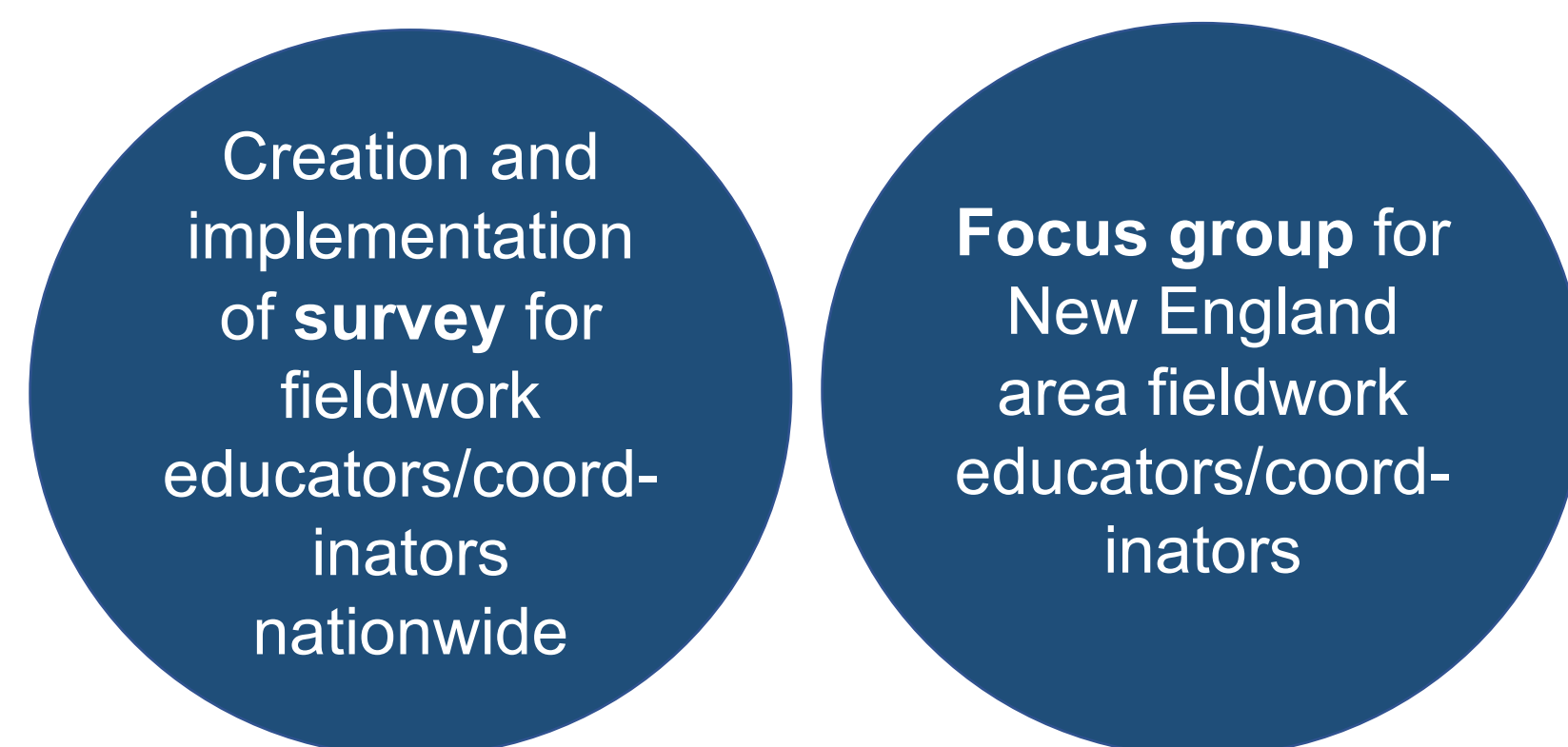


## Introduction

Fieldwork (FW) education, specifically Level II fieldwork education, is a requirement and highly sought-after component of the entry-level occupational therapy curriculum and degree model. It has been coined "an essential bridge between academic education and occupational therapy practice," providing students with hands-on experience related to competencies within OT practice (Roberts et al., 2015). Within the fieldwork world, several components are contributing to the challenge as well as the benefit of fieldwork placement and coordination. Fieldwork educators and coordinators are the only individuals with firsthand experience of these challenges and benefits; research on their opinions and experiences is lacking.

