

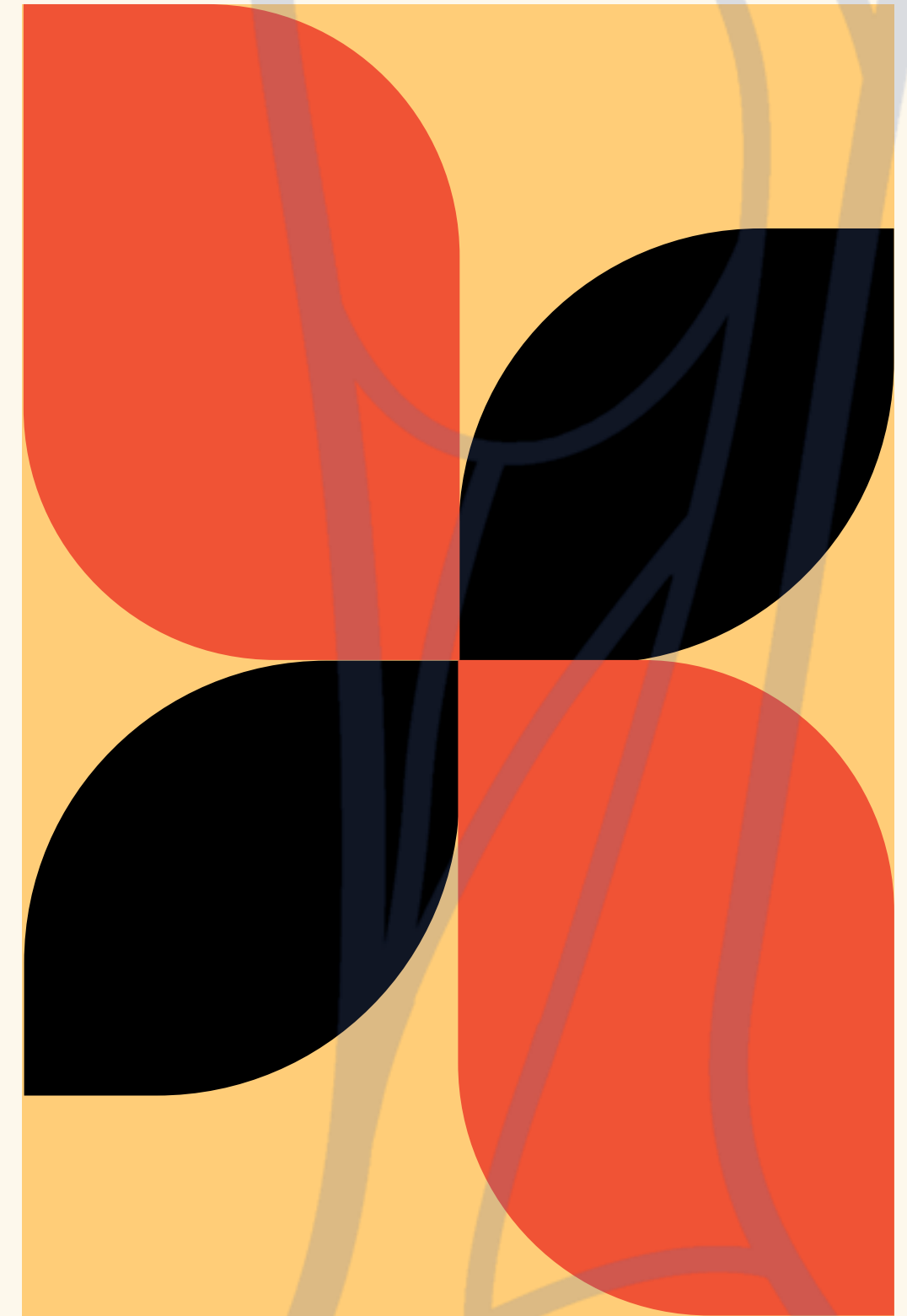


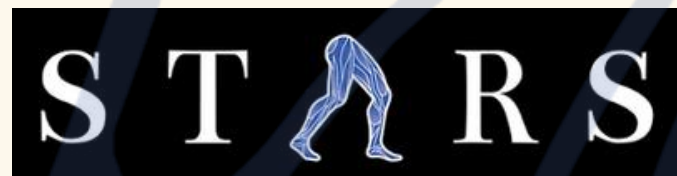
Bullying, undermining & harassment in the vascular workplace

