

# Charting the Waters

## **ARAFMI NSW**

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# Carer Services Mapping Project - NSW

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- Map services for families & carers of people with a mental illness in NSW
- Consult with families & carers about their needs
- Identify gaps & unmet need for services
- Work with Area Health Services, NGOs and other service providers to establish strategic directions for family & carer support

# Why a 'mapping' project of carer services?

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- Specific services for families & carers of people with a mental illness are patchy & at best minimal across the state
- Services that do exist have been successful when there is a particular local interest &/or funding is available, but we know there are huge gaps elsewhere

# Continued...

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- To determine good practice
- Demystify what is needed - working with families has been seen as a 'specialist intervention' by many services. This contrasts to family & carer requests for more 'basic' needs to be met eg information about the illness & medication, coping skills & dealing with crises (Hatfield 1983)

# Family and Carer Needs

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- We already know **a great deal** about what families & carers need (research evidence dates back to the 1970's)
- Mental health research particularly highlights the increased relapse prevention rates for consumers, and a reduction in distress for families, when services support and work together with families

# What are family and carer services?

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- Education about mental illness
- Education in coping skills
- Counselling
- Support Groups
- Information
- Individual Carer Support / Advocacy
- Commonwealth Programs (respite, financial support)

# Important considerations

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- Special needs groups (Aboriginal people, CALD communities, young carers, older carers, men & siblings)
- Indicators of family sensitive practice including workforce education

# How?

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- Review of current research, policy, recent initiatives
- Surveyed mental health services, NGOs and private hospitals about services they provide
- Surveyed carers to establish feedback
- Consultations and focus groups
- Produce an online database of mental health specific services for carers
- Need to repeat survey at least annually to track progress

# Strategic Planning

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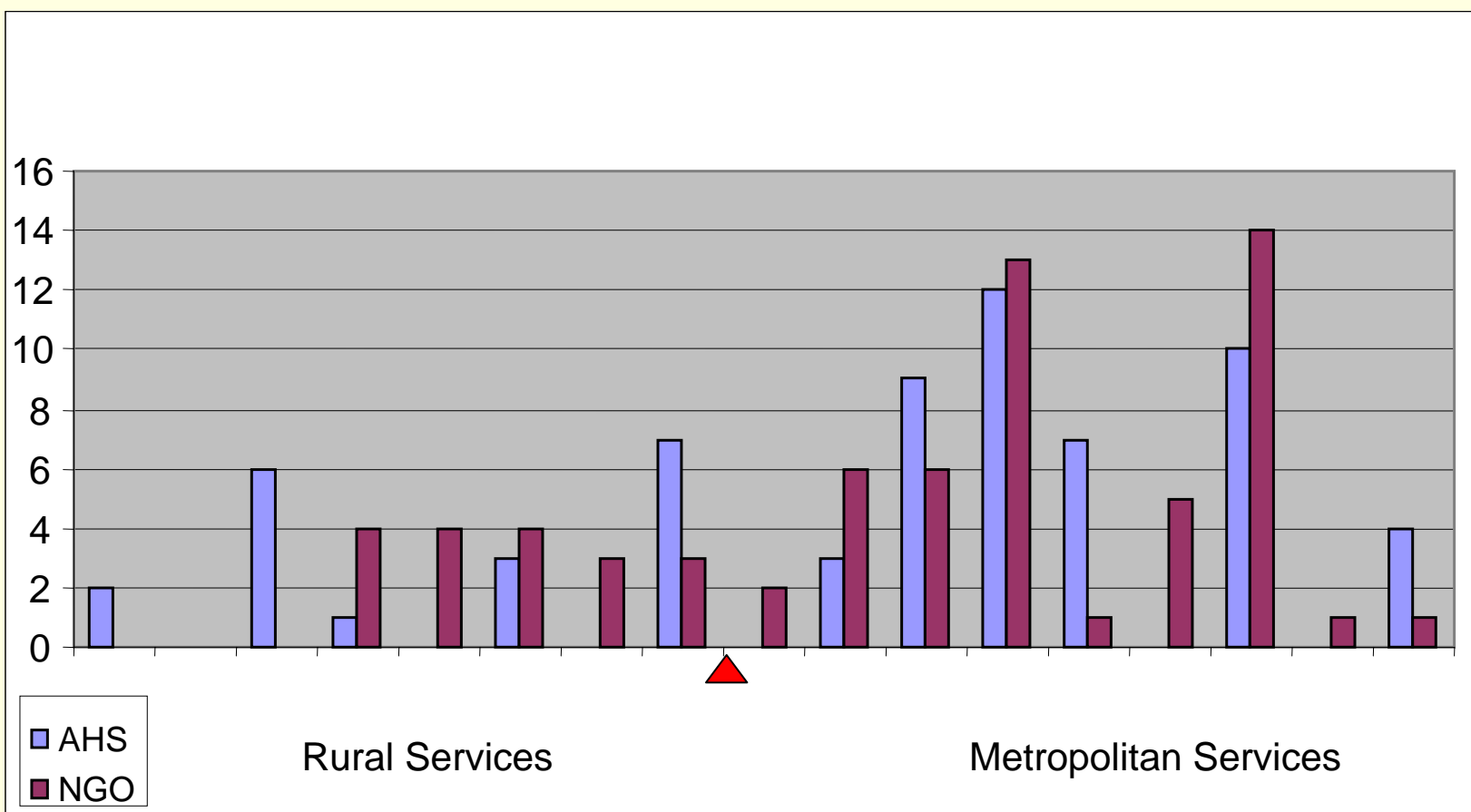
- ARAFMI NSW project is one of a number of initiatives to inform service direction
- Caring for Carers Mental Health - demonstration projects
- \$1 million recurrent for carer support (mental health) in NSW
- Family & Carer Strategic Planning Working Party - develop strategic directions & inform a framework for carer support