## Aims

This project aims to complete an overall needs assessment looking at what could be done in the future regarding creating more sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships with fieldwork educators and their sites. The needs assessment will be informed by completion of the following:



## Methods

The focus group component of this project conducted via Zoom.

The survey that was distributed via a snowball method was adapted with permission from Roberts et al., 2015.

### Inclusion Criteria

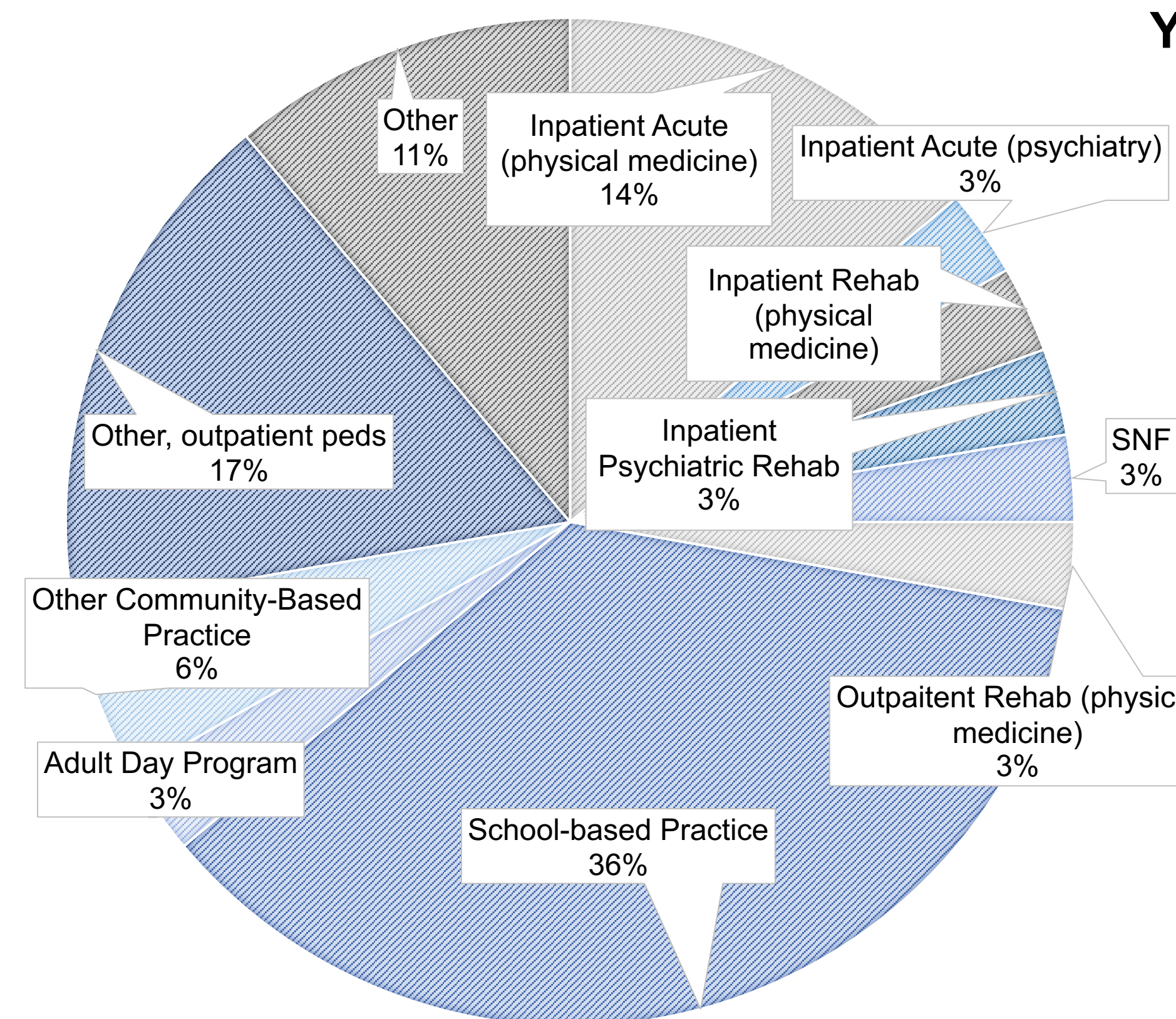
- Fieldwork educator or site coordinator
- Has supervised/hosted at least 1 level II fieldwork student for any OT/OTA program within the last two years

