

2021 Needs Assessment Report

JULY 2021

DERYK JACKSON

THOMAS RODRIGUEZ-SCHUCKER



Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY4

 Bergen-Passaic TGA4

INTRODUCTION5

Acknowledgments6

Demographics.....1

 Are you of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin?2

 Insurance Status4

Questions on Services.....5

Services Most Important to Link to Care6

 All Responses6

 18-24 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care.....7

 25-34 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care.....8

 35-44 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care.....9

 45-54 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care.....10

 55-64 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care.....11

 65+ Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care.....12

 Black/African American Participants – Services Most Important to Link to Care ...13

 Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Participants – Services Most Important to Link to Care
14

 Uninsured vs Insured – Services Most Important to Link to Care.....15

Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression16

 All Clients.....16

 18-24 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression17

 25-34 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression18

 35-44 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression19

 45-54 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression20

55-64 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression21

65+ Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression22

Black/African American Participants – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression23

Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Participants – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression24

COVID-19 IN THE BPTGA26

Do you plan to get the COVID-19 vaccine?26

Do you know where to get your COVID-19 vaccine?27

How do you receive information about COVID-19?27

During COVID-19, I can use the following electronic devices to stay connected to Ryan White services:.....28

The Pandemic’s Impact on Services29

Which of the following service needs have been harder to get due to the COVID-19 pandemic?29

What is helping you stay in HIV medical care during the COVID-19 pandemic30

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bergen-Passaic TGA

The City of Paterson, representing the Bergen-Passaic Transitional Grant Area (TGA), provides direct emergency relief to persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH) in the New Jersey counties of Bergen and Passaic under the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) funding. The purpose of this project is to support the comprehensive continuum of high-quality care and treatment for PLWH and to ensure the continuation of essential core medical and support services to achieve and increase HIV viral suppression rates. Using the RWHAP funding, the TGA has proposed a 'point of entry' system that focuses on ensuring creation and maintenance of consistent linkages to primary medical care for Ryan White eligible clients.

2020 was an unprecedented year with the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts that it had on Ryan White Services. The Planning & Development Committee of the Bergen-Passaic TGA Planning Council developed a Needs Assessment with questions revolving around service needs and barriers. The Needs Assessment incorporates input from a variety of key stakeholders, including PLWHA who receive HIV services, PLWHA currently not receiving HIV services but who are aware of their HIV status, medical and support service providers, and Ryan White and Non-Ryan White funded providers in the TGA.

The primary objective of this Needs Assessment is to assess the current needs of consumers within the TGA and use that consumer feedback to input into the Priority Settings and Resource Allocations Process. In order to cast a wide net to increase our understanding of the unique circumstances that the pandemic has created, participants were asked specific questions focusing on access to services, and utilization during the pandemic.

This report outlines which services consumers prioritize when it comes to being linked to care and maintaining viral suppression. This report also takes a look at services that were hard to access, and the services that were helping individuals stay in their HIV medical care during the pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

The TGA, located in northeastern New Jersey, is geographically the fourth (Bergen) and seventh (Passaic) smallest of the 21-counties in New Jersey planning region and contains 16.14% of the State's population. There are 4,418¹ persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH). The City of Paterson (Passaic County), the largest epicenter for HIV incidence in the TGA, remains one of the ten IMPACT cities in New Jersey with highest concentrations of HIV infection.²

The Bergen-Passaic Transitional Grant Area (TGA), general population is 1,461,014. The TGA is comprised of two counties located in the northeastern corner of New Jersey accounting for. The TGA is densely populated with 16% of the State's population residing in the TGA. Approximately one-third of its residents live at or below 300% of the federal poverty level. Passaic County is among the poorest counties in New Jersey. Social and economic indicators rank Paterson among the worst in the state. The TGA is a rich mosaic of racial and ethnic cultures as well. In both counties combined, 30% are foreign born with more than fifty languages spoken in the home.³

During the 2020 grant year, the Bergen-Passaic Ryan White Part A program was devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many subrecipient offices were closed to in-person evaluations and consultation, which resulted in more telehealth visit, or less contact with clients. In a recent study *The Impact of COVID-19 and the Critical Need for Case Management (2020)*⁴ states:

The global coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic will have significant impacts for both health systems and patients. It is clear there will be economic, clinical, and psychosocial consequences, among others. Although these consequences continue to be better understood, especially the magnitude of the financial losses to hospitals (Ellison, 2020), the silver lining during this pandemic is that new and creative innovative ways to connect and support patients are now occurring. It is remarkable to witness how these innovative ways have been implemented in a short amount of time. Although there will continue to be unique and more traditional elements of care, the COVID-19 pandemic is demonstrating how "new models" in health care, such as virtual patient care and digital outreach, can be more readily available to patients. Case Managers and Social workers will be essential in their duties in coordinating care, supporting patients in the management of chronic illness and post hospital care, and advocacy and interventions in social determinants of health.

¹ New Jersey Department of Health (2020). Attachment 3: HIV/AIDS Demographic Table. Division of HIV, STD and TB Services (DHSTS): Epidemiologic Services Unit. New Jersey eHARS Data as of December 31, 2019.

² New Jersey Department of Health (2020). 10 Major Cities Service by IMPACT initiative. Web. 19 September 2020. <https://www.state.nj.us/health/hivstdtb/hiv-aids/cities.shtml>.

³ Census.gov. (2017). State and County QuickFacts. [Quickfacts.census.gov](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html). Retrieved 15 August 2018, from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>

⁴ Geld, Bonnie MSW *The Impact of COVID-19 and the Critical Need for Case Management, Professional Case Management: September/October 2020 - Volume 25 - Issue 5 - p 300-303*

The Planning council continued to conduct business virtually to address the needs of consumers living in the TGA. This survey was administered out via email to all subrecipients and Planning Council members and was encouraged to be shared throughout the community.

The survey collected 163 responses with an overall 71% survey completion rate. This survey captures the feedback of approximately 3% of all PLWH in the TGA and 10 % of consumers of Ryan White Part A funds. This survey was open and available to all PLWH in New Jersey, regardless of if they are consumers of Part A services.



There are approximately 4,418 persons living with HIV/AIDS in the TGA.



The 2021 Bergen-Passaic Needs Assessment collected 163 total responses

Acknowledgments

This Needs Assessment would not have been possible without the efforts and support of many. First, we thank the nearly 163 participants who took the time to complete the survey. The information derived reflects their too often unheard voices.

We thank the ever so hard-working commissioners of the Bergen-Passaic TGA Planning Council, the City of Patterson including the entire Ryan White Part A recipient and staff. None of this would have been possible without their unwavering efforts and determination to continue the role of the Planning Council in these times.

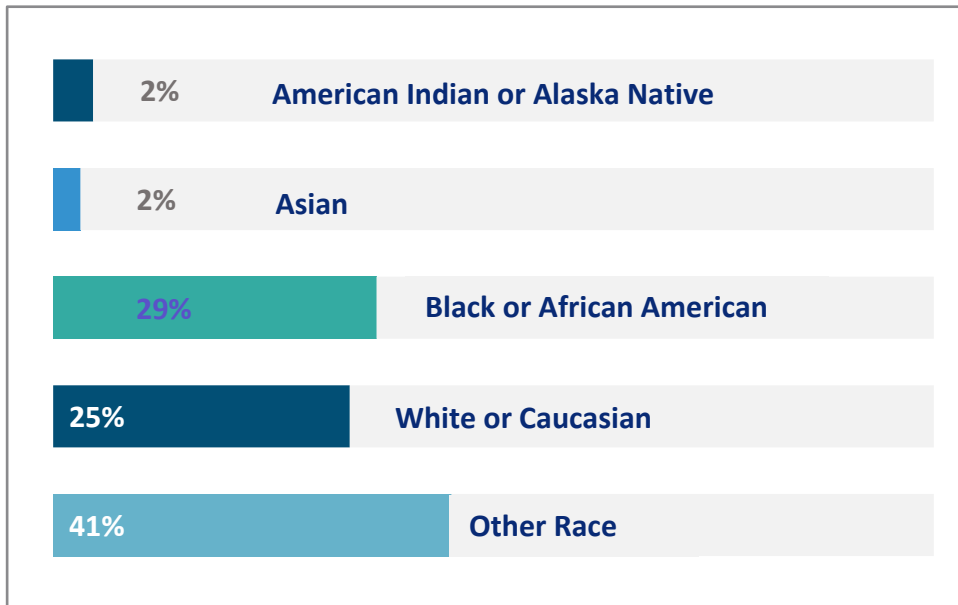
Special thanks to the subrecipients of the Bergen-Passaic TGA who assisted clients in filling out the survey.

Demographics

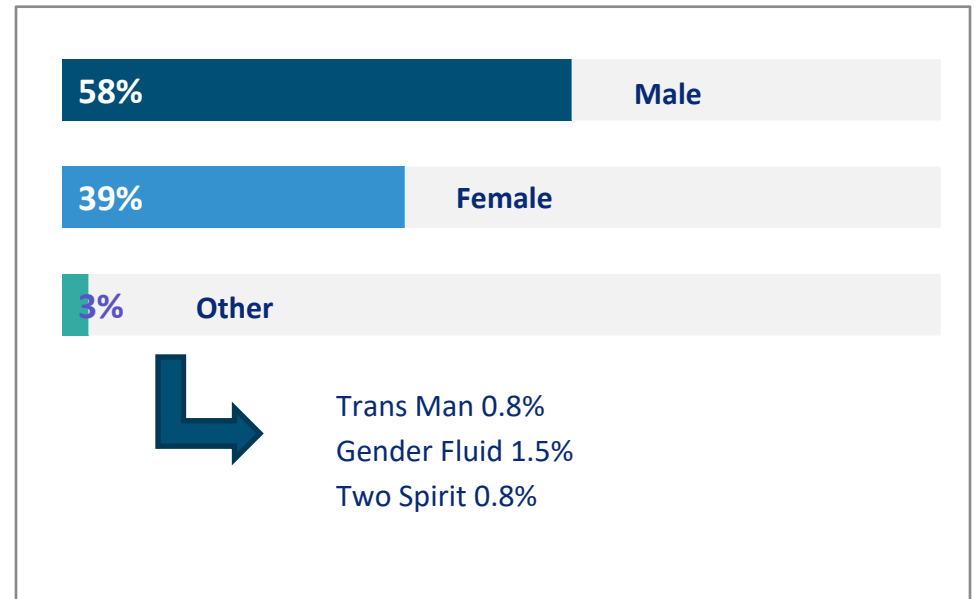
While Whites comprise 74% of the general population, they represent only 21% of PLWH in the TGA. On the other hand, African American/Black's comprise only 11% of the TGA's general population but 28% of PLWH. Hispanic/Latinos are 31% of the population but 47% of PLWH.



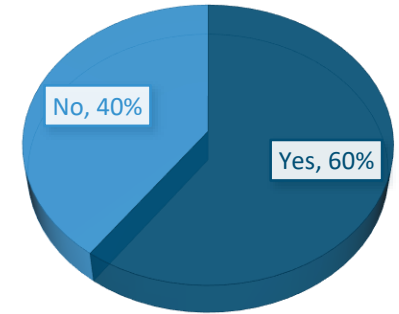
RACE/ETHNICITY



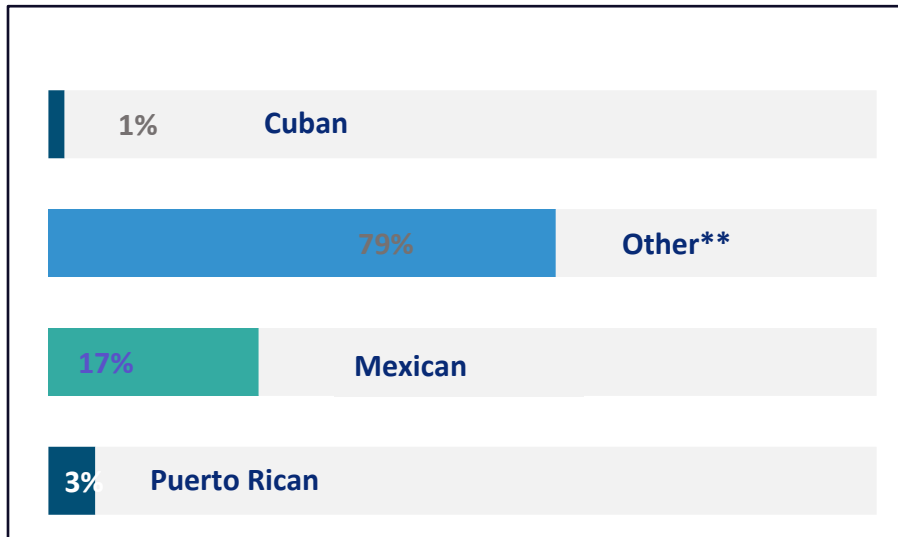
GENDER



Are you of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin?