## A 'taster' of some of our early data...

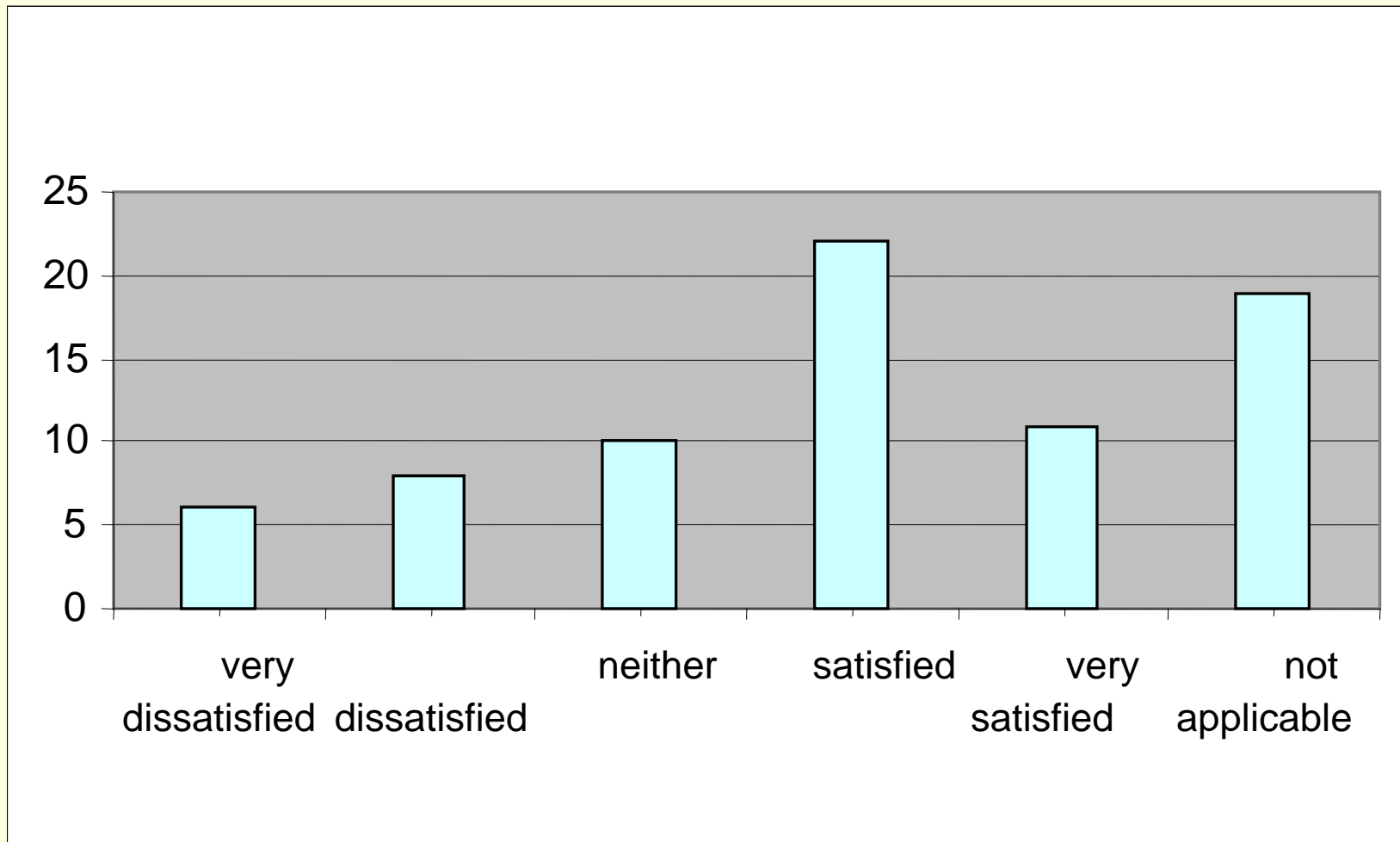
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- 1025 carer surveys sent out with 12% response rate (data available for 60% of total)
- Presented data does not include information about the special needs services or respite & financial support programs
- All Mental Health Services surveyed & 100% response rate
- 36 surveys received by relevant NGOs and community groups & 86% response rate

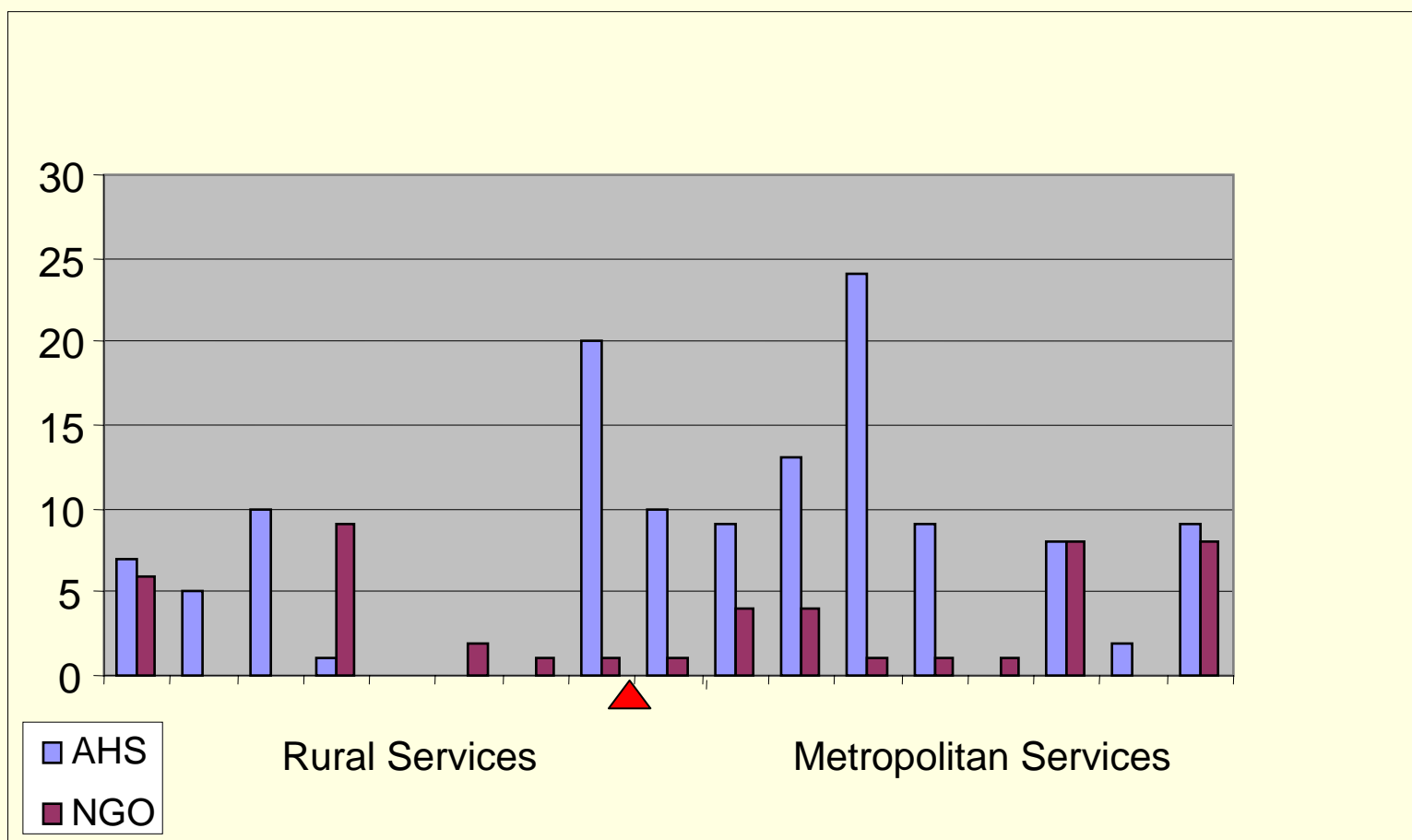
# No. of AHS & NGO Education Programs about Coping Skills