### Exclusion Criteria

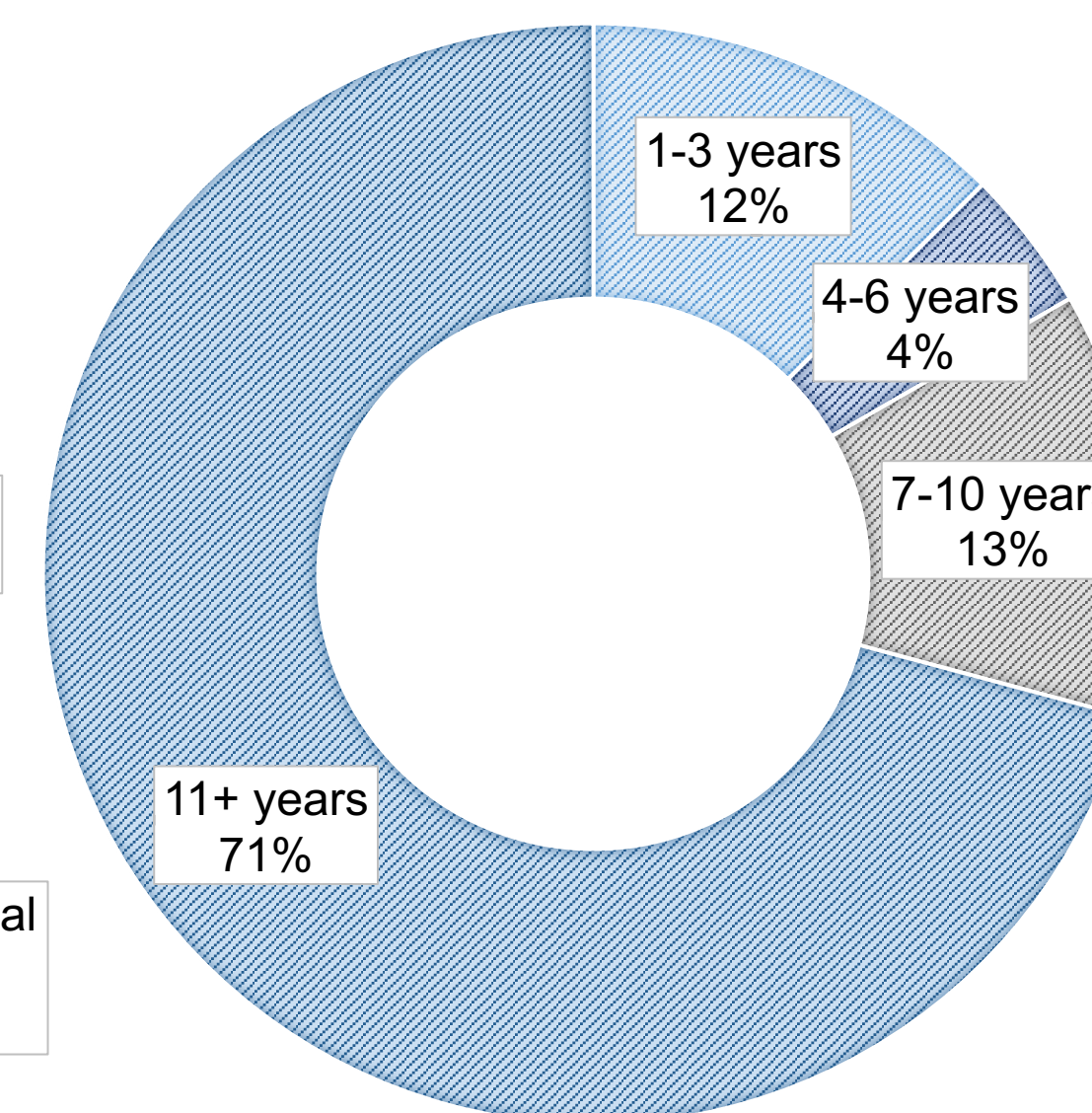
- Licensed as an OT for less than one year
- Educator/coordinator has not hosted a level II student in the last 2 years