- 60% of participants who answered this question identified as Hispanic, Latinx, or of Spanish origin.
- Of the participants who selected “Other Race”, 43 of the 52 individuals (83%) identified with being of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin.

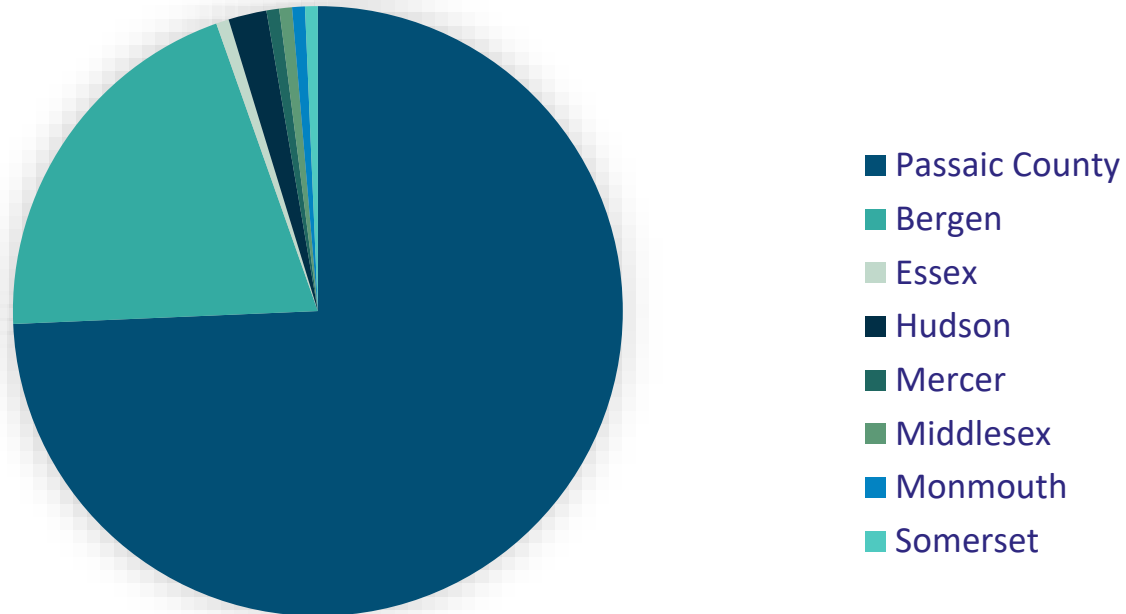


ETHNICITY BREAKDOWN



**In this survey, the term Other is defined as “includes all individuals who identify with one or more nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central and South America, and other Spanish Cultures. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Guatemalan, Honduran, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, Peruvian, Venezuelan, etc.

Participants by County



The Bergen-Passaic TGA, population 1,434,028, is comprised of two counties located in northeastern New Jersey bordering New York City and Newark⁵. The majority of HIV cases are found in the urban centers of Paterson, Passaic City, and Hackensack.

The Bergen-Passaic TGA is densely populated with 3,865 persons per square mile in Bergen and 2,705 in Passaic, outpacing the state by more than 1,520 persons per square mile. Approximately one-third of residents live at or below 300% of the federal poverty level. Passaic County (48%) is among the poorest counties in the state based on the percentage of population living below 300% of the FPL.

County	Percentage of Participants
<i>Passaic</i>	74.32%
<i>Bergen</i>	20.27%
<i>Essex</i>	0.68%
<i>Hudson</i>	2.03%
<i>Mercer</i>	0.68%
<i>Monmouth</i>	0.68%
<i>Middlesex</i>	0.68%
<i>Somerset</i>	0.68%

5

United States Census Bureau. 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office. Web. 19 September 2020. <http://www.census.gov/>.

Insurance Status

TGA Consumers

11% Private Health Insurance

10% Medicaid

4% Medicare

7% Uninsured

30% Other/Unknown



Survey Participants

15% Private Health Insurance

34% Medicare

39% Medicaid

21% Uninsured

Medicare and Medicaid did have an overlap in coverage for some participants. 13% of participants identified having both Medicare and Medicaid.

Questions on Services

Participants were asked to rank services on a scale of 1-10 (*10 being most important*) for two questions.

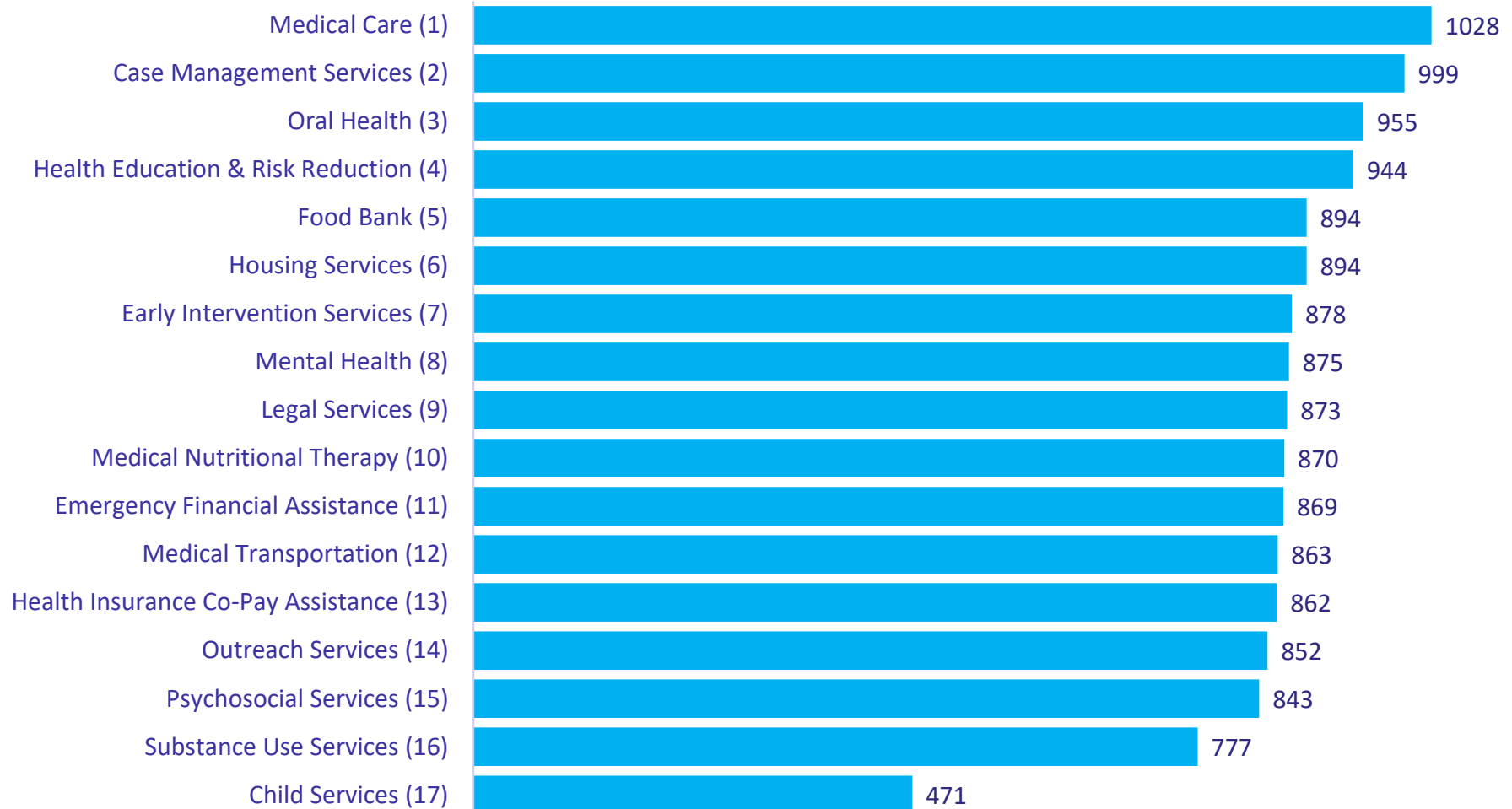
1. What Services are most important to link someone into medical care?
2. What services are most important for someone to maintain viral suppression?

In this section you will see the aggregate ranking of services for all participants, and then subsequently the rankings in specific demographics:

