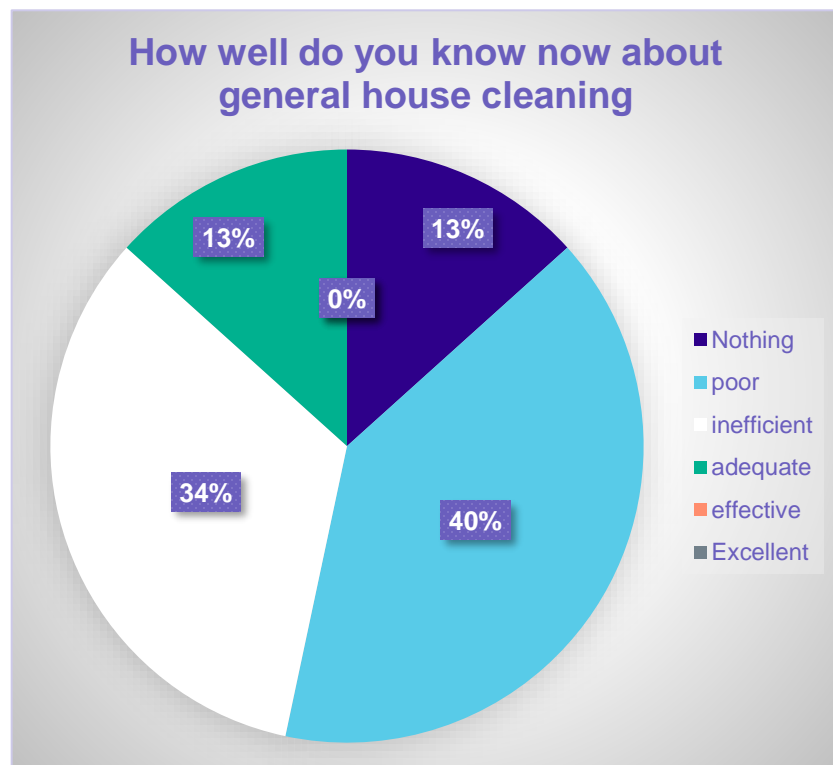


Case study: House hygiene training program

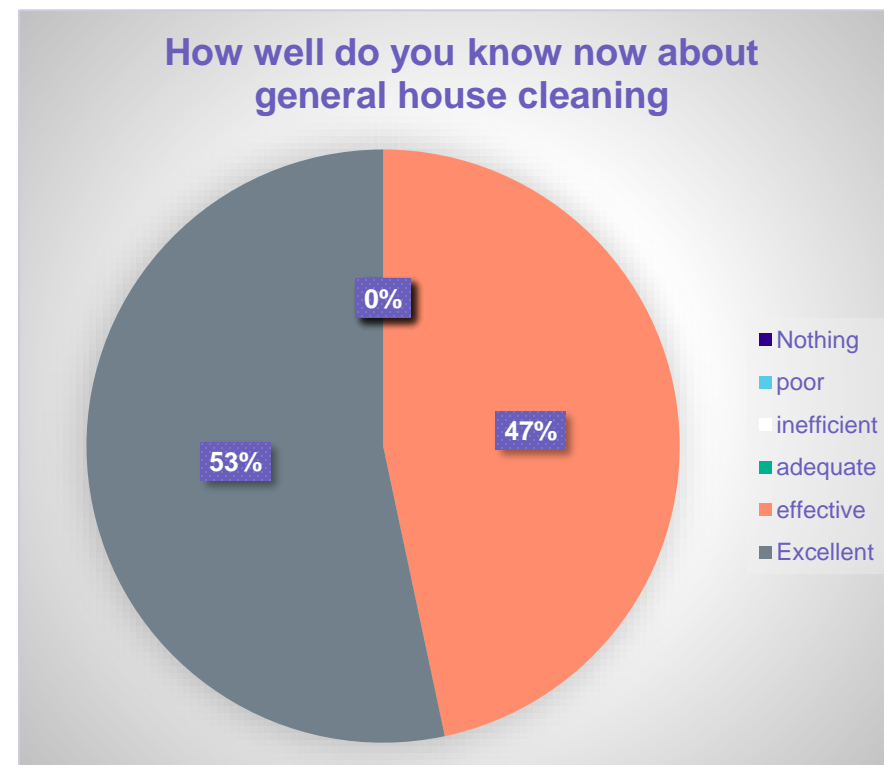


General house cleaning Knowledge

Pre-Training