## Participants

### PRIMARY AREA OF PRACTICE, N=41



### YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, N=24



## Discussion

**Recommendation 1: Communication preferences** (personalize comm. type and amount to each educator)

**Recommendation 2: Prioritize student/site match** (ensure student attribute match and interest in site prior to placement)

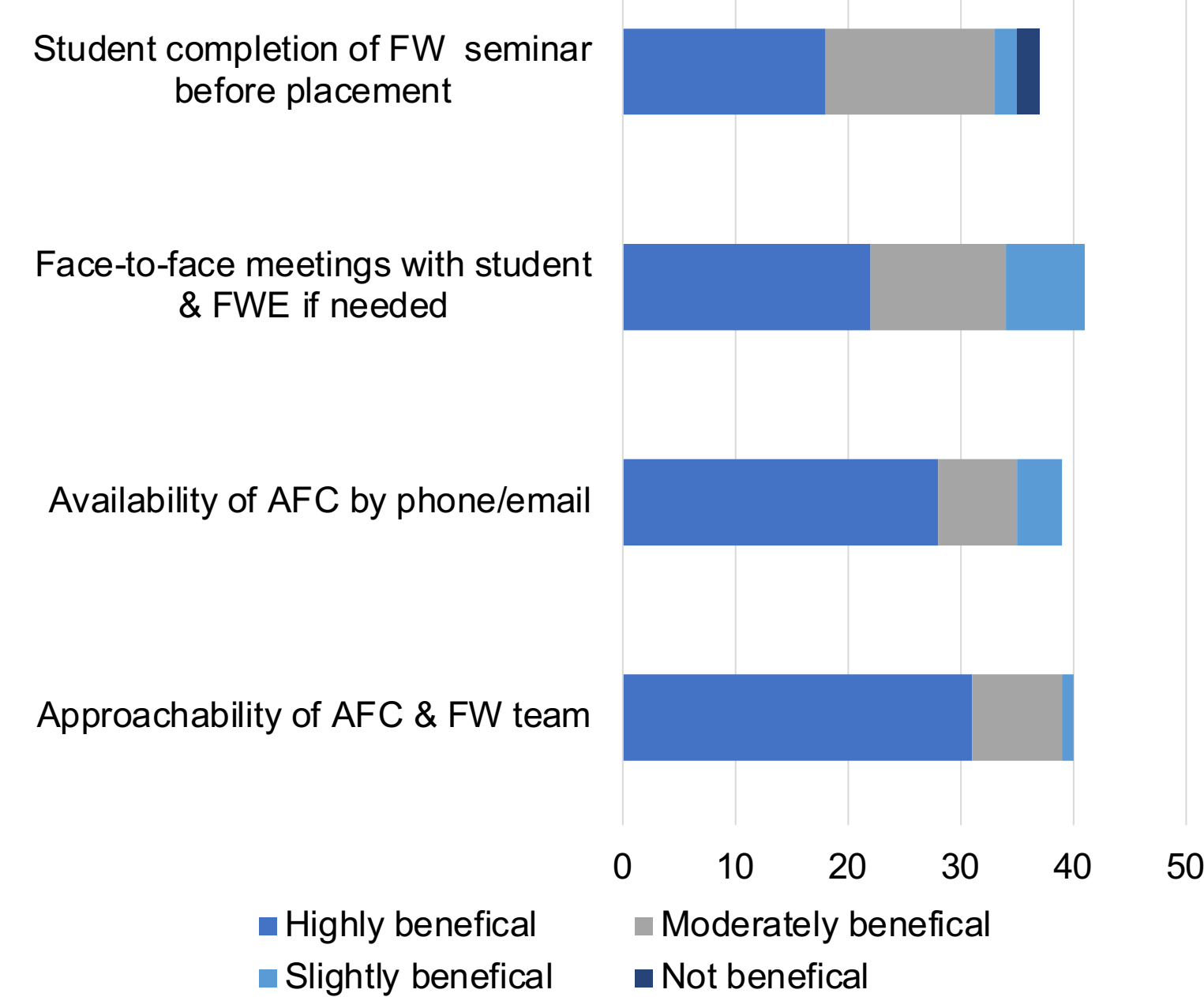
**Recommendation 3: Maximize student preparedness & professionalism** (prioritize student knowledge of site and promote professional behaviors)