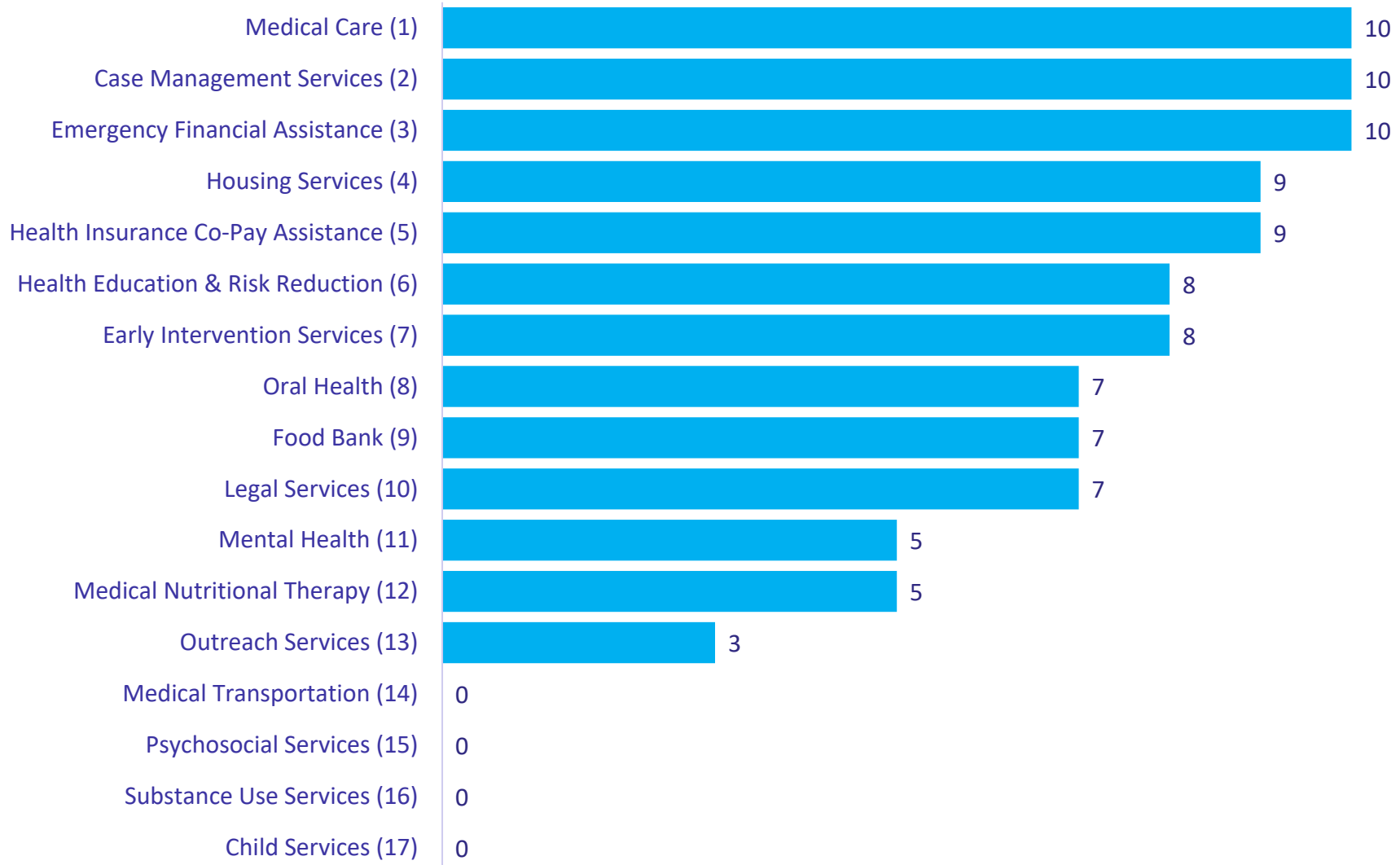
- Age
- Race
- Insurance Status

Services Most Important to Link to Care

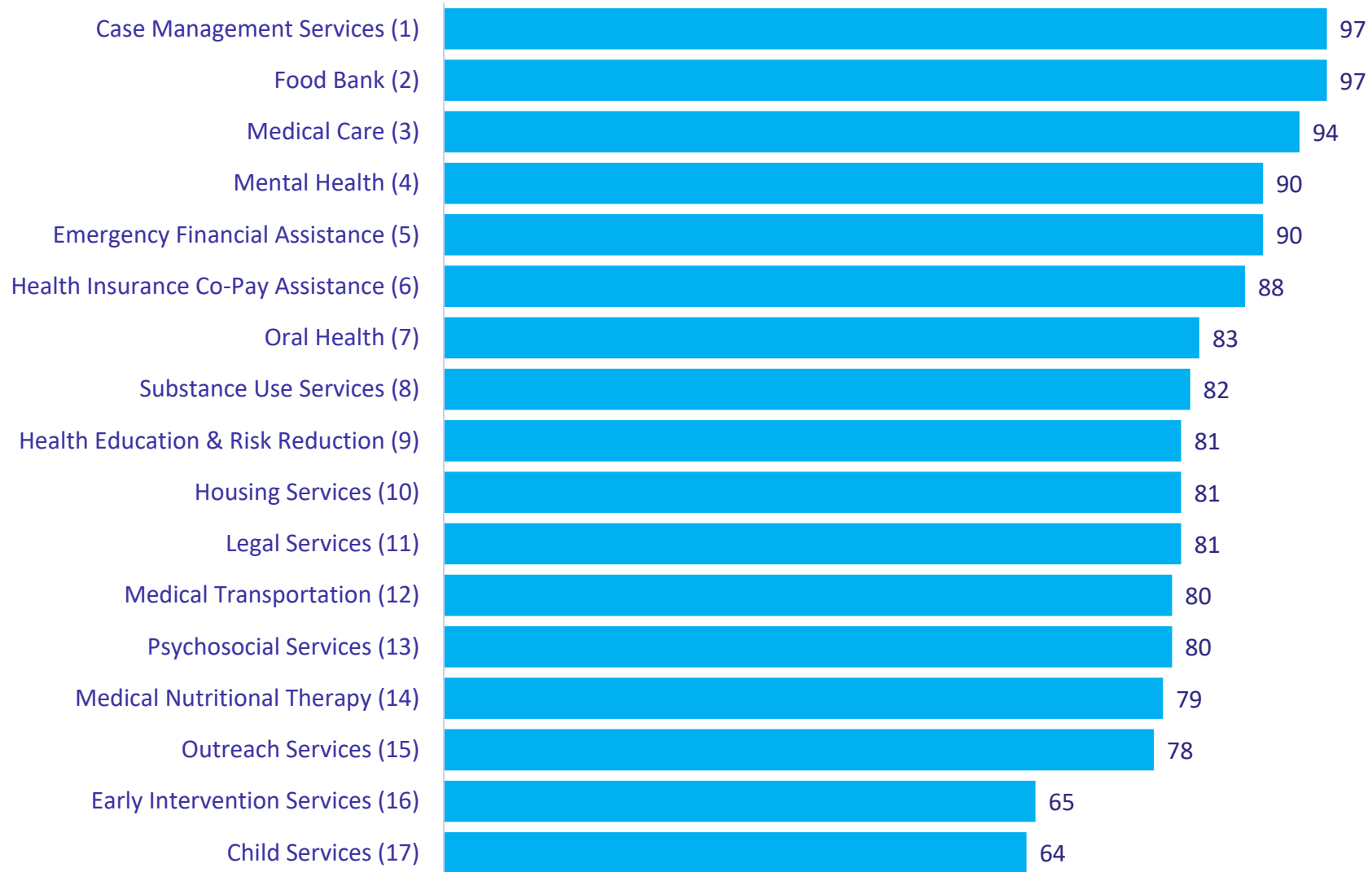
All Responses



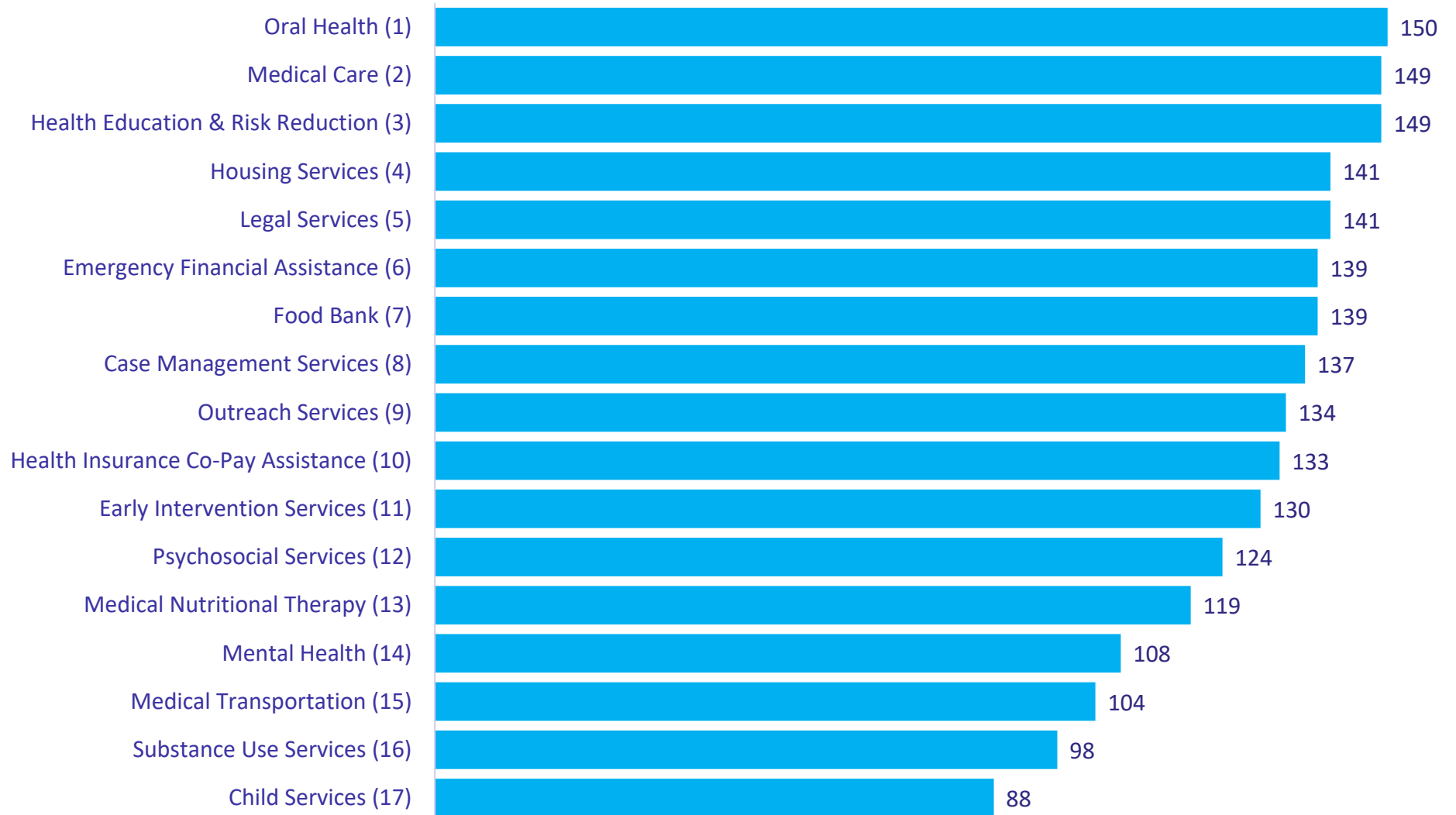
18-24 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care



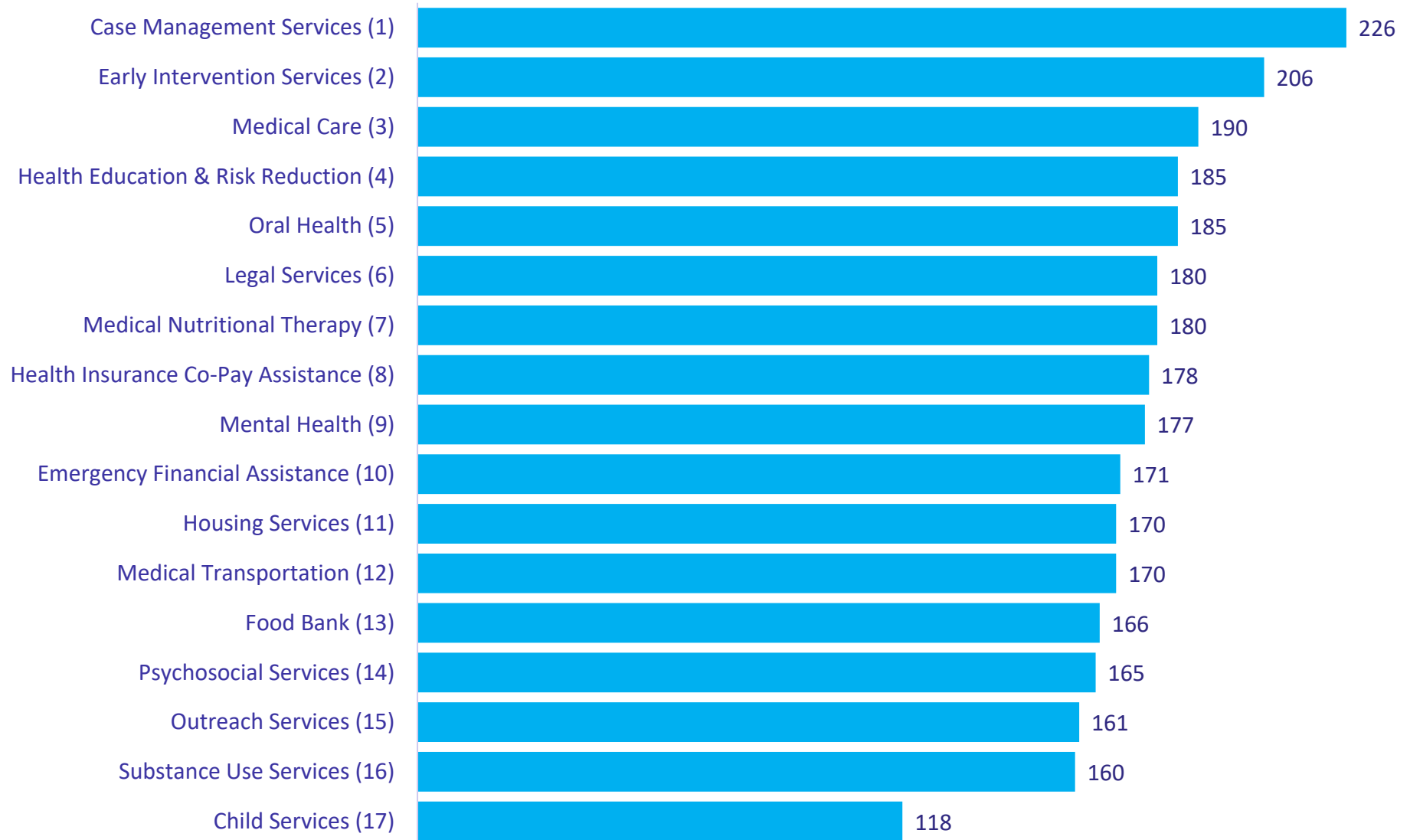
25-34 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care