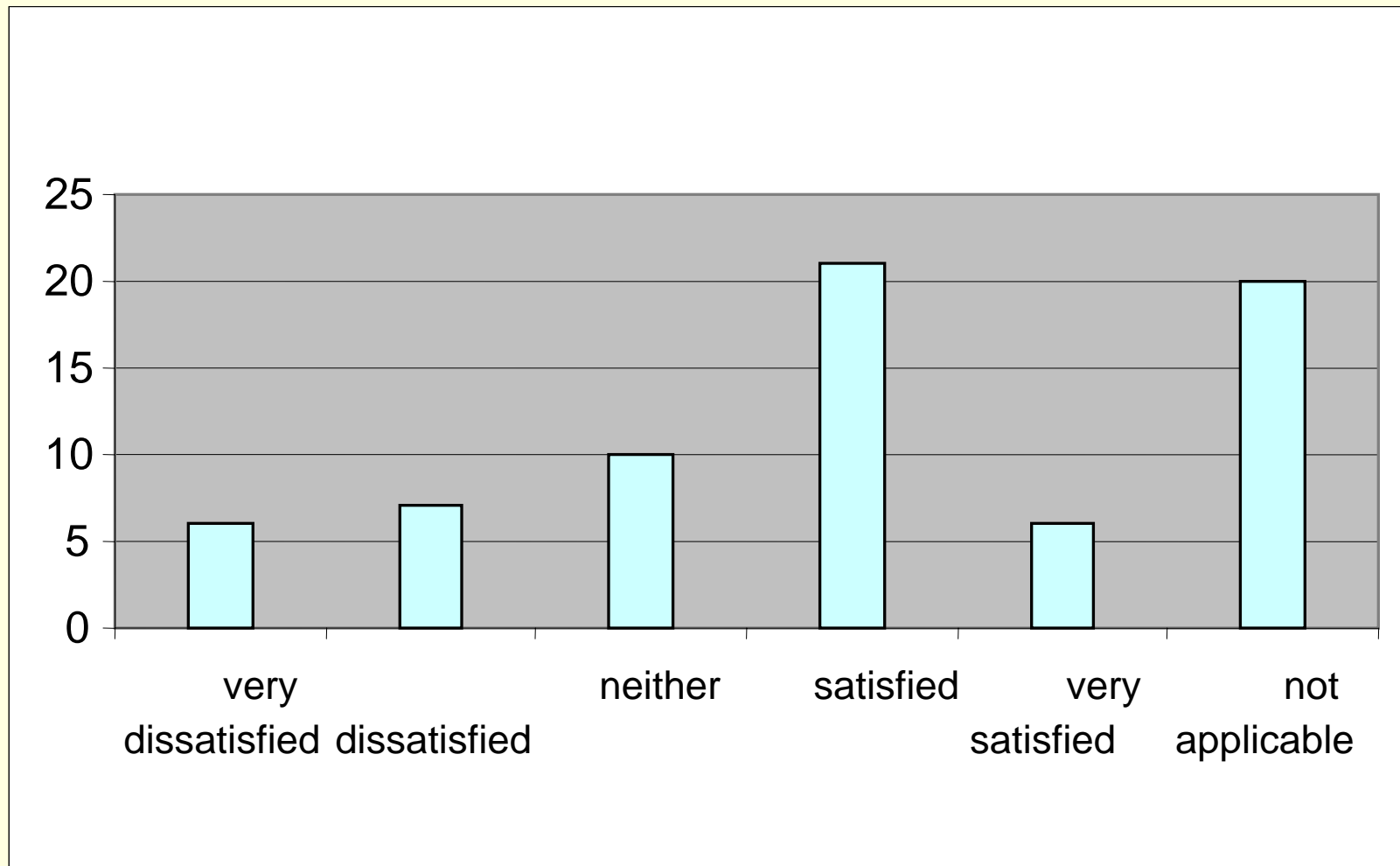
# Carer Satisfaction - Education about Coping Skills



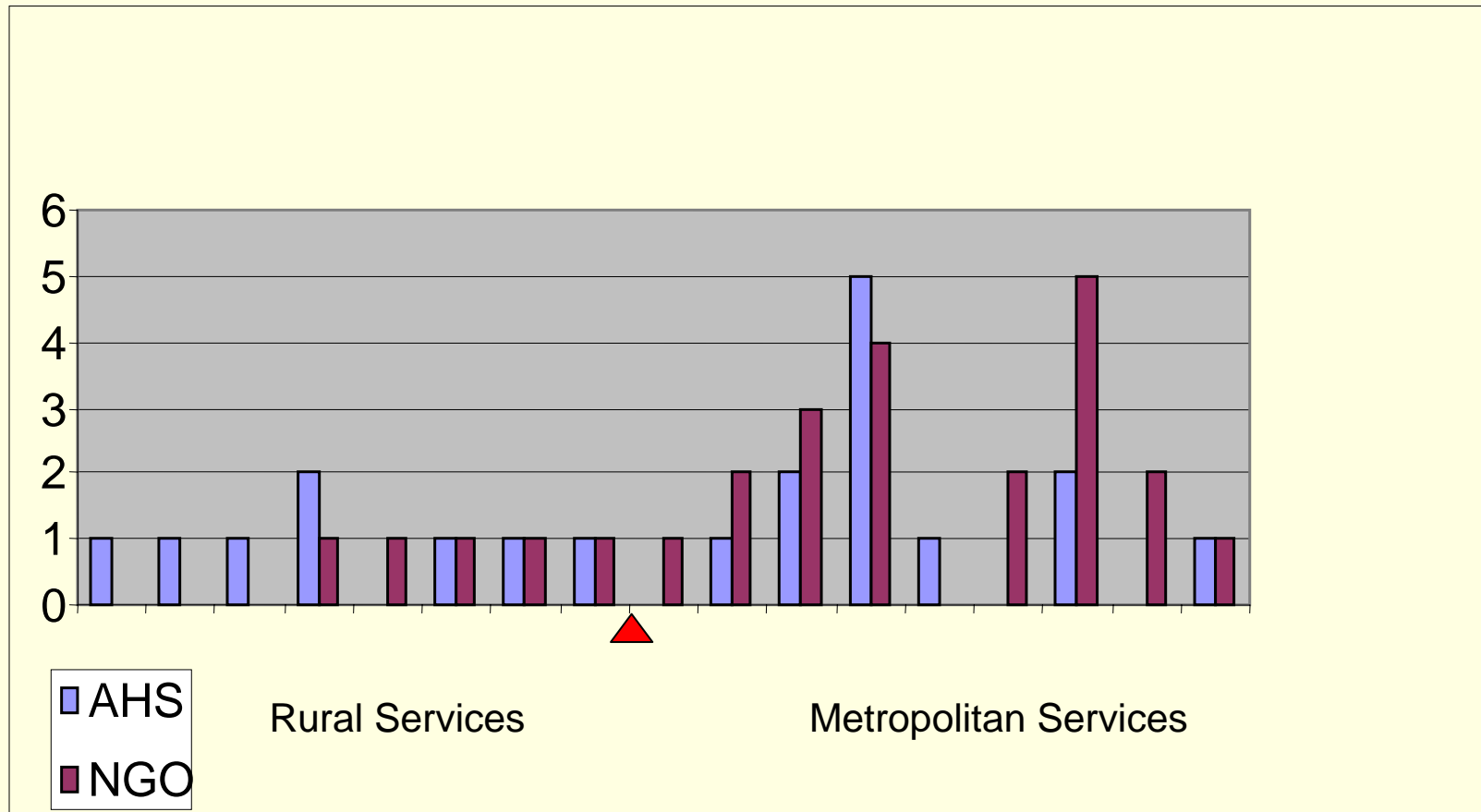
# No. of AHS and NGO Education Programs about Mental Illness