St Thomas' Advanced Revascularisation Symposium

Results of a pan-European multi-disciplinary
survey

Rachael Forsythe | Edinburgh Royal Infirmary



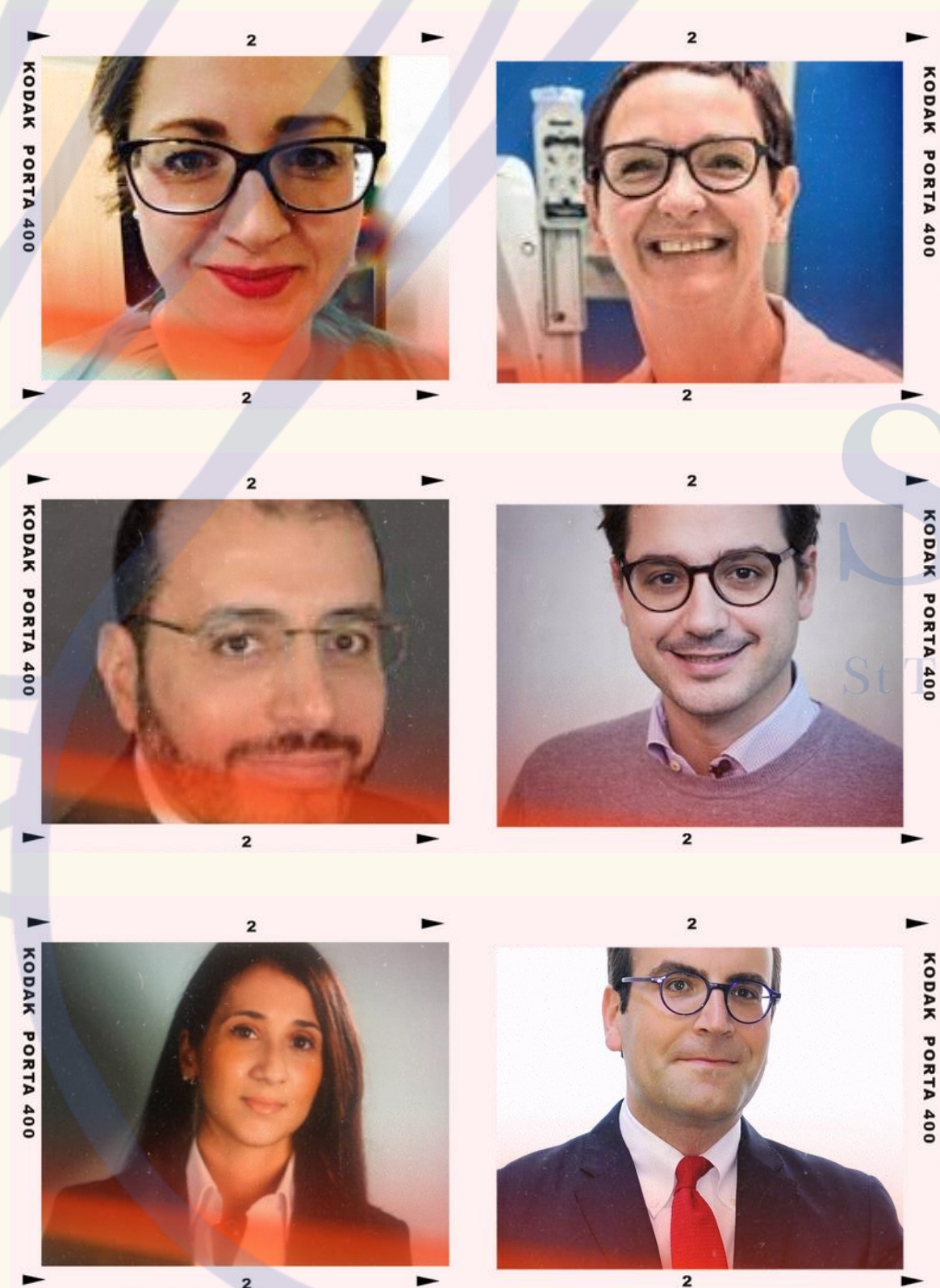


Co-authors and collaborators



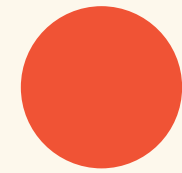
Co-authors: Rachael Forsythe, Isabelle van Herzeele, Hany Zayed, Konstantinos Stavroulakis, Angeliki Argyriou, Athanasios Saratzis

Collaborators: Austrian Society for Vascular Surgery, Backtable.com, Belgian Society for Vascular Surgery, British Society for Endovascular Therapy, Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiological Society of Europe, Dutch Society of Vascular Surgery, European Vascular Surgeons in Training, Finland Vascular Surgery Society, German Society for Vascular Surgery, Greek Society for Vascular surgery, Italian Society of Vascular & Endovascular Surgery, Portuguese Society for Vascular Surgery, Research Collaboration in Peripheral Artery Disease, Rouleaux Club, Romania Vascular Surgical Society, Serbian Society for Vascular Surgery, St Thomas' Advanced Revascularisation Symposium, Swedish Vascular Surgical Society, Swiss Society for Vascular Surgery, Vascupedia.com

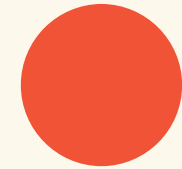


Background.

Bullying, undermining and harassment (BUH):



is a recognised problem within workplaces



leads to poor morale, breakdown of teamwork



may lead to patient harm



is a cause of workplace attrition



should not be tolerated

Methods.

1

Anonymous
international web-
based survey

S

T

2

R

S

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Distributed via social
media and targeted
emails / newsletters

3

Summary data and
free text comments
analysed

Definitions.

Bullying

A behaviour or pattern of behaviours that a reasonable person would expect, might victimize, humiliate, undermine or threaten a person to whom the behaviour is directed.

Undermining

A behaviour that subverts, belittles, weakens or wears away confidence (rude, ridicule, belittle, patronize or similar).

Harassment

An unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended (based on age, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or similar trait).

Sexual harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favours and other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature by which a reasonable person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Results.

Demographics.