**Strengths:** long timeline for thematic and statistic analysis, organization, collaborative interpretation process

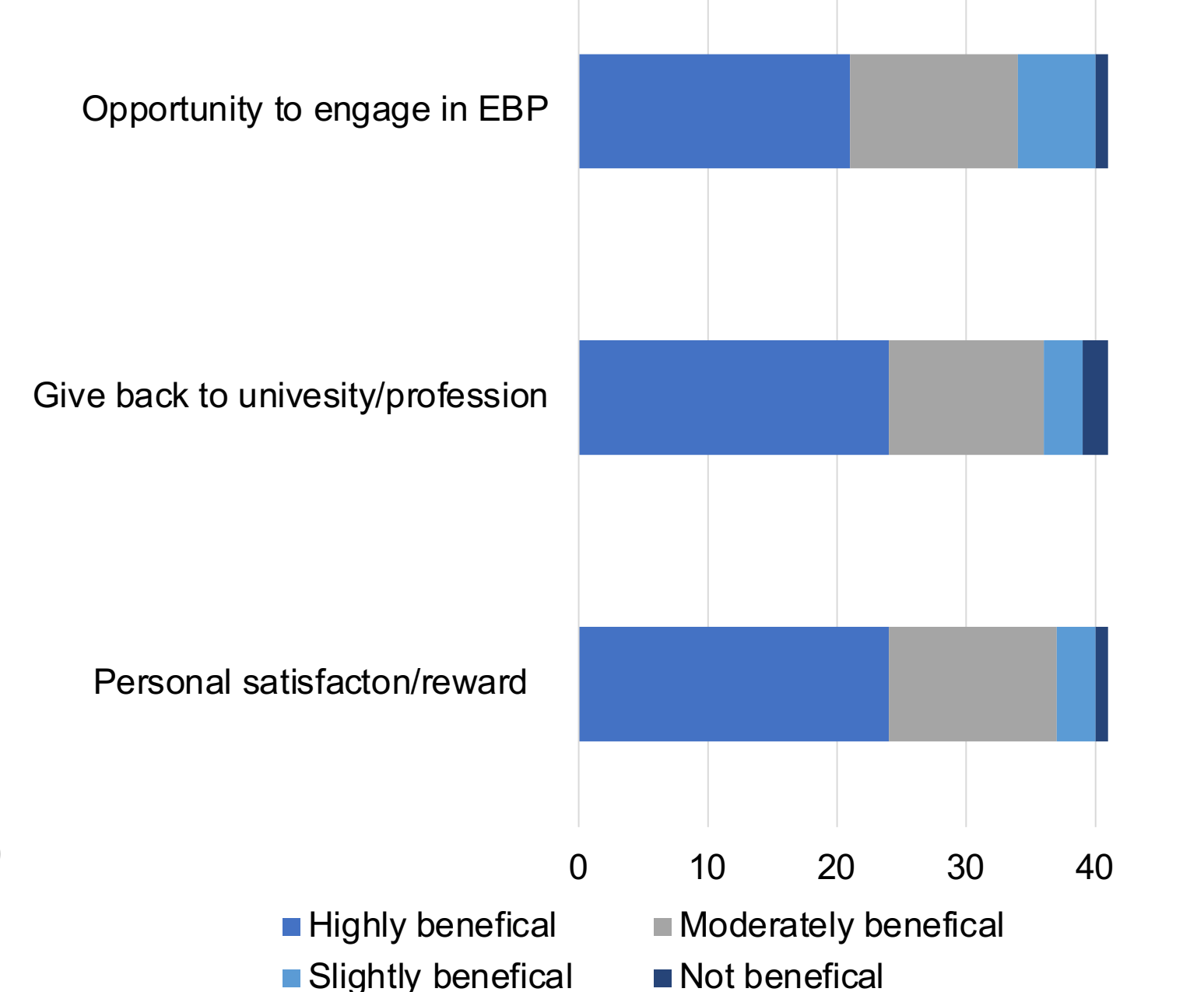
**Limitations:** small qualitative sample size (n=6), unequal quantitative data set, single coder for qualitative data