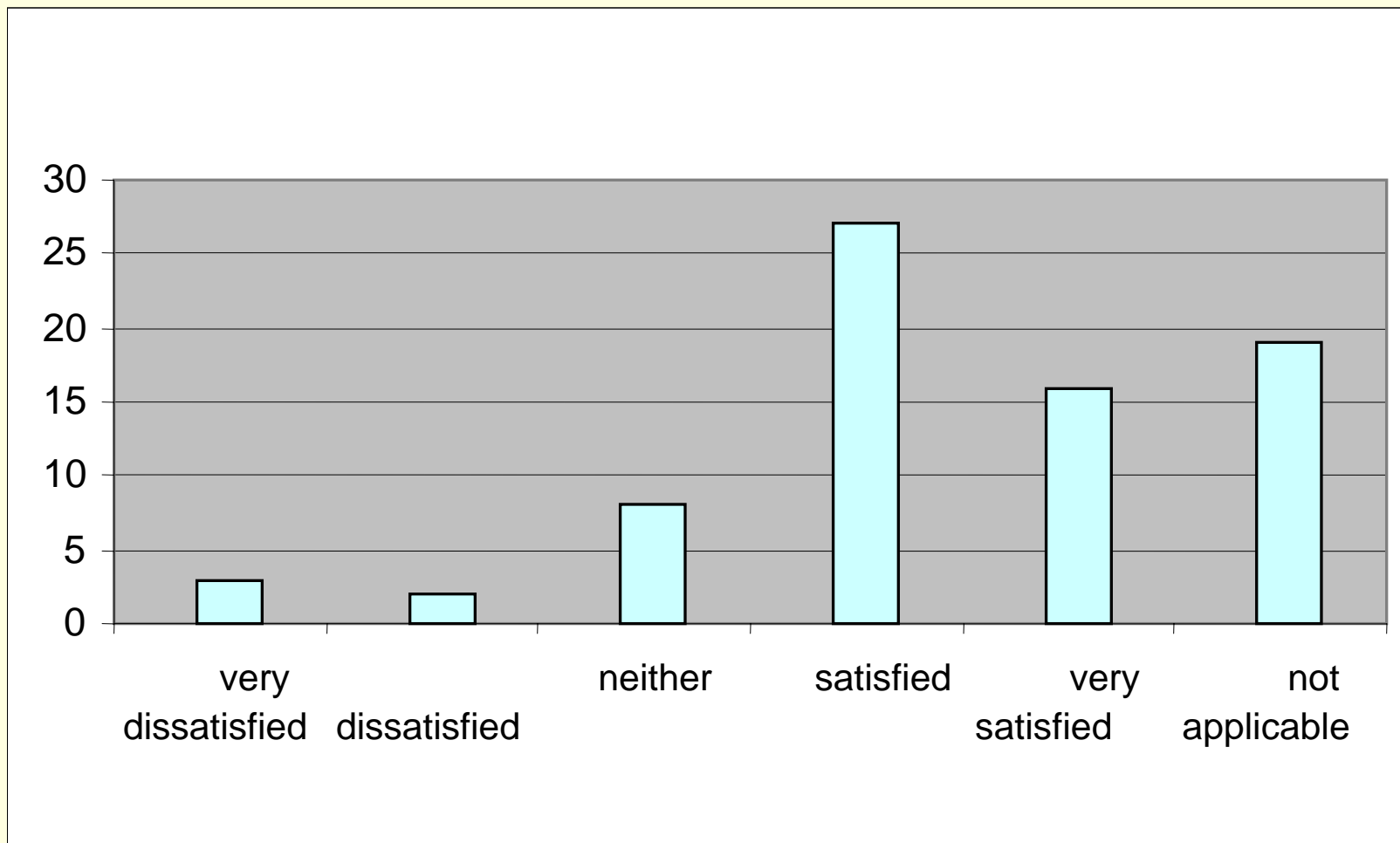
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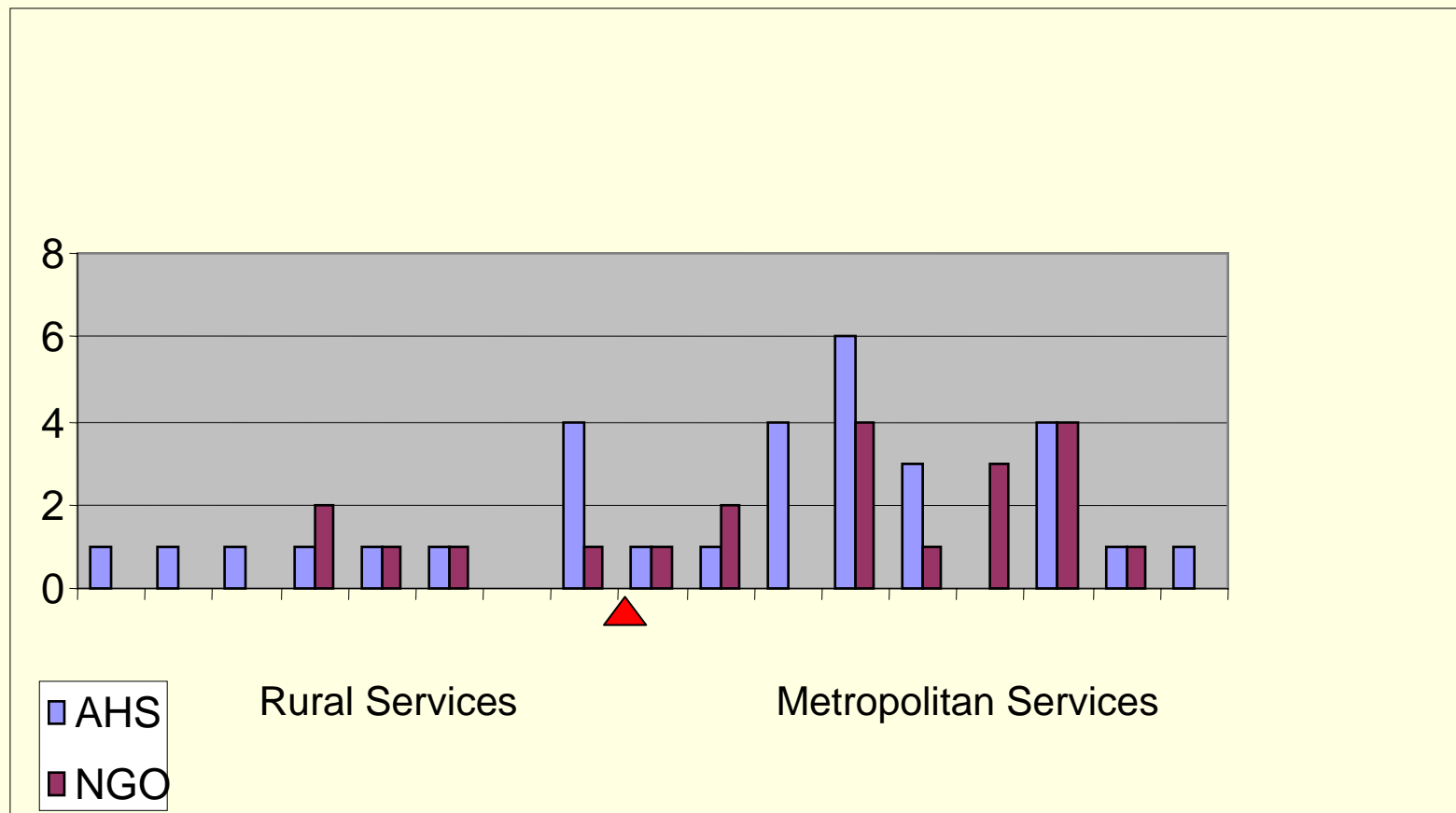
# AHS Sectors and NGOs Offering at Least One Mental Health Support Group