58 medical practitioners



85.5% vascular surgery
13.5% IR
1.0% angiology

7

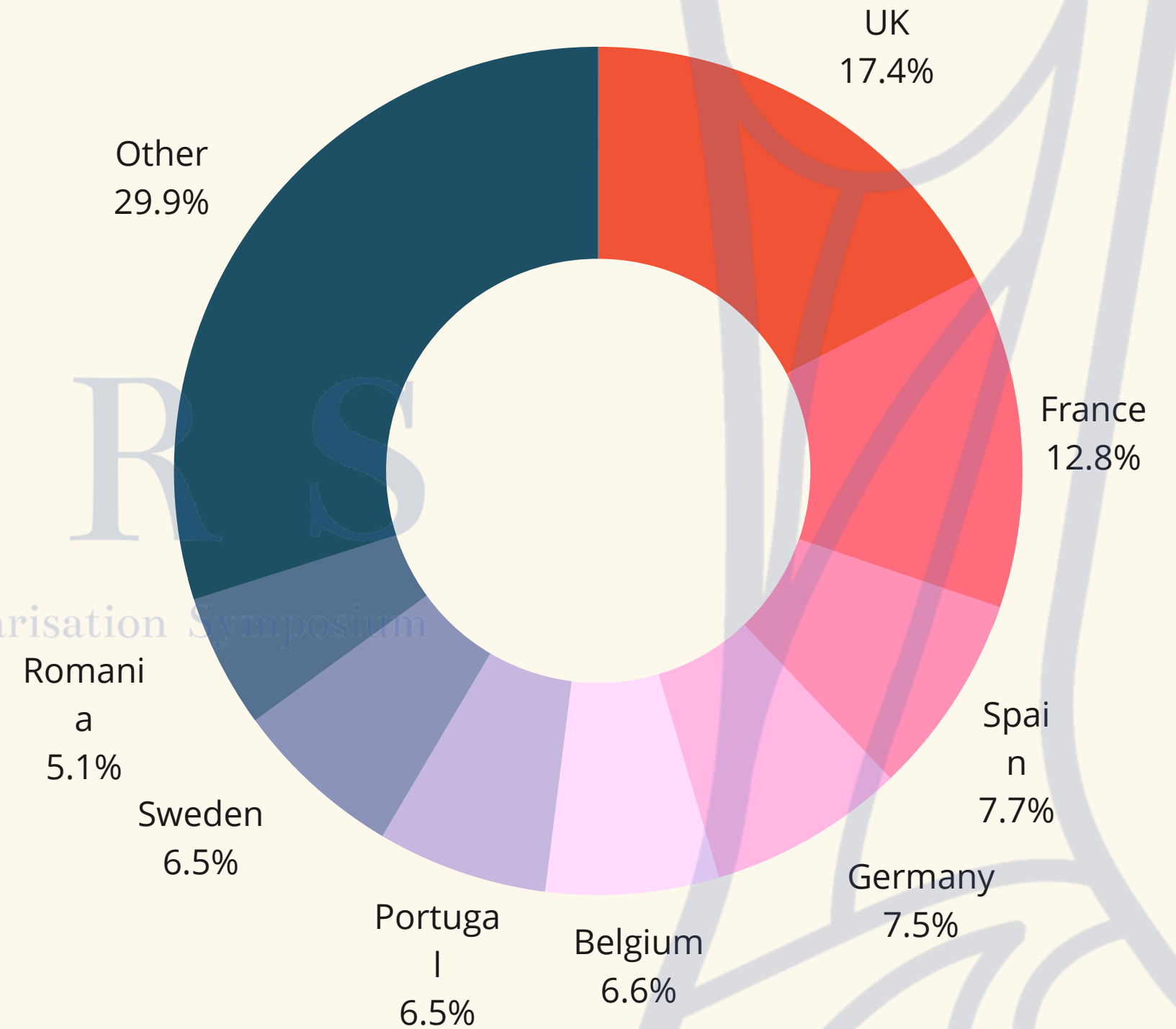
2

countries



93.9% Europe

8



Demographics.

Age

20-25 ---> 1.2%
26-30 ---> 11.1%
31-35 ---> 20.6%
36-40 ---> 17.9%
41-45 ---> 15.2%
46-50 ---> 9.9%
51-60 ---> 17.5%
61-70 ---> 6.3%
71+ ---> 0.3%

Gender

Male ---> 62.9%
Female ---> 35.8%
Transgender:
• Male ---> 0.2%
• Female ---> 0.2%
• Non-binary ---> 0.2%
Prefer not to say -> 0.7%