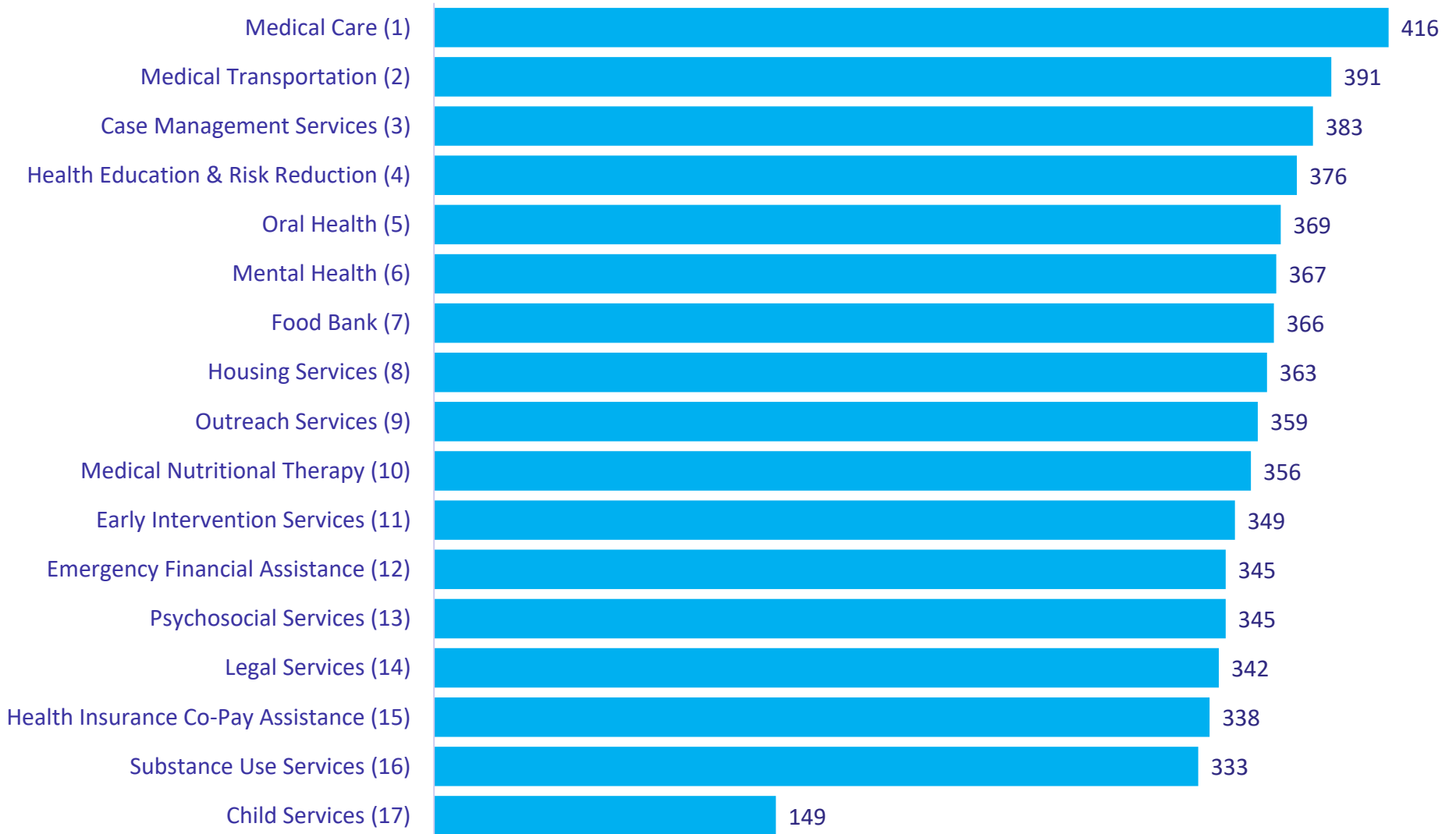
35-44 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care



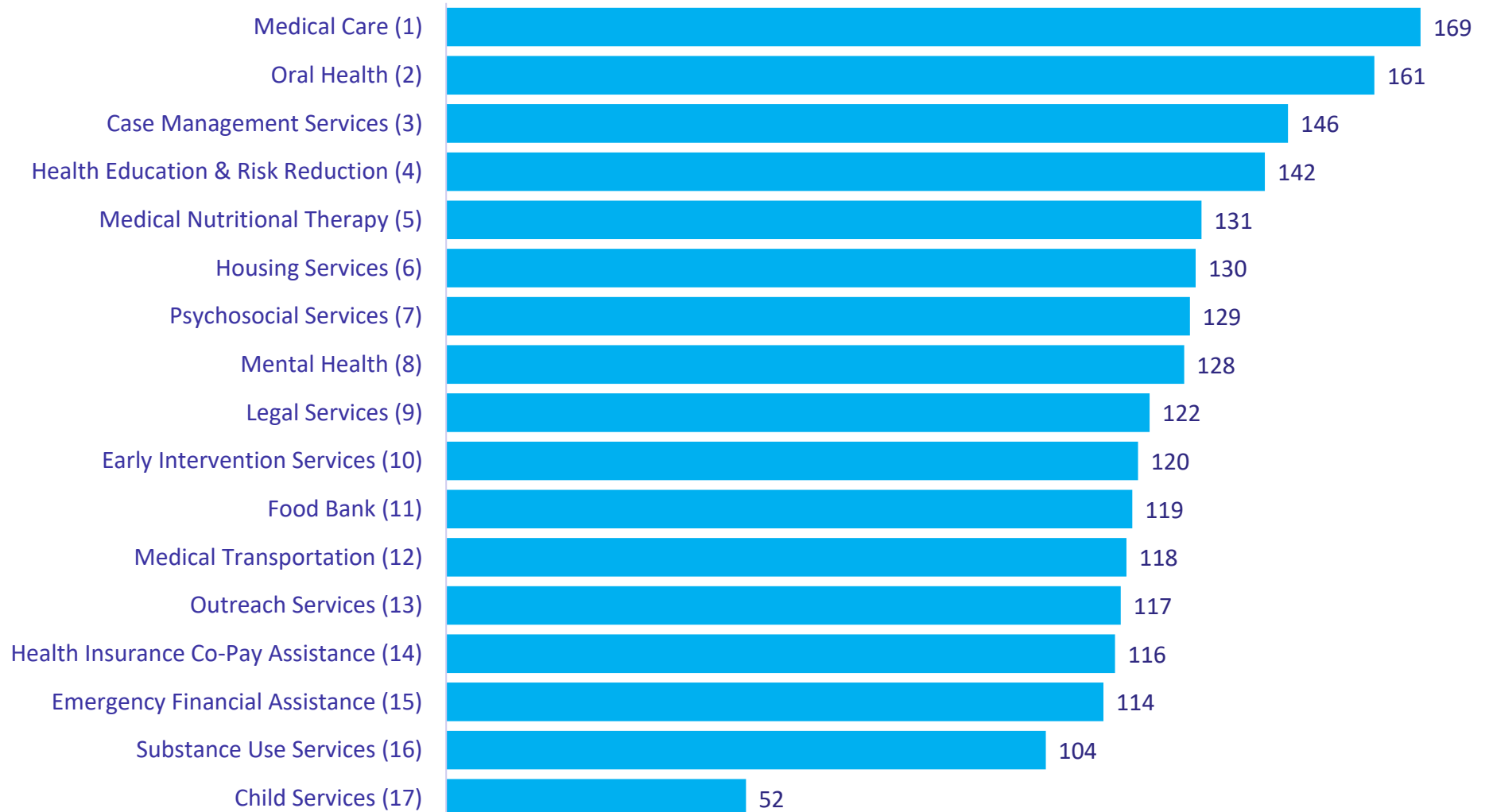
45-54 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care



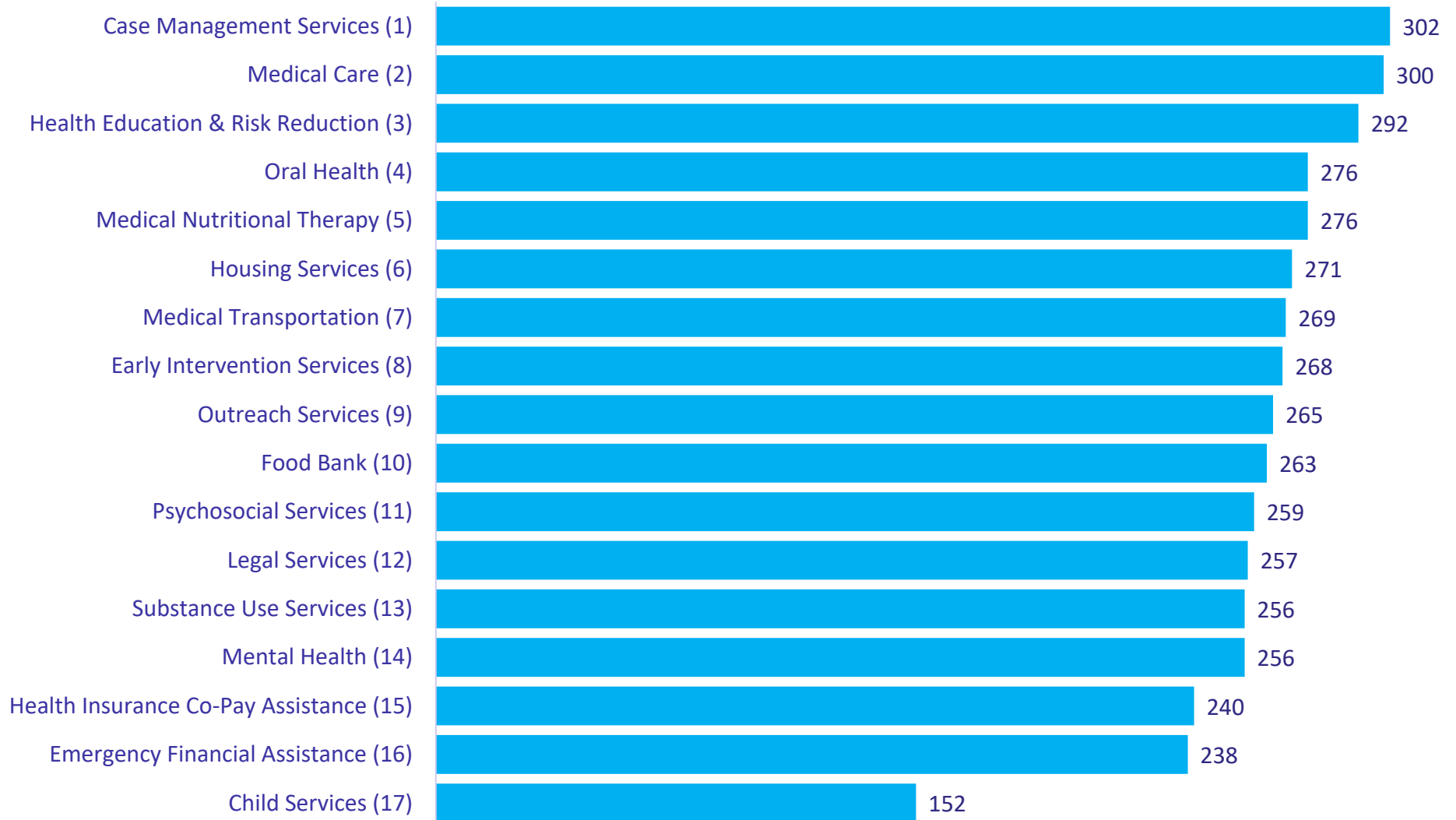
55-64 Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care



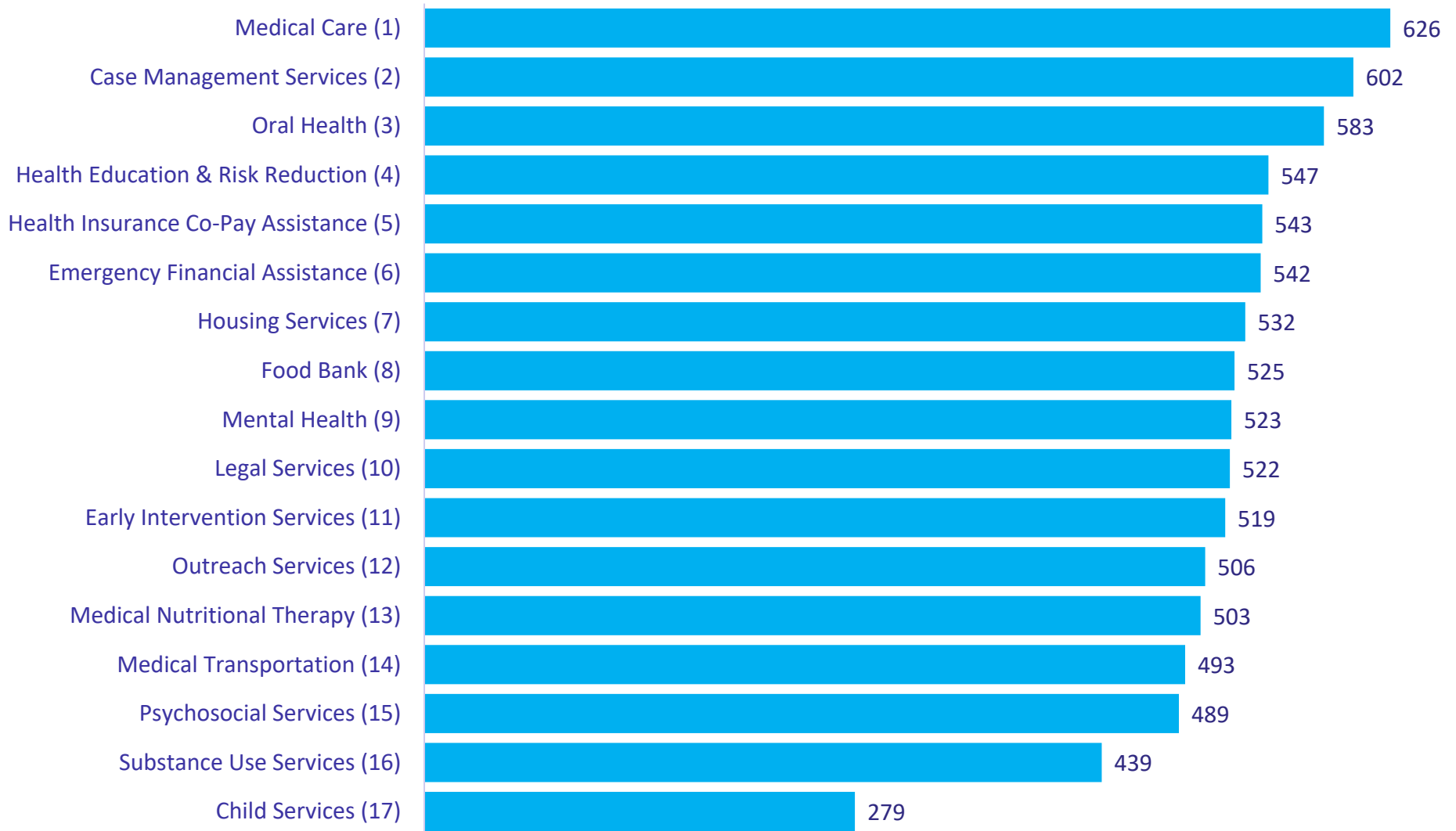
65+ Age Group – Services Most Important to Link to Care