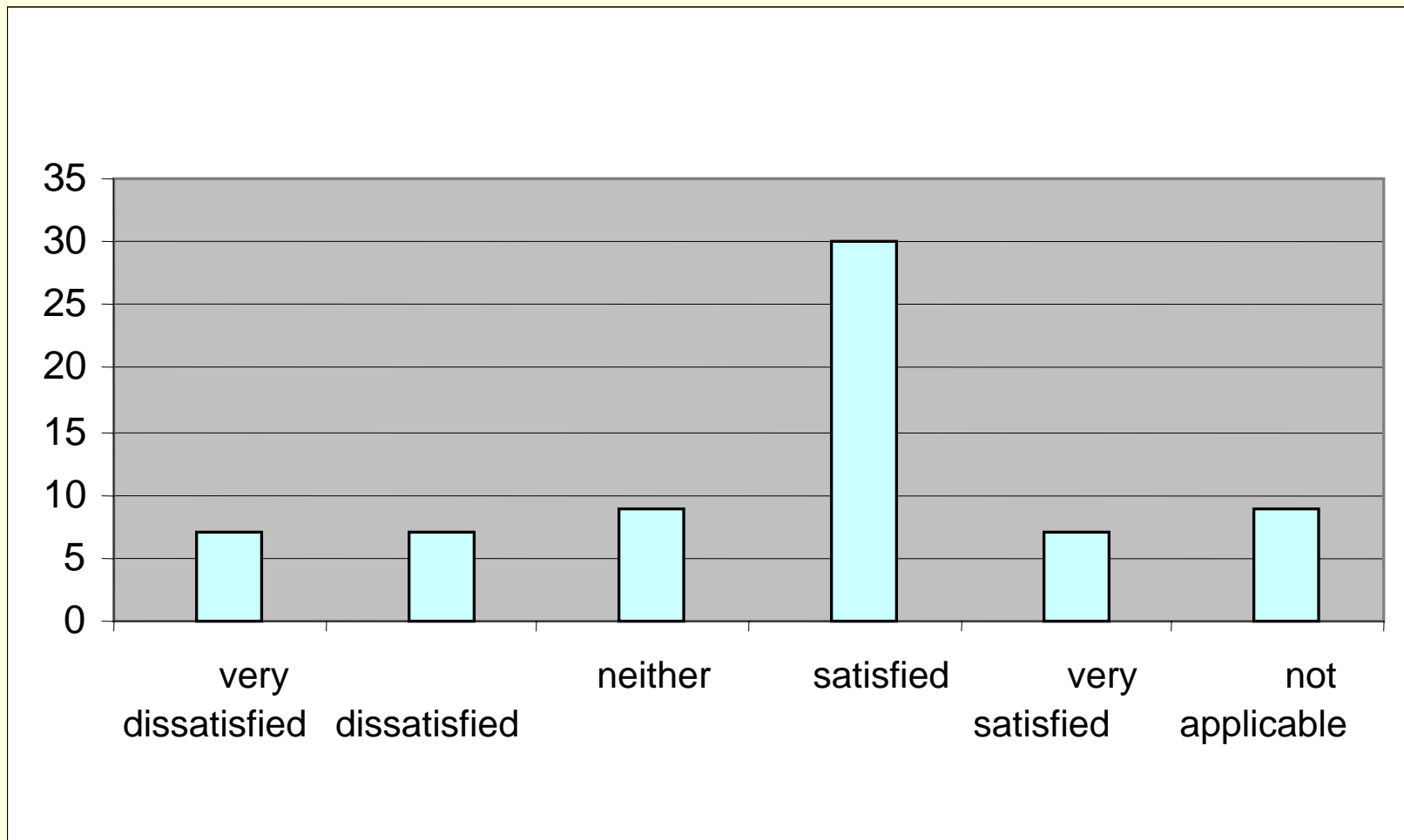
# Carer Satisfaction - Support from Support Groups