Sexual orientation

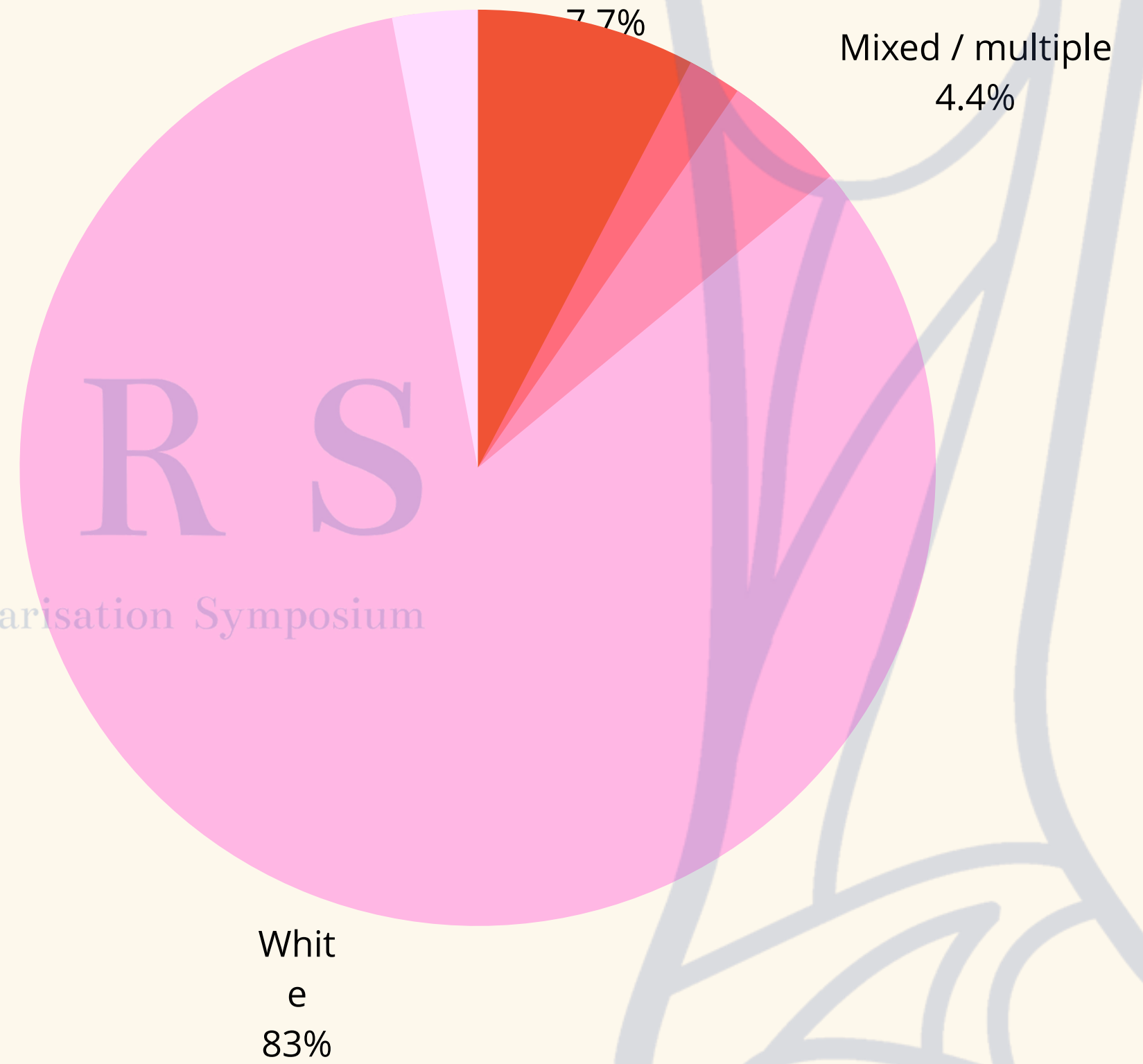
Heterosexual ---> 94.0%
Homosexual ---> 2.4%
Bisexual ---> 1.9%
Pansexual ---> 0.2%
Asexual ---> 0%
Prefer not to say --> 1.5%