## Results

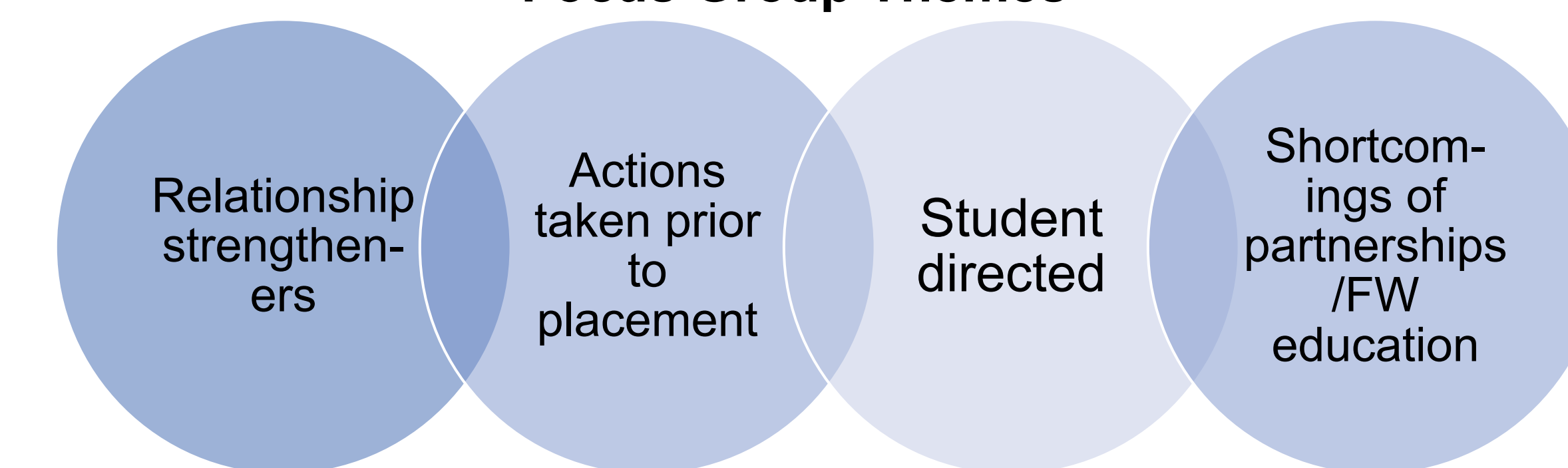
### Top perceived benefit of supports from OT prgms, n=41



### Top perceived benefits of hosting fieldwork students, n=41



### Focus Group Themes



### Notable Focus Group Quotes

- "Provide the distance that I need in order to [supervise], if I was in constant communication because we take so many interns, I would be talking with FW placements all the time"
- "Trying to force the student to go to a place that they really don't want to be at it's not beneficial to anybody"
- "You set up those relationships and they last, and people know your personality and how someone will fit in your place, so I think, by having those relationships, it really helps to get the best students who would be the best fit for their internship"

### Results of t-test and Descriptive Statistics of Years of OT Experiences and Preferences

	1-6 years' experience		7+ years' experience		p (one-tail)	Cohen's d	Hedge's g
	n	M(SD)	n	M(SD)			
Benefit of fieldwork student participation in fieldwork seminar course prior to placement	4	4(0)	20	3.235(0.831)	0.00079893	1.302	0.991

### References



### Contact

Student PI: Rachel Cohen,  
[rcohen12@tufts.edu](mailto:rcohen12@tufts.edu)  
Faculty mentor: Ryan Whitney,  
[ryan.whitney@tufts.edu](mailto:ryan.whitney@tufts.edu)