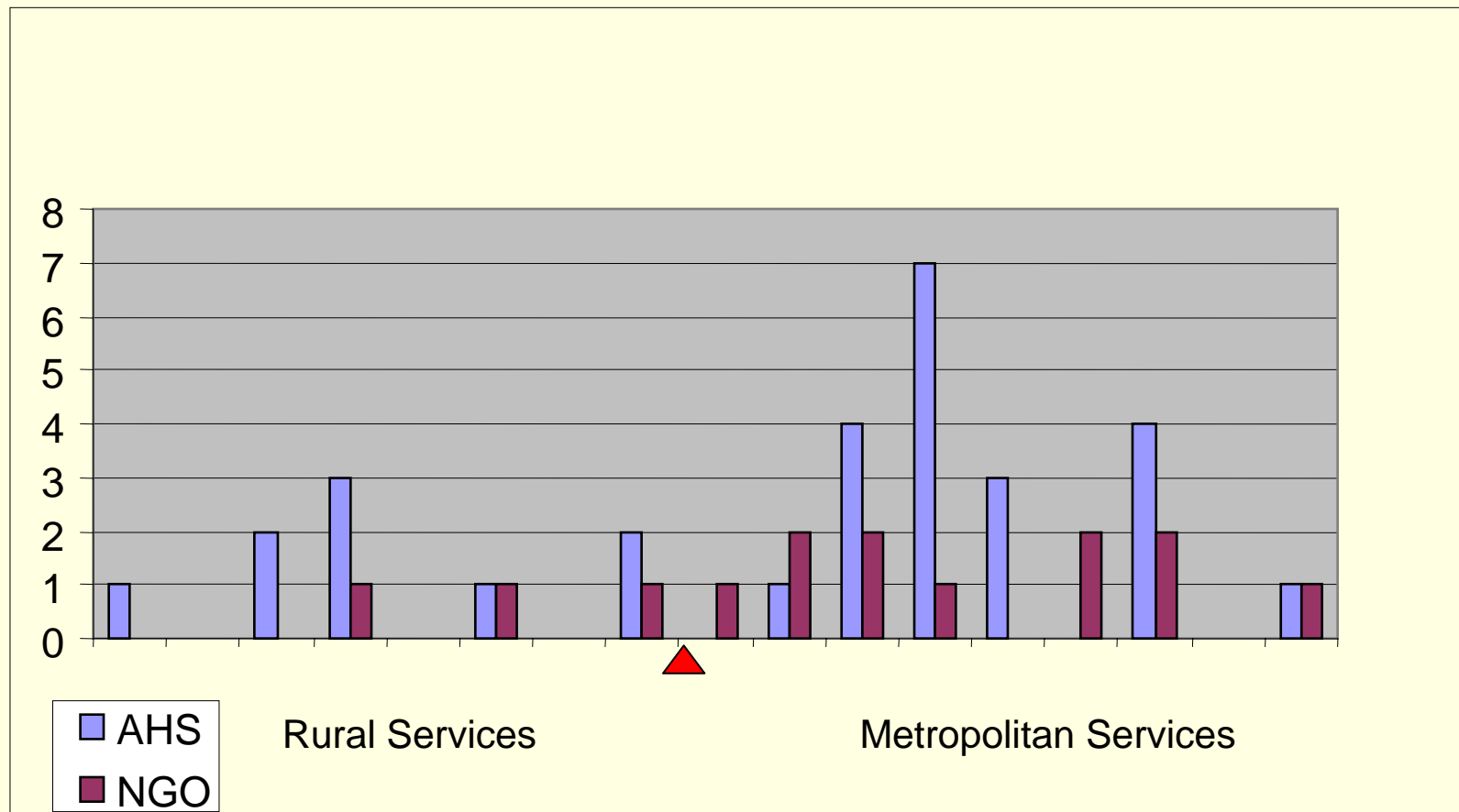
# AHS Sectors and NGOs Who Provide an Information Package for Families and Carers



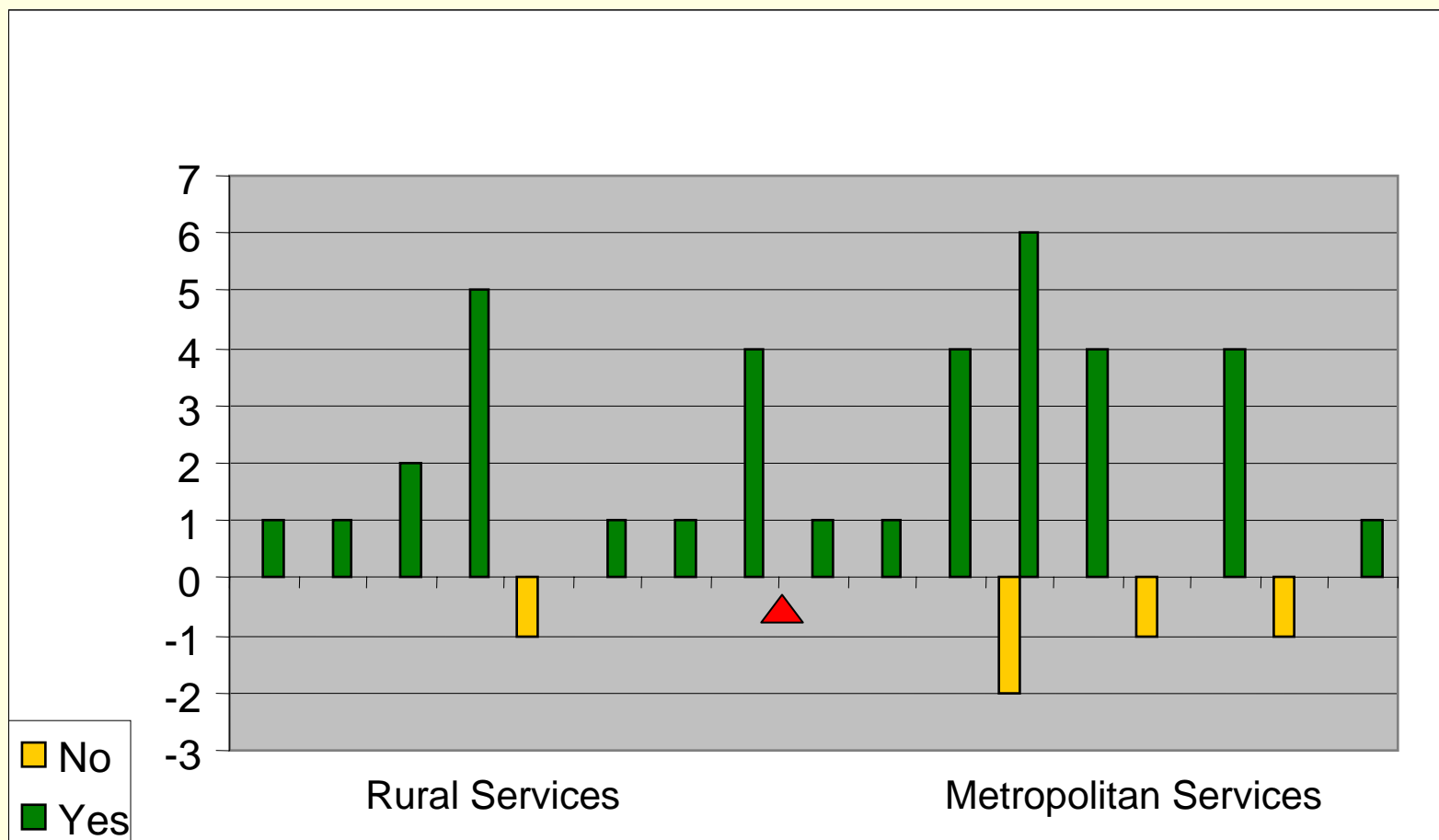
# Carer Satisfaction - Information Received