Disability

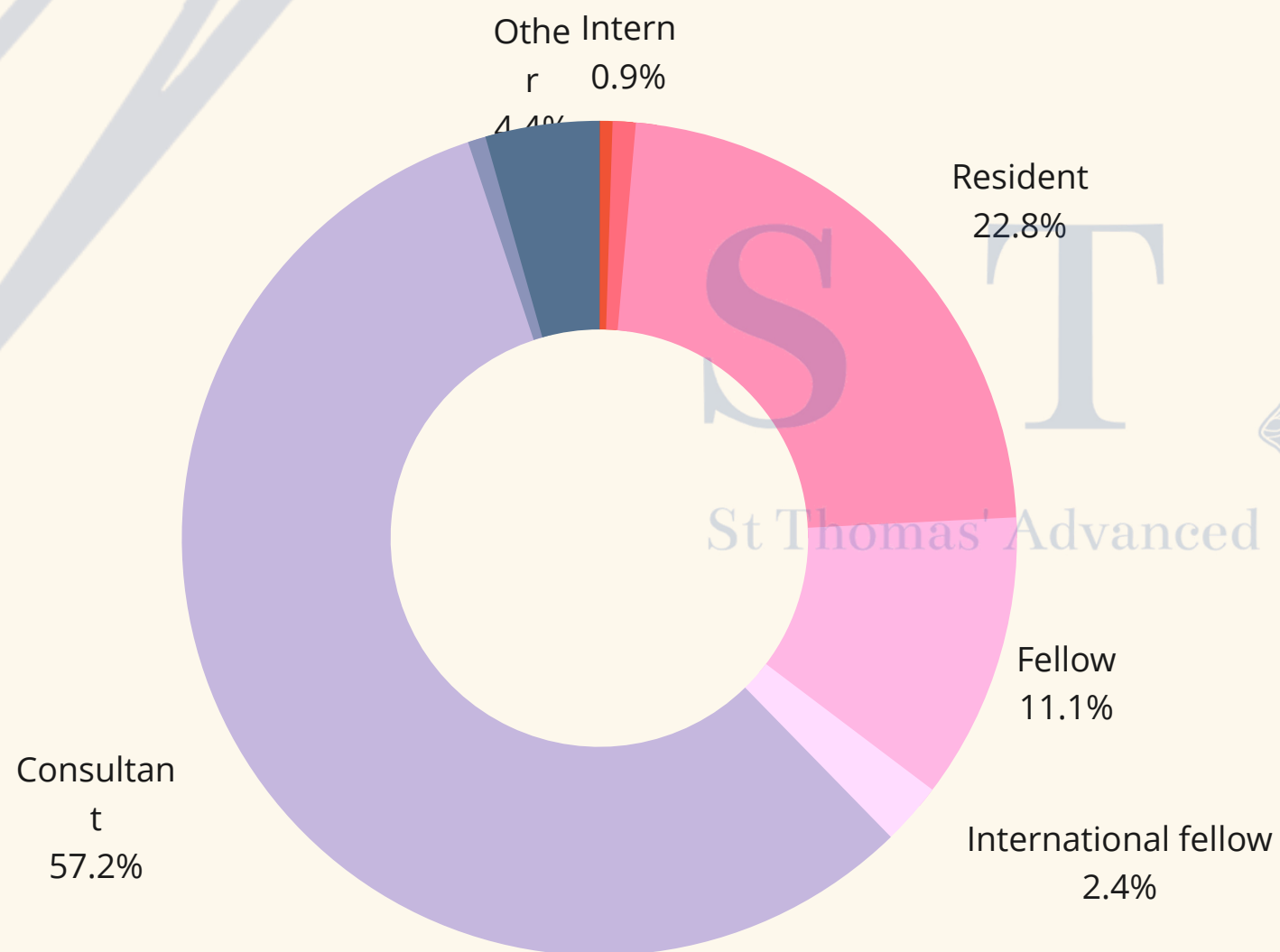
Yes ---> 2.7%
No ---> 96.1%
Prefer not to say --> 1.2%

Demographics.