Black/African American Participants – Services Most Important to Link to Care



Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Participants – Services Most Important to Link to Care

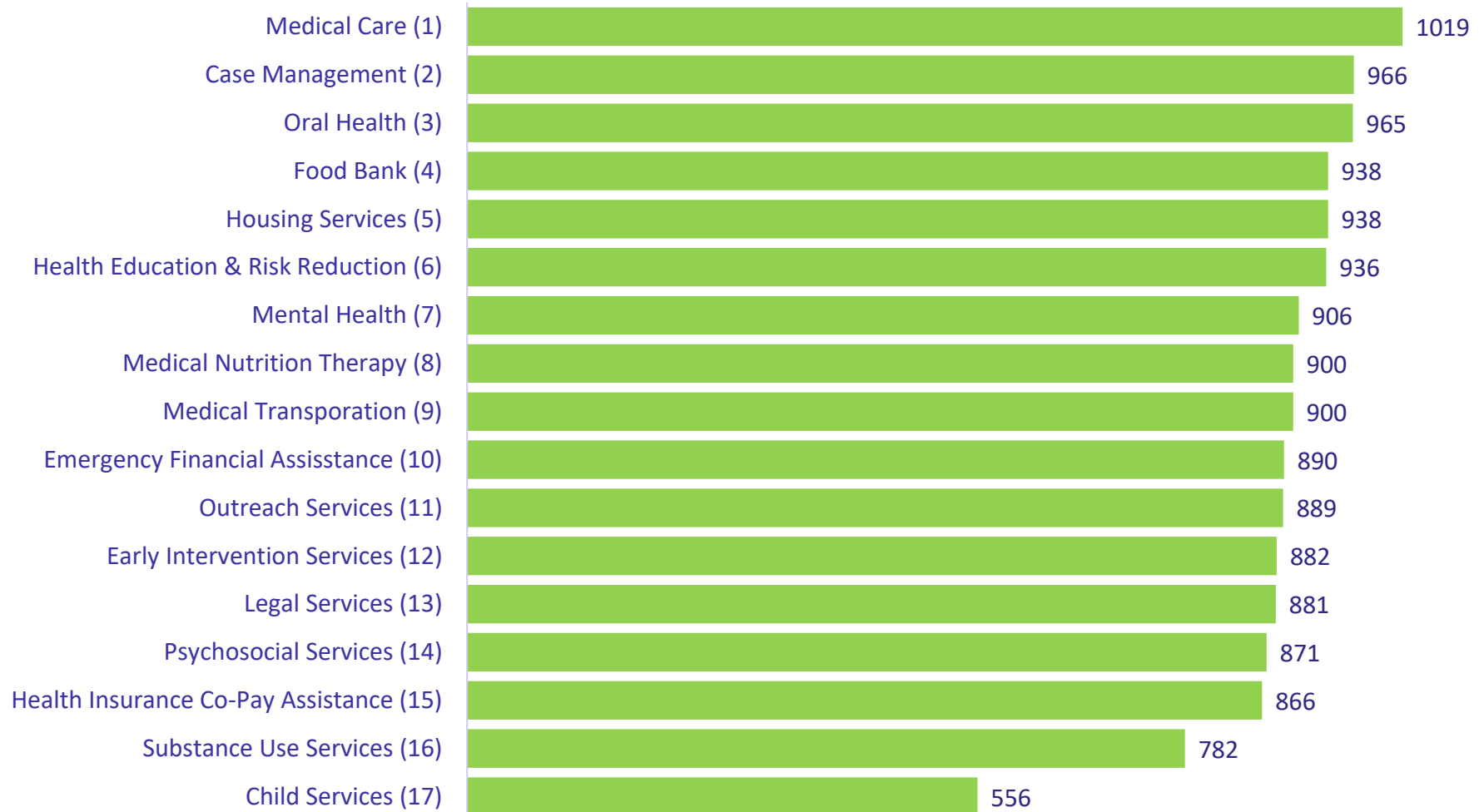


Uninsured vs Insured – Services Most Important to Link to Care

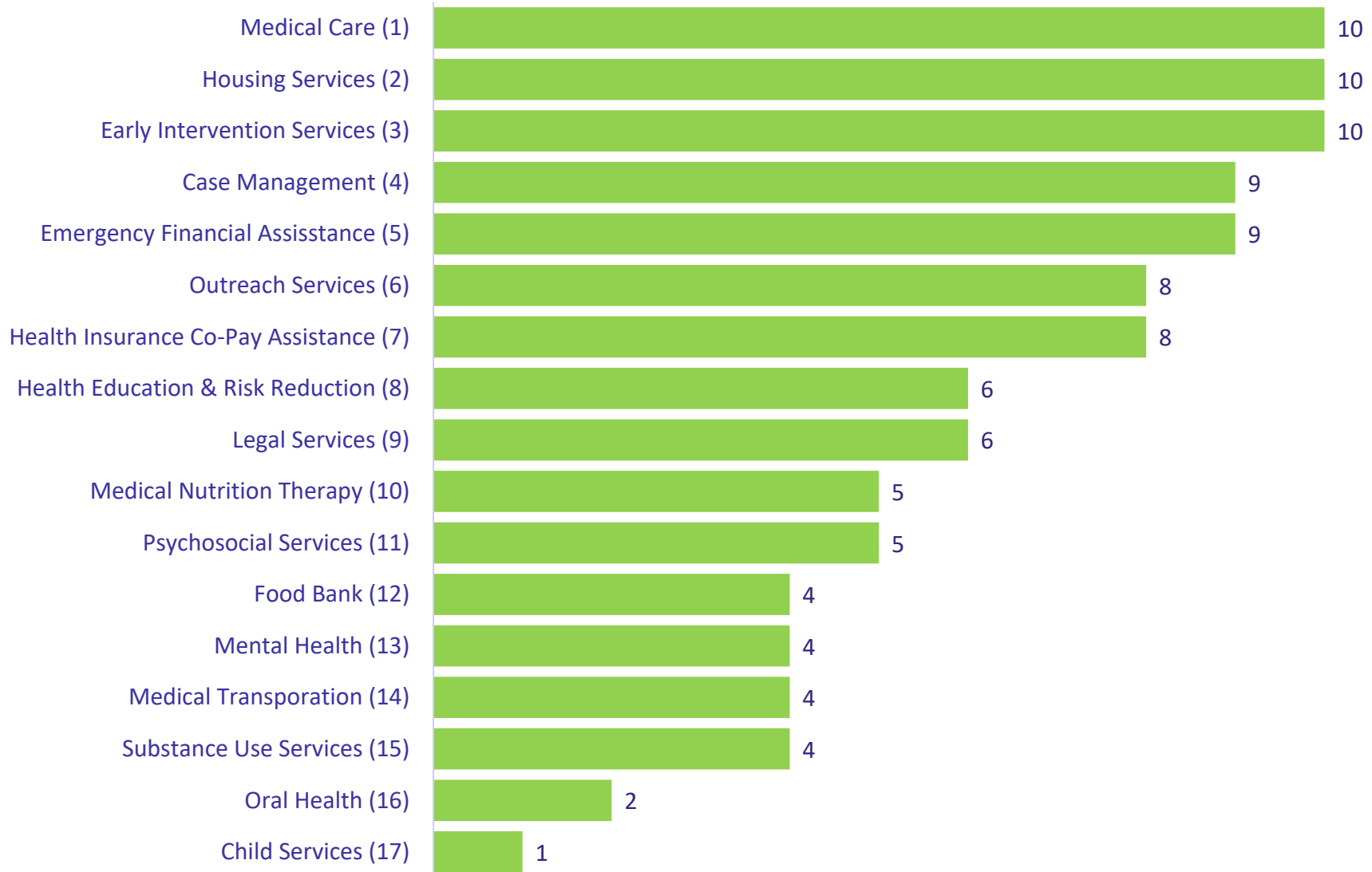
RANKING	UNINSURED	INSURED- (EMPLOYER, DIRECT PURCHASE, MEDICAID, MEDICARE)
1	Medical Care	Medical Care
2	Oral Health	Case Management Services
3	Outreach Services	Oral Health
4	Legal Services	Health Education & Risk Reduction
5	Emergency Financial Assistance	Food Bank
6	Housing Services	Mental Health
7	Health Education & Risk Reduction	Medical Transportation
8	Early Intervention Services	Housing Services
9	Health Insurance Co-Pay Assistance	Medical Nutritional Therapy
10	Case Management Services	Early Intervention Services
11	Food Bank	Legal Services
12	Psychosocial Services	Emergency Financial Assistance
13	Medical Nutritional Therapy	Health Insurance Co-Pay Assistance
14	Mental Health	Psychosocial Services
15	Medical Transportation	Outreach Services
16	Substance Use Services	Substance Use Services
17	Child Services	Child Services

Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression

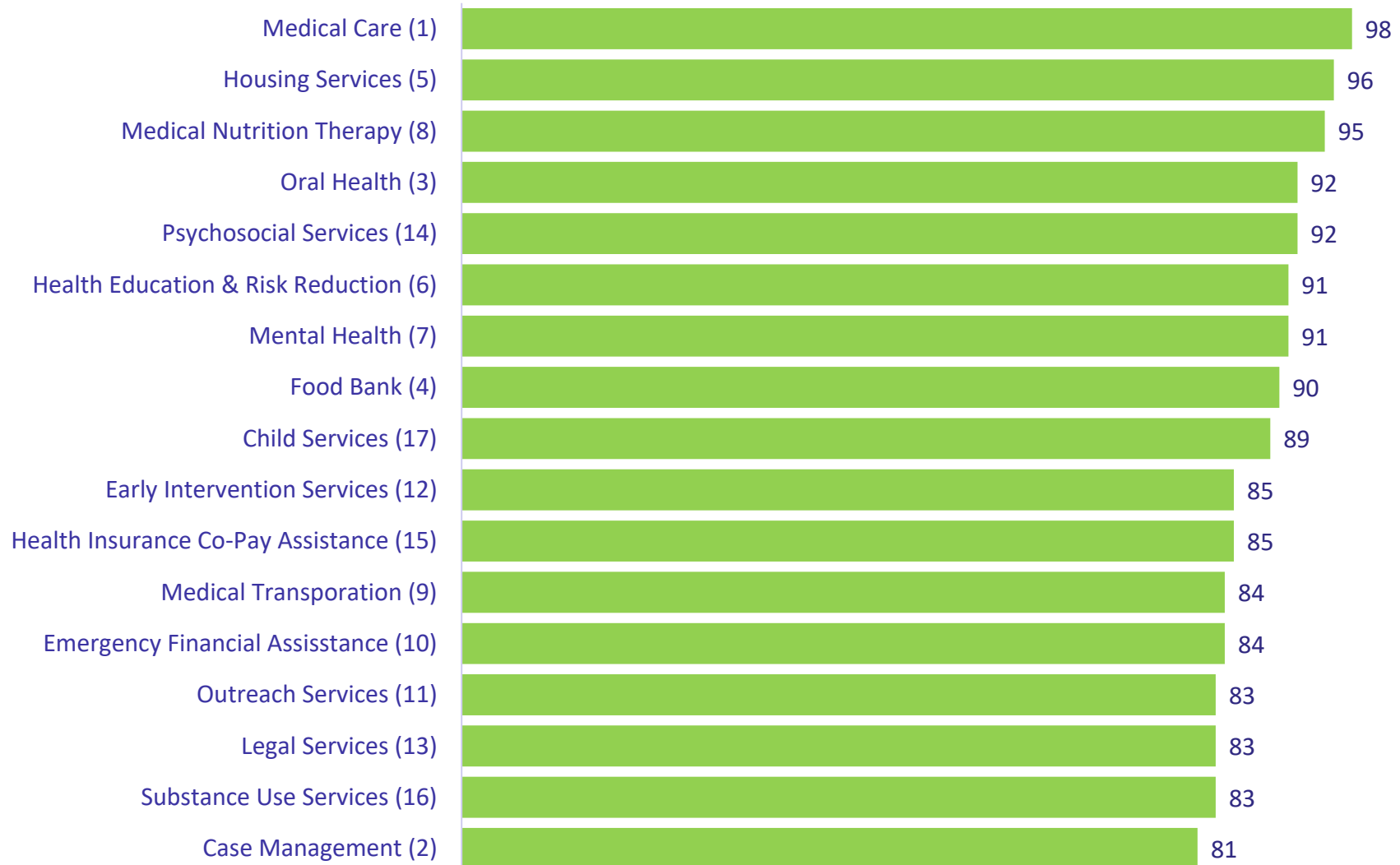
All Clients



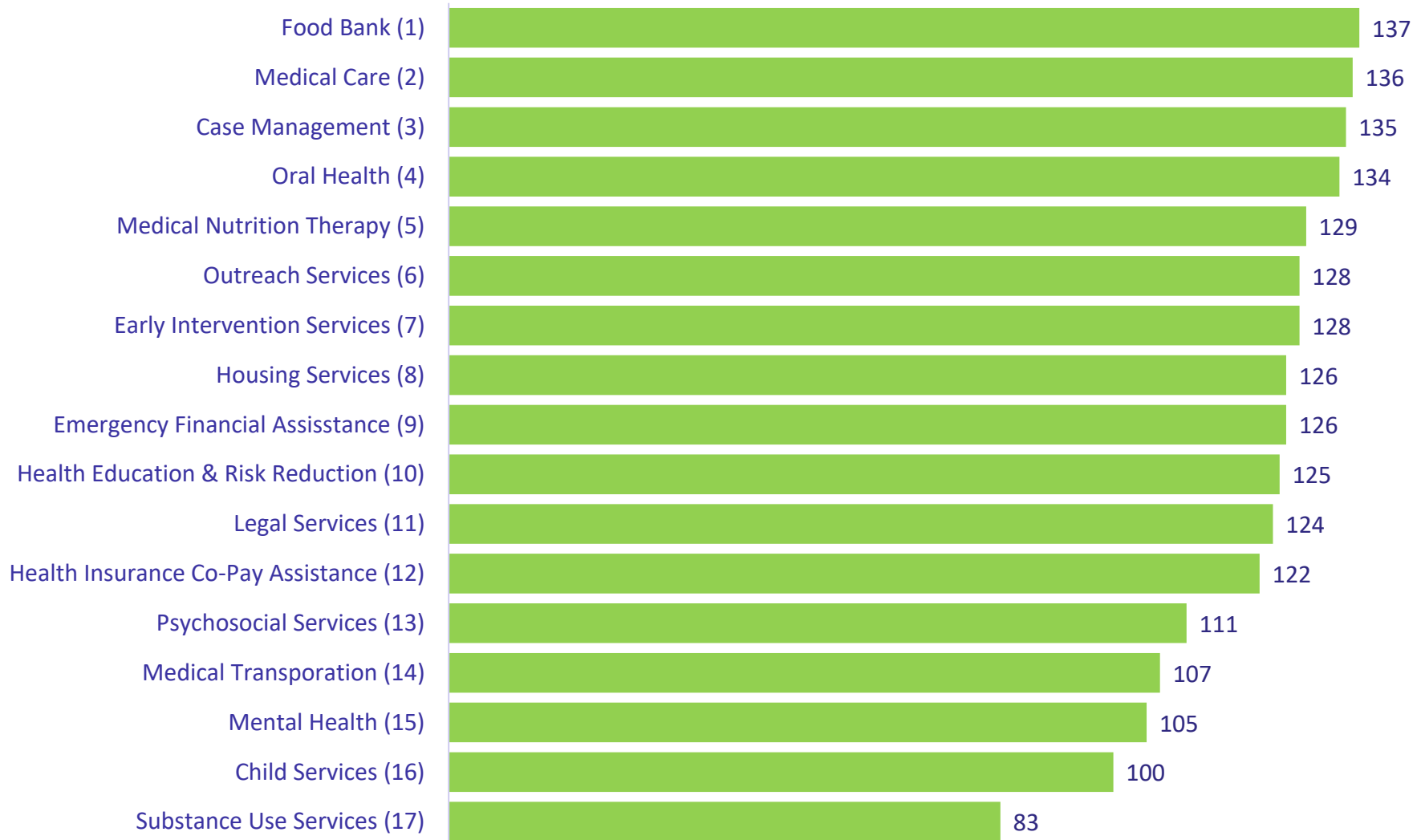
18-24 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression



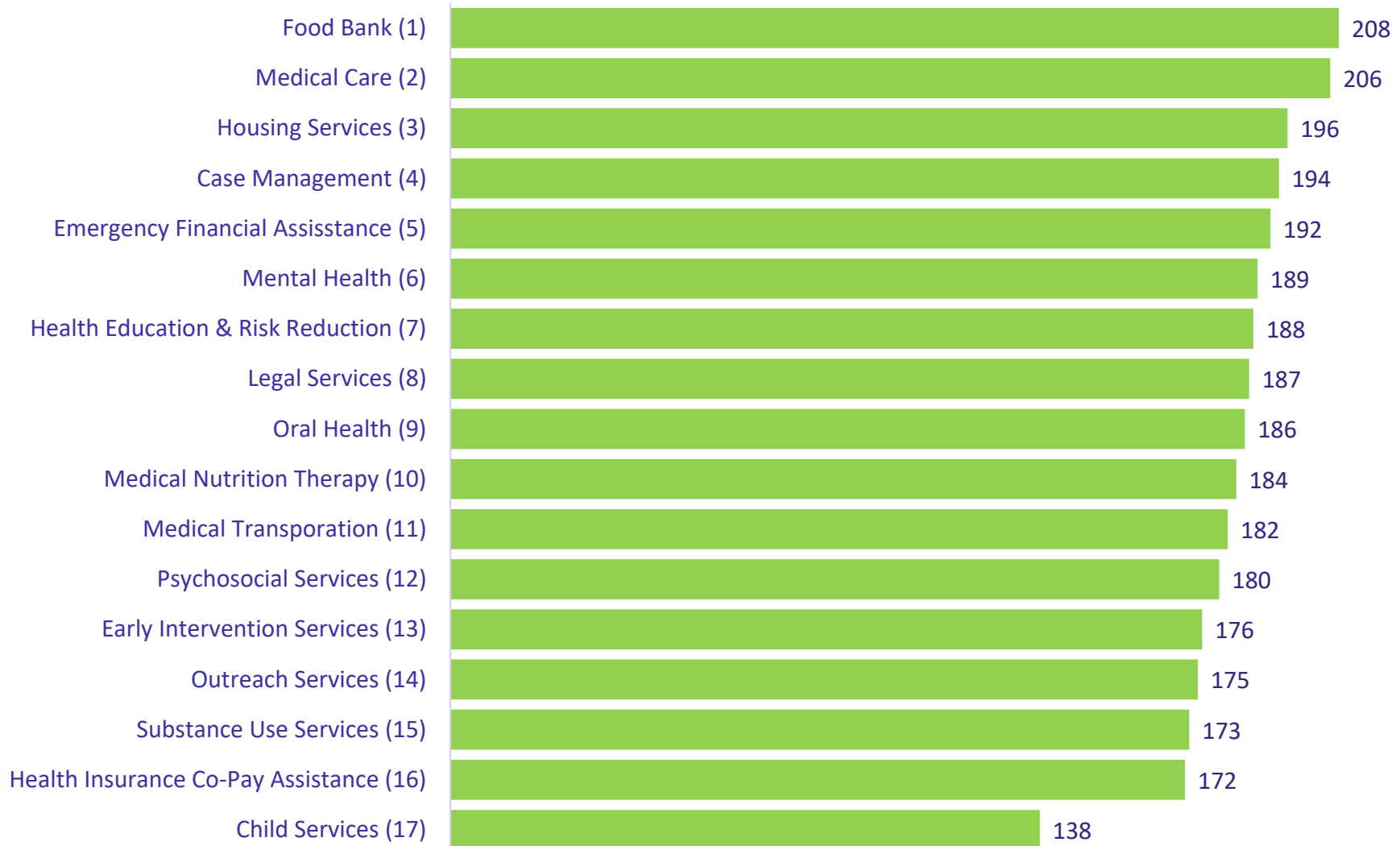
25-34 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression



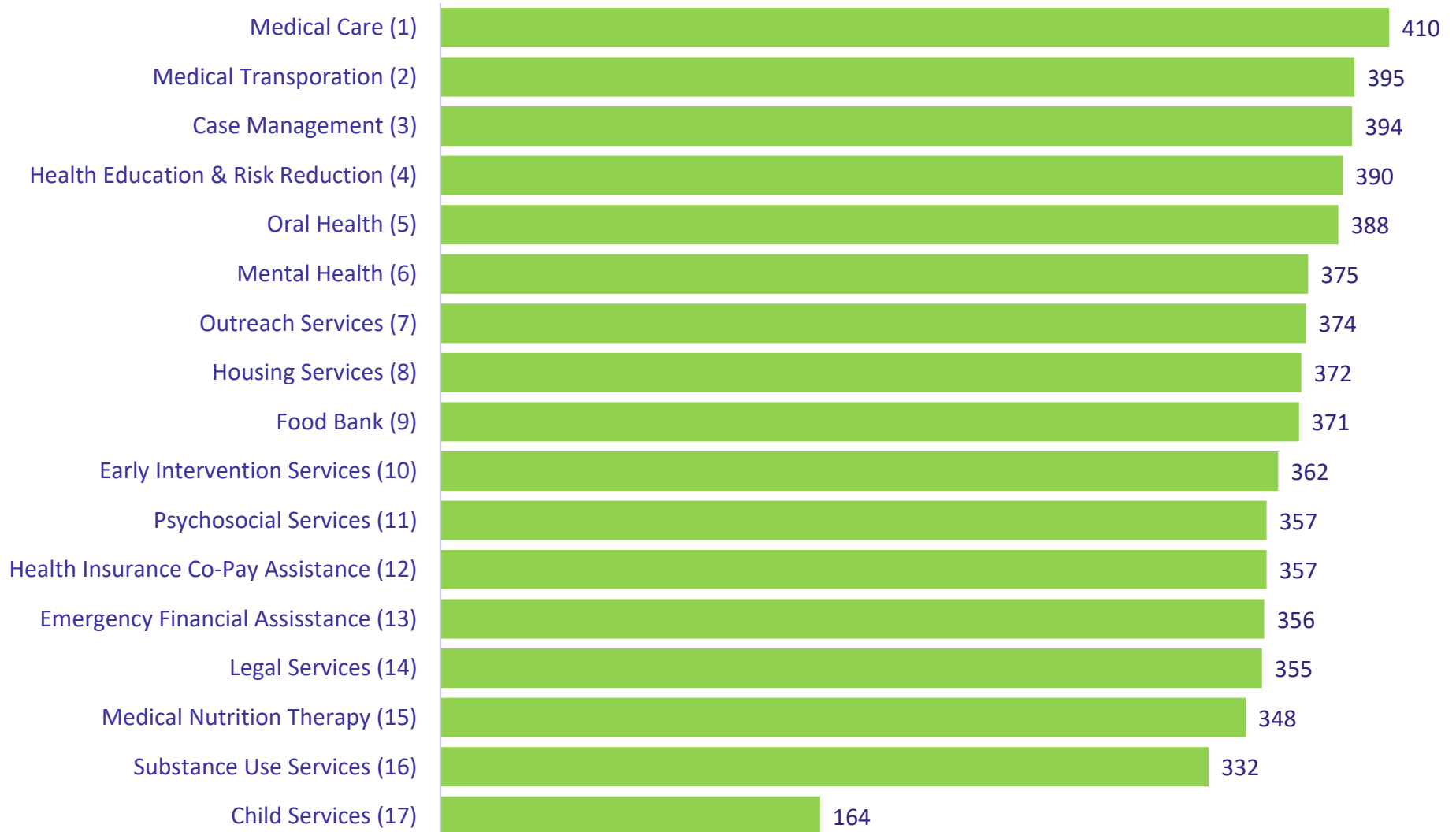
35-44 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression



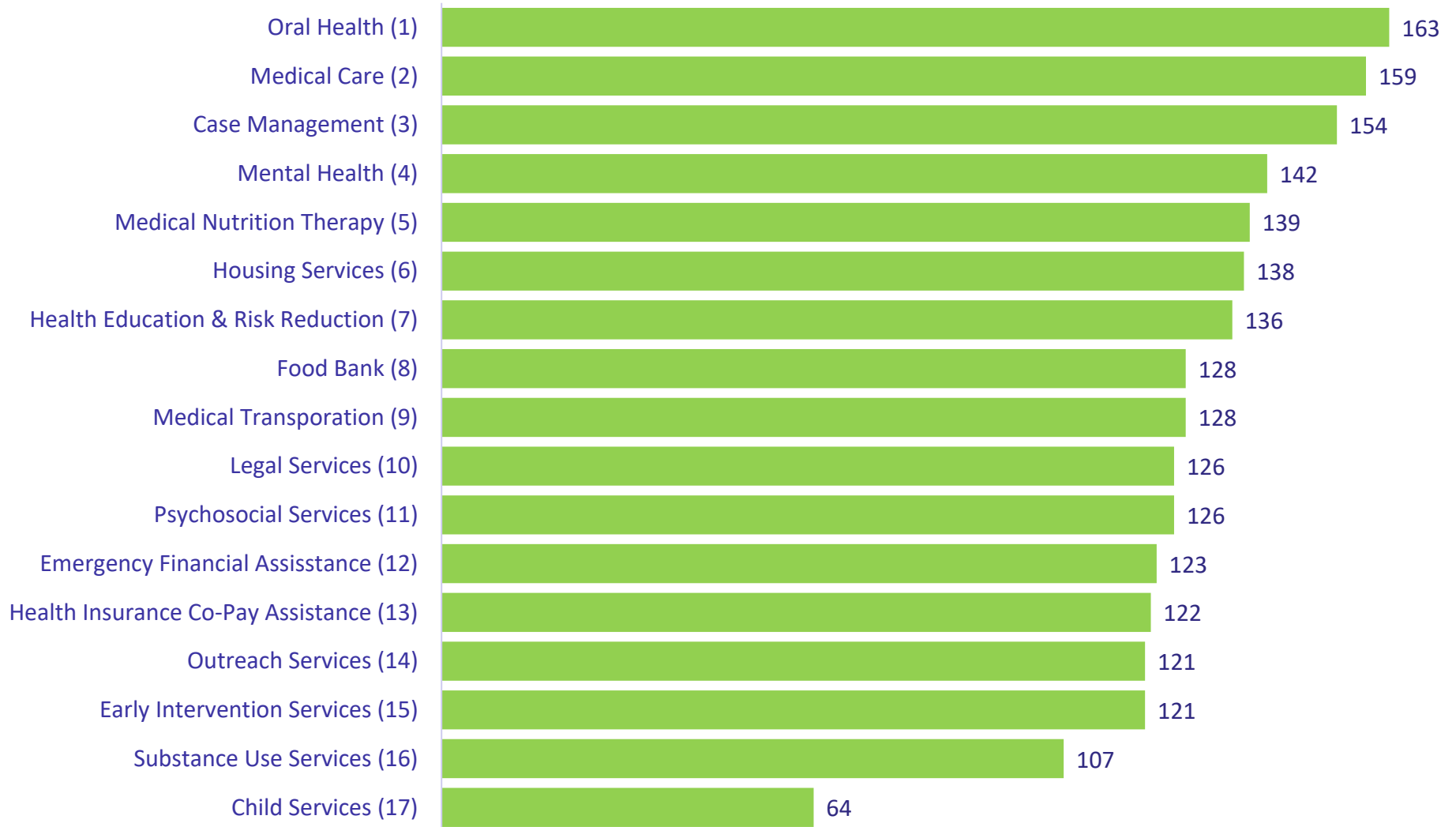
45-54 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression



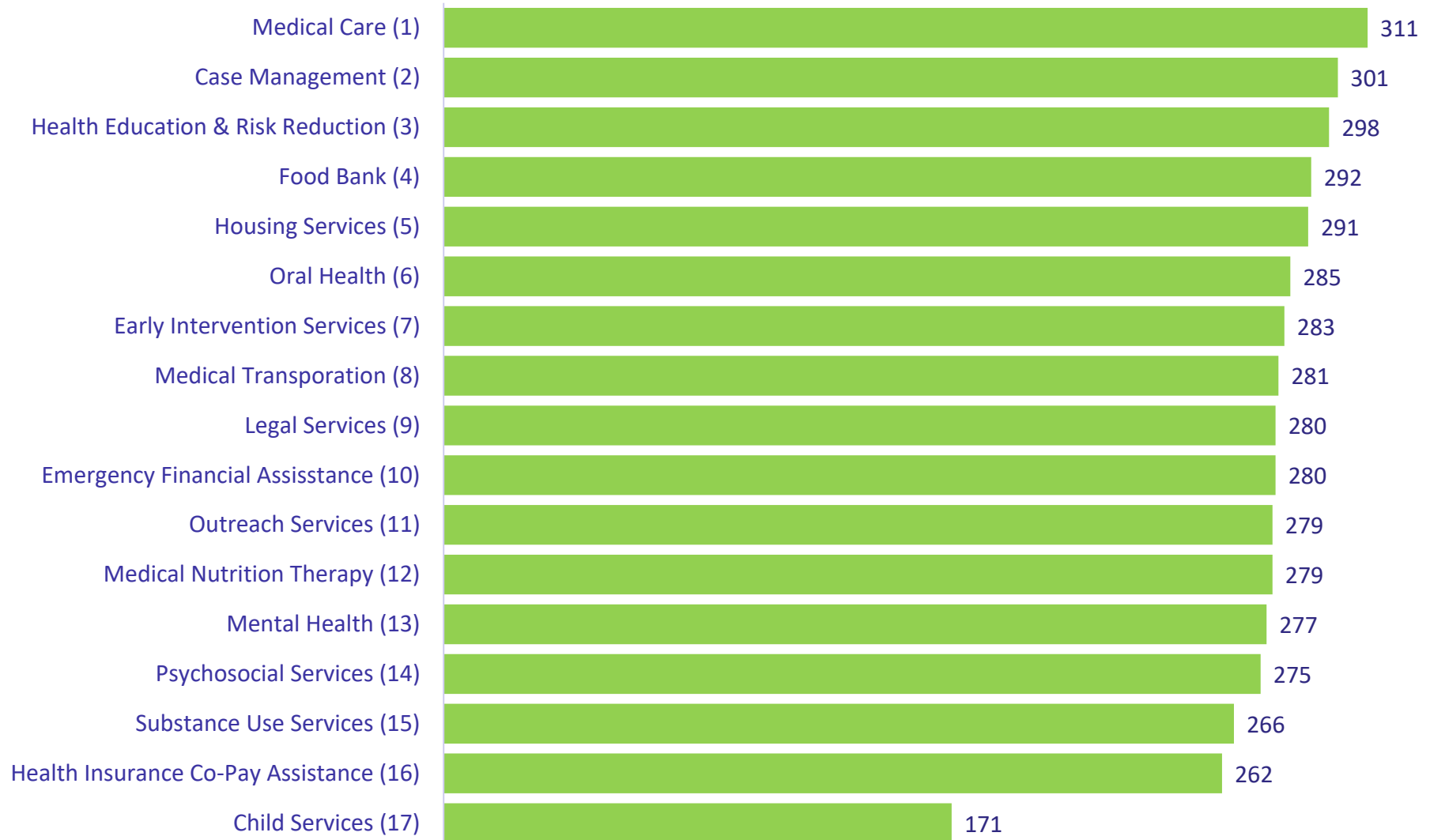
55-64 Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression



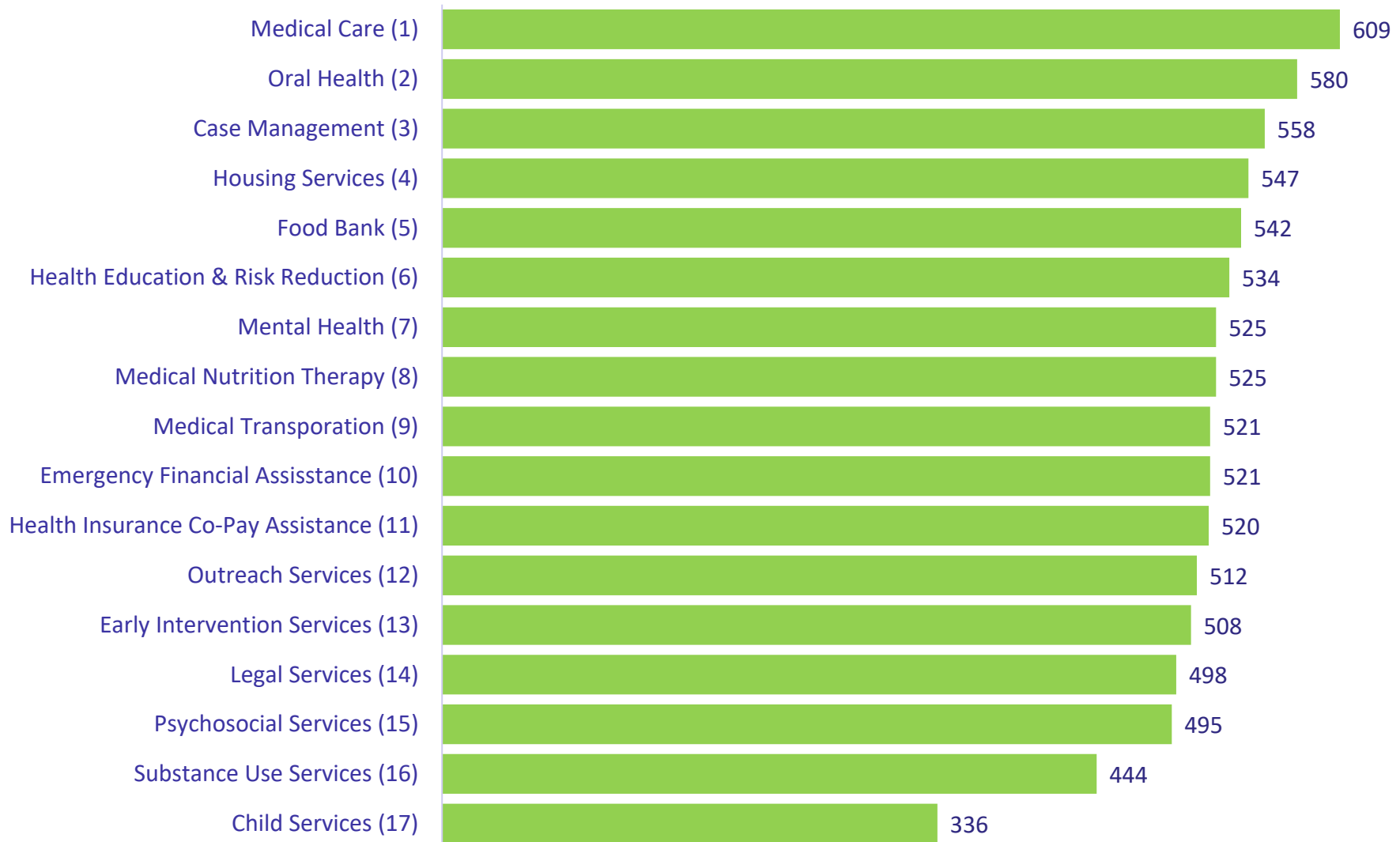
65+ Age Group – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression



Black/African American Participants – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression



Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Participants – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression

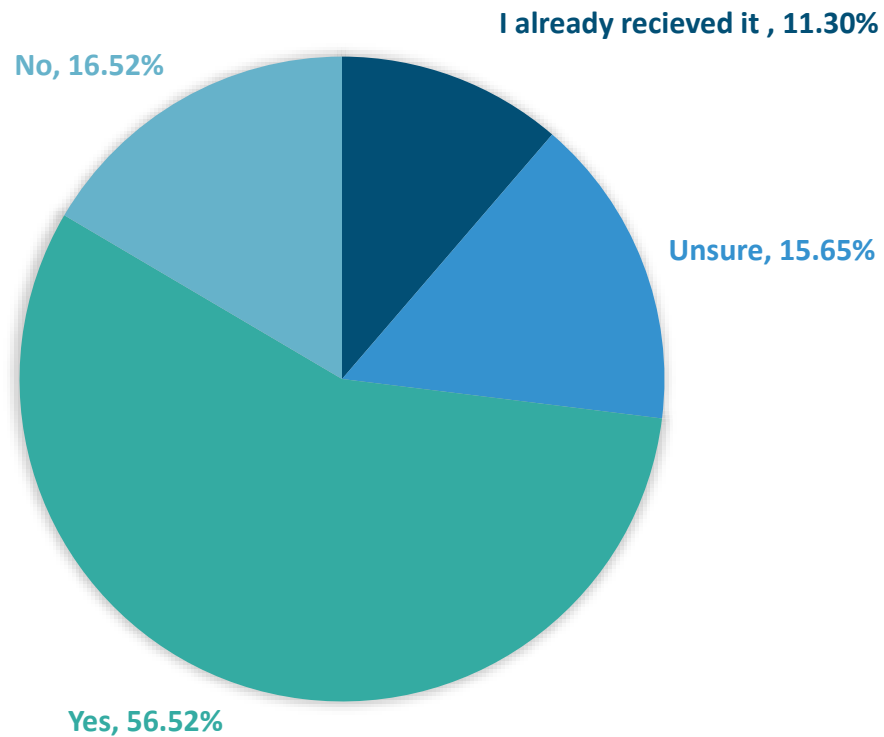


Uninsured vs Insured – Services Most Important to Maintain Viral Suppression

RANKING	UNINSURED	INSURED- (EMPLOYER, DIRECT PURCHASE, MEDICAID, MEDICARE)
1	Health Insurance Co-Pay Assistance	Medical Care
2	Housing Services	Case Management Services
3	Food Bank	Oral Health
4	Emergency Financial Assistance	Health Education & Risk Reduction
5	Outreach Services	Housing Services
6	Medical Care	Food Bank
7	Legal Services	Mental Health
8	Early Intervention Services	Medical Transportation
9	Oral Health	Medical Nutrition Therapy
10	Case Management	Psychosocial Services
11	Health Education & Risk Reduction	Outreach Services
12	Medical Nutrition Therapy	Emergency Financial Assistance
13	Medical Transportation	Early Intervention Services
14	Psychosocial Services	Legal Services
15	Mental Health	Health Insurance Co-Pay Assistance
16	Substance Use Services	Substance Use Services
17	Child Services	Child Services

COVID-19 IN THE BPTGA

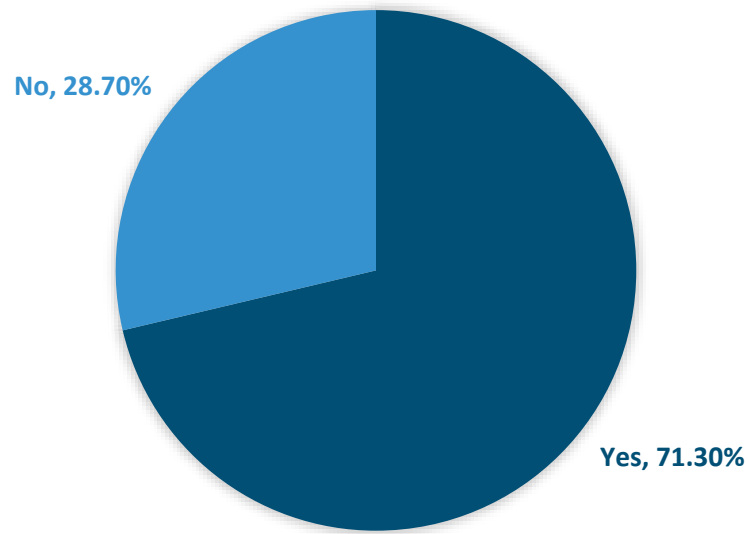
Do you plan to get the COVID-19 vaccine?



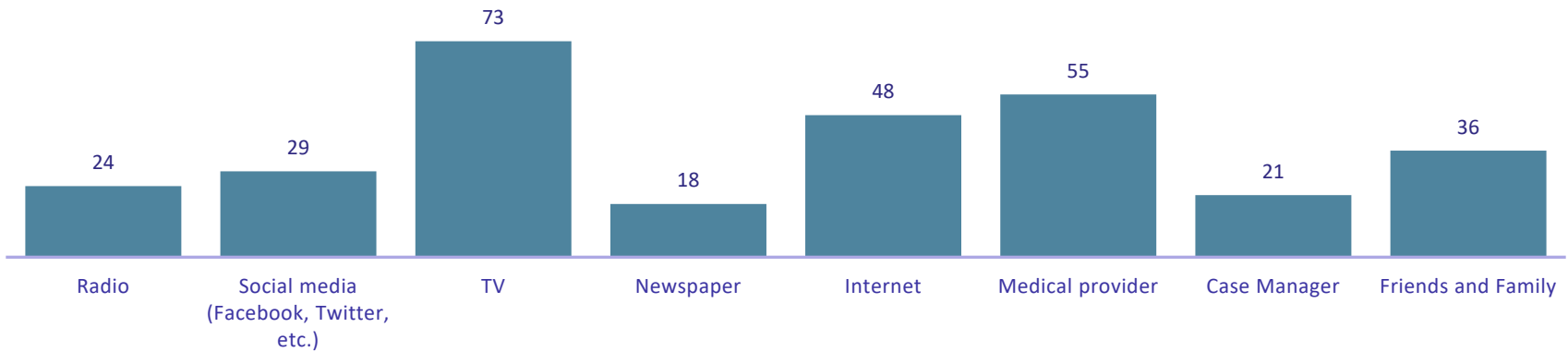
Participants had the ability to provide an open-ended response if they did not plan to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Two common themes of answers were provided:

- “Not ready to take it because it’s too soon to see the side effects”
- “Religious reasons”

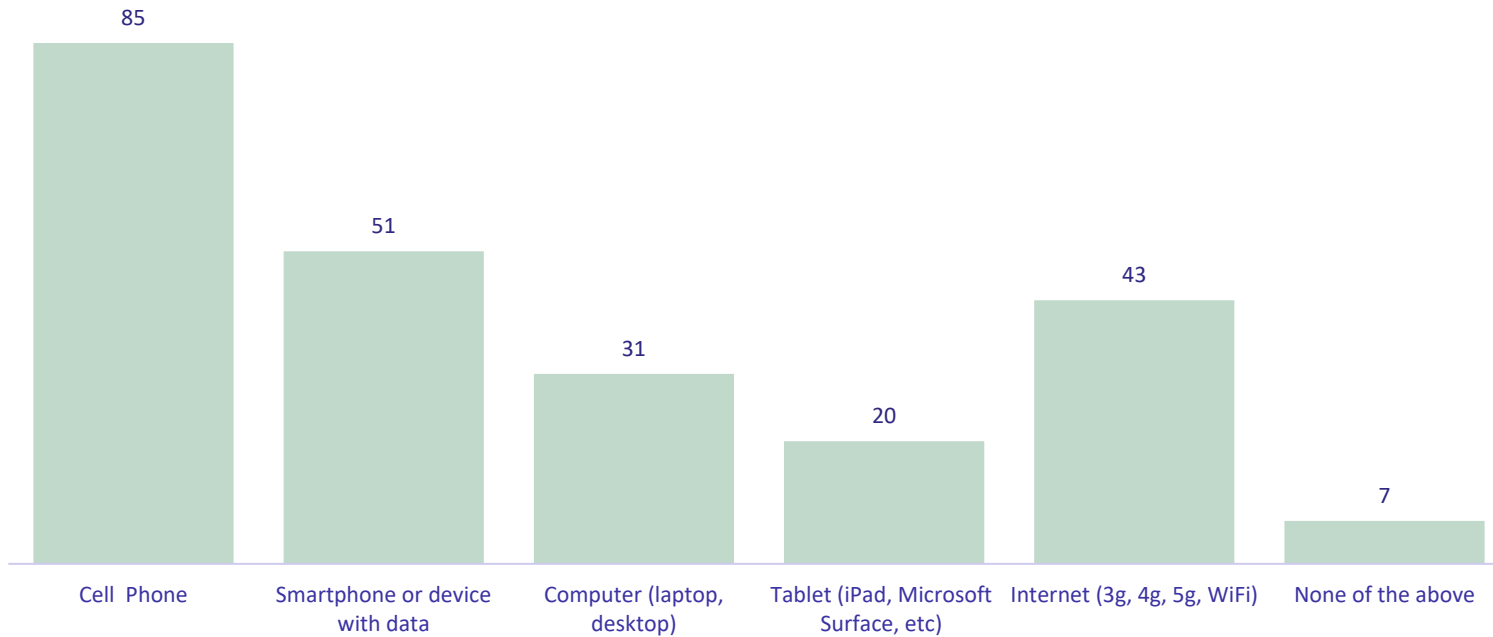
Do you know where to get your COVID-19 vaccine?



How do you receive information about COVID-19?

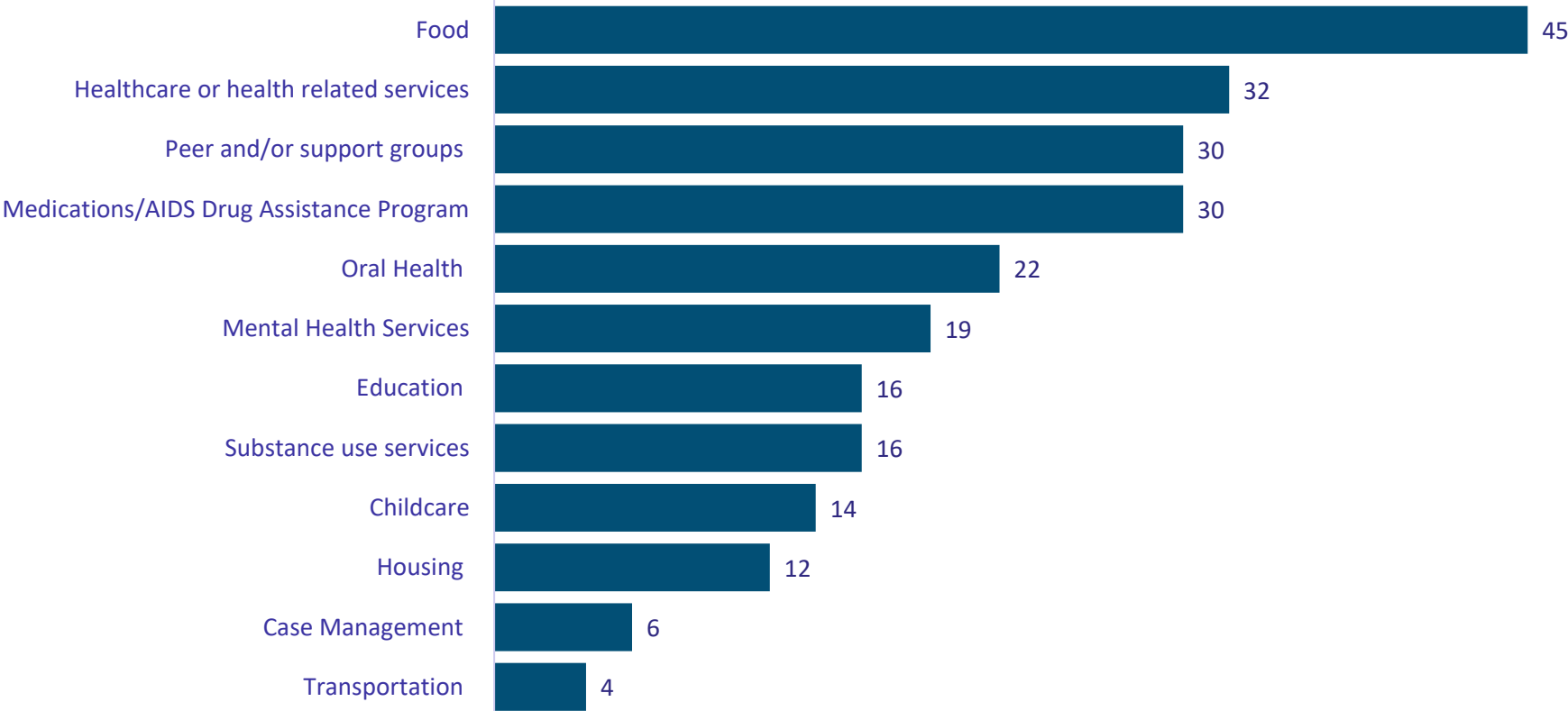


During COVID-19, I can use the following electronic devices to stay connected to Ryan White services:



The Pandemic's Impact on Services

Which of the following service needs have been harder to get due to the COVID-19 pandemic?



What is helping you stay in HIV medical care during the COVID-19 pandemic?