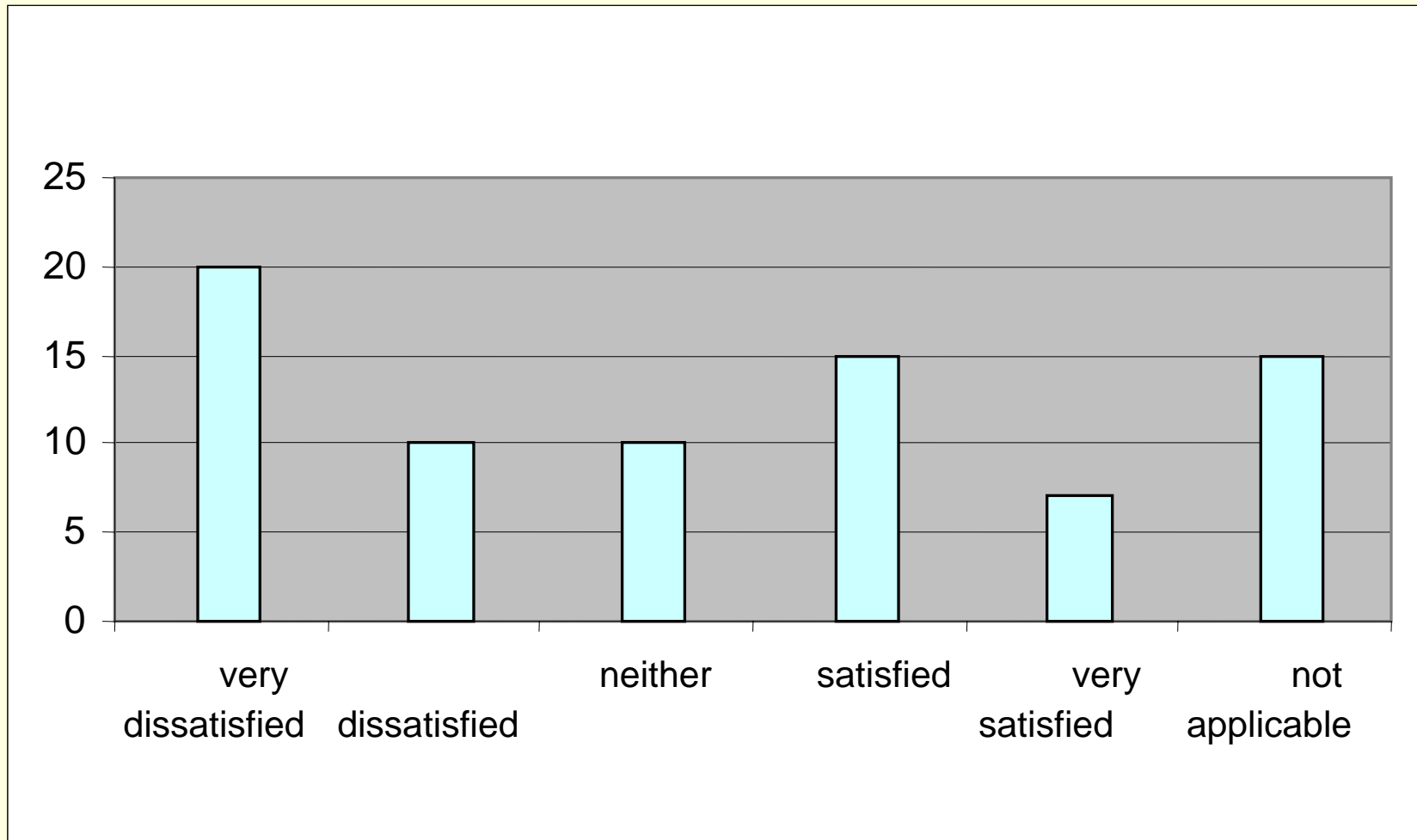
# AHS Sectors and NGOs who Provide Education to Staff about Working with Families