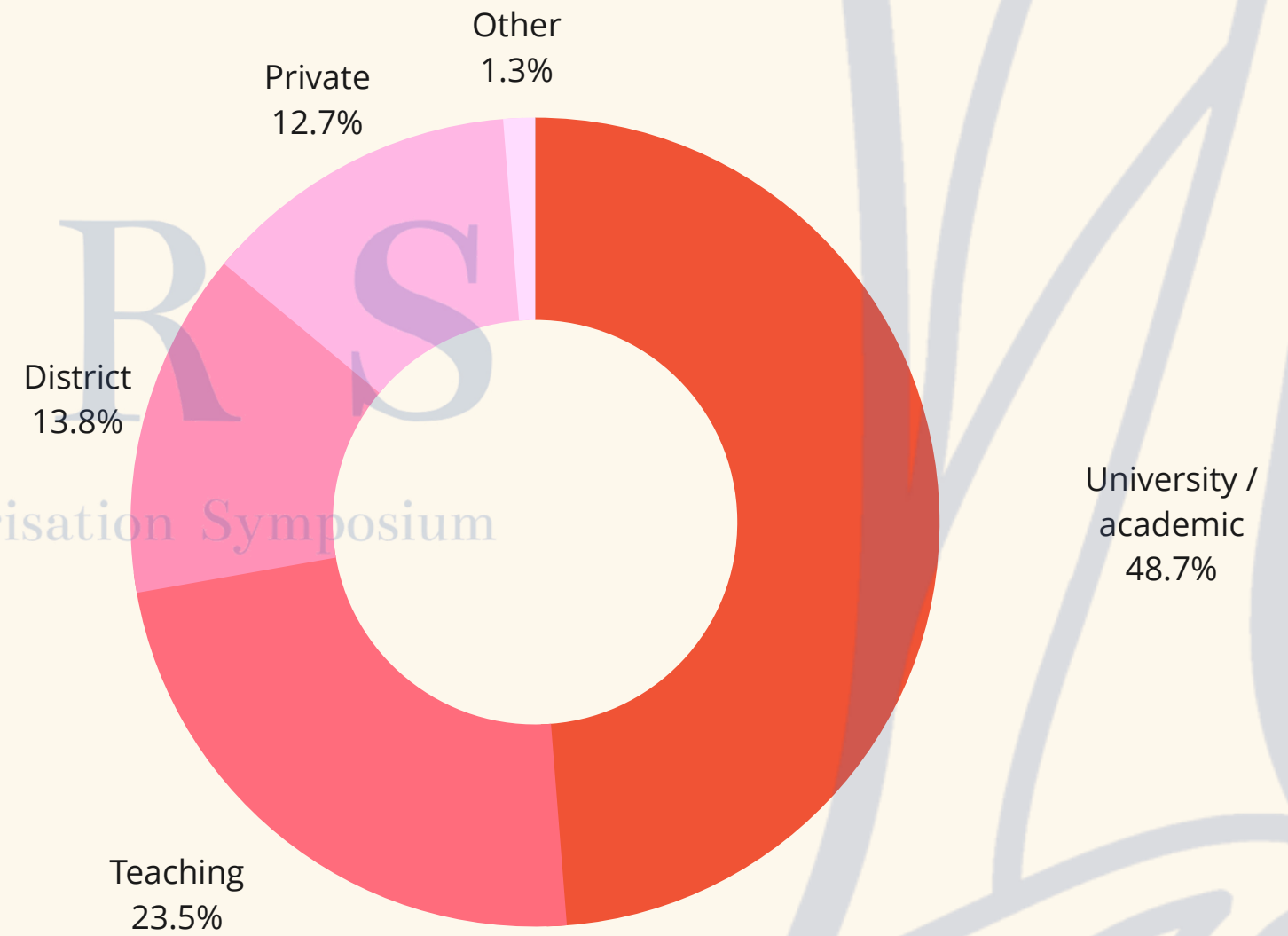
Ethnicity.



Demographics.



Grade of practitioner



Type of hospital

Personal experience of BUH.

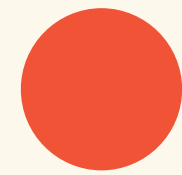


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