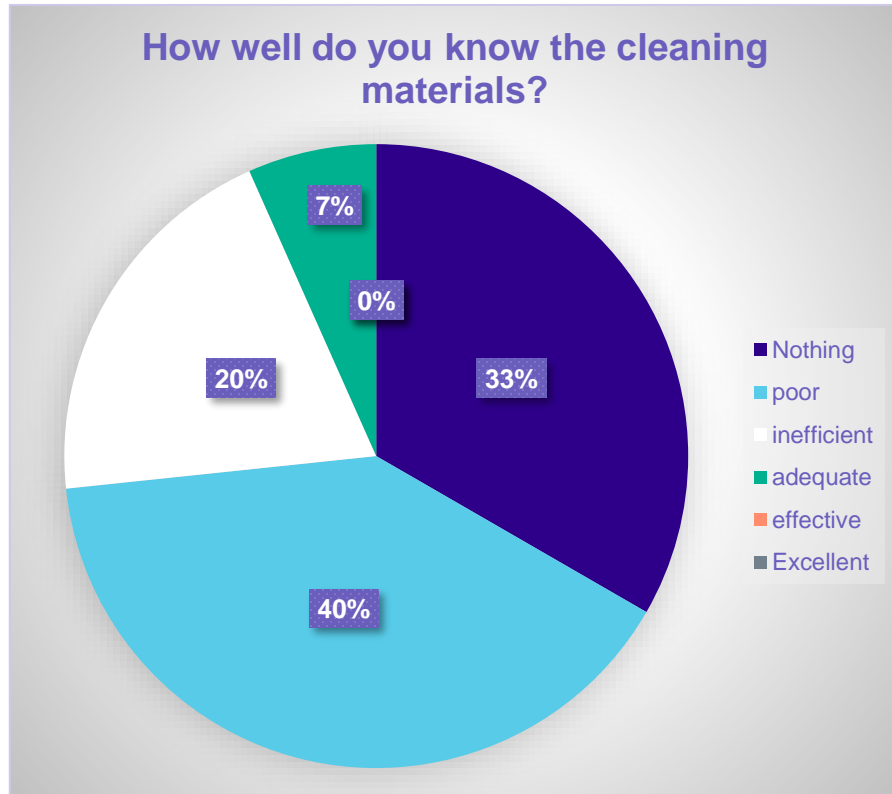


Post-Training

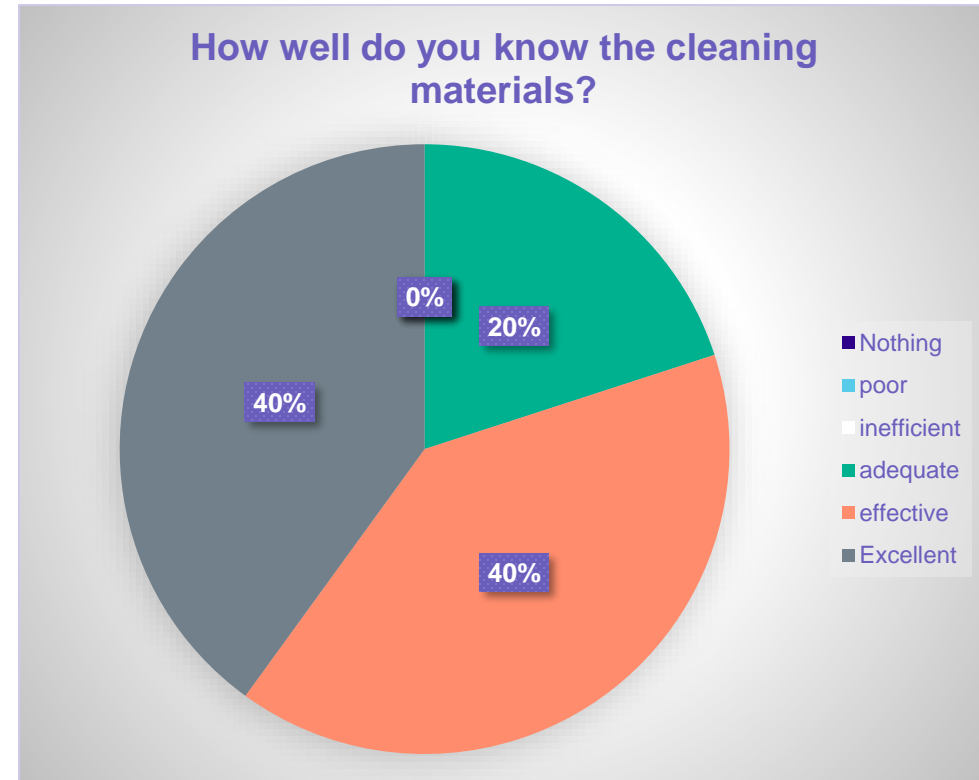


Cleaning materials Knowledge

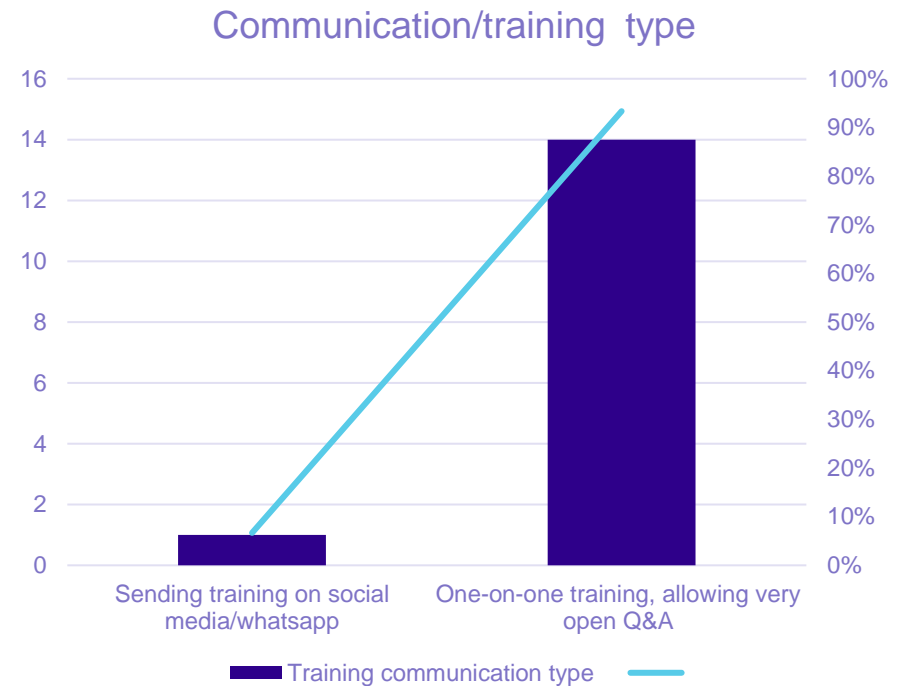