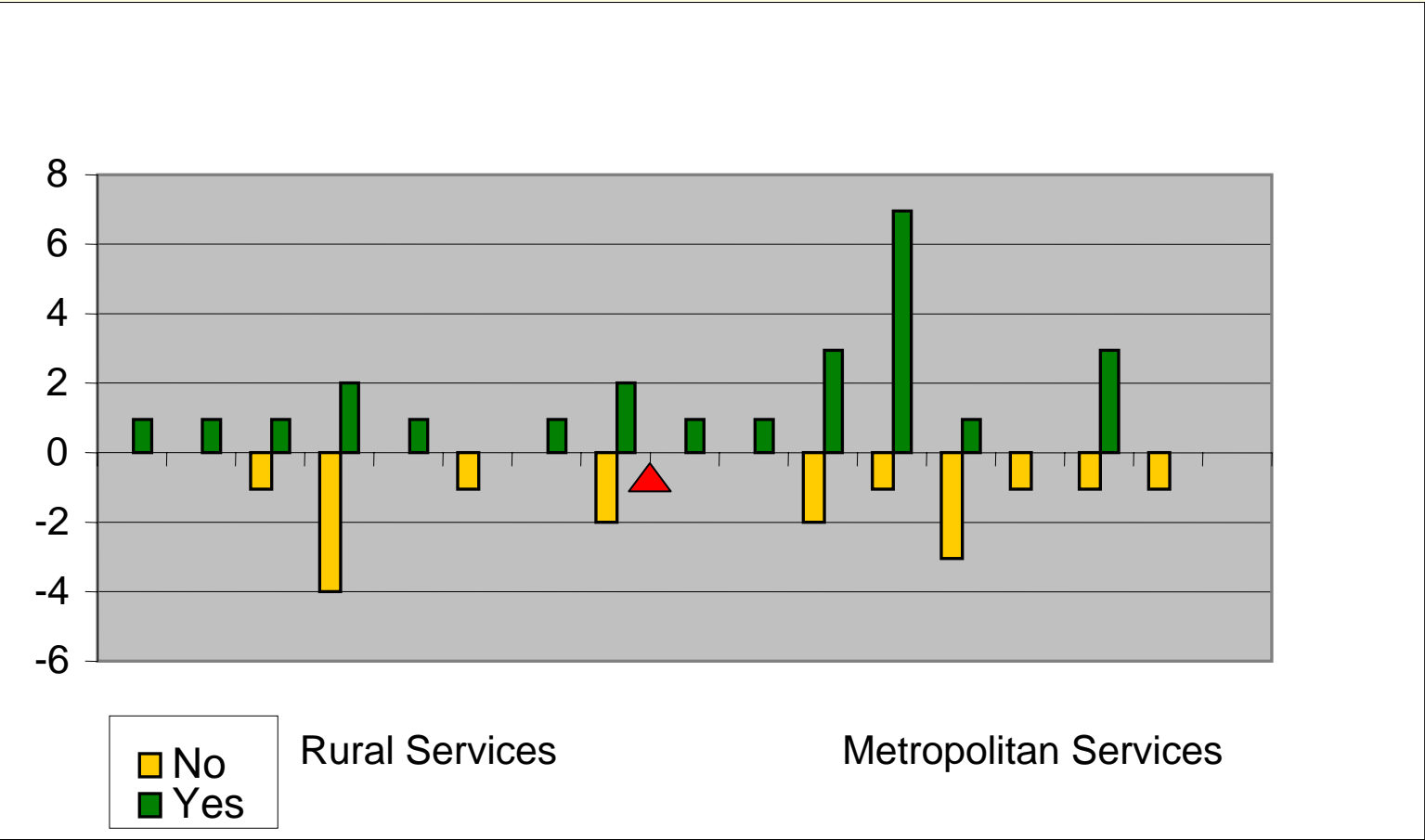
# AHS Sectors who Encourage Working with Families in Clinician Job Descriptions



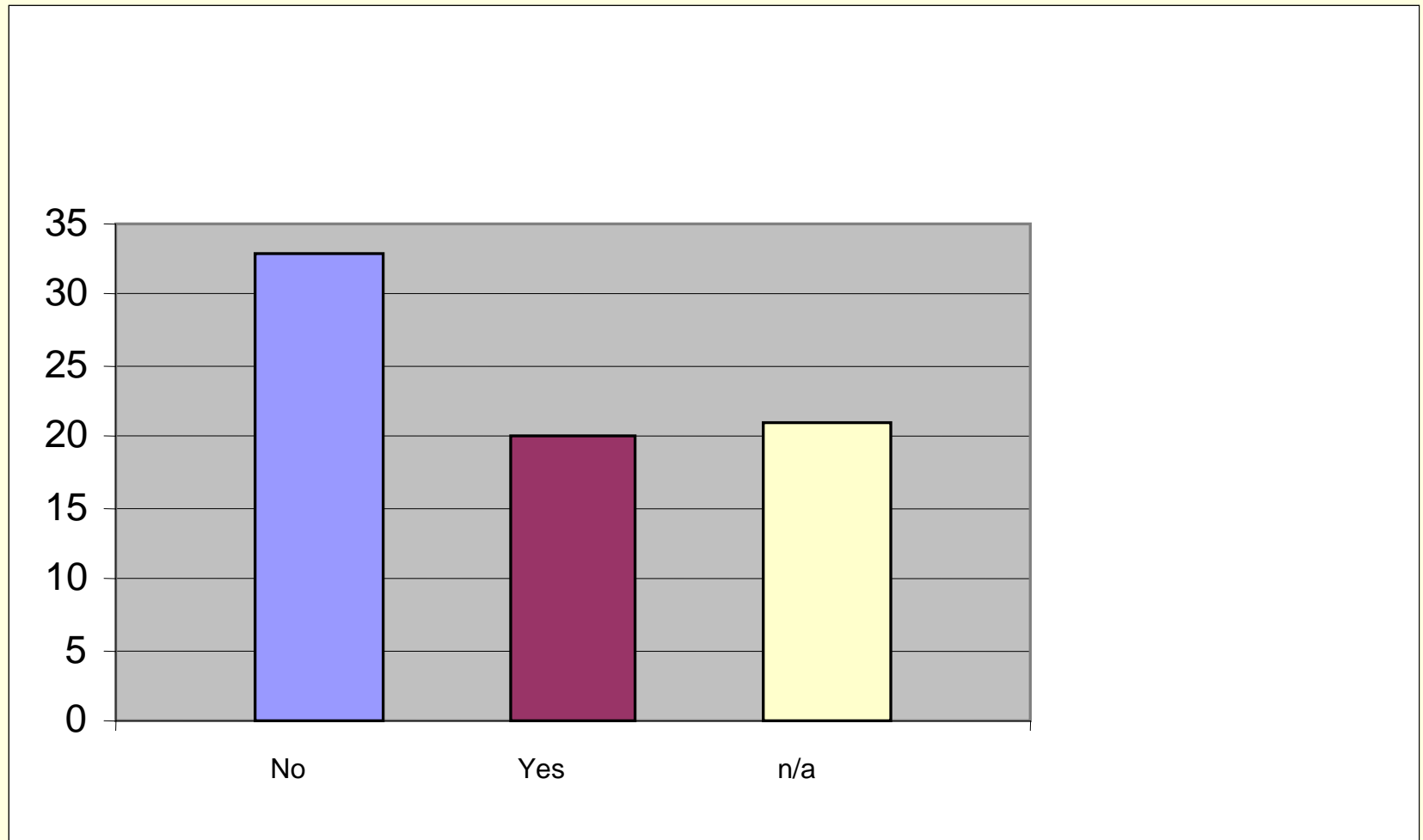
# Carer Satisfaction with Input to Treatment



# AHS Sectors Written Policy of Carer Rights and Responsibilities



# Were Rights & Responsibilities Explained to Carers



# Project Outcomes

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- Final report & recommendations identifying needs / gaps in services and good practice (Dec 2004)
- Proposed level of service provision to meet basic needs
- Database of carer services in NSW, specific to mental health, for families & carers

# Contact details

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