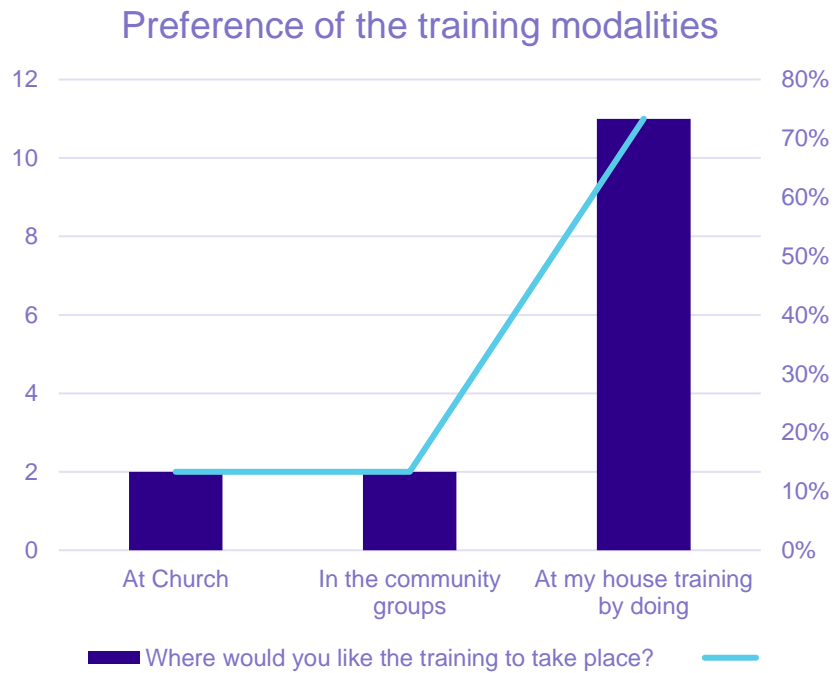
Pre-Training



Post-Training



Training venue and type preference



Thank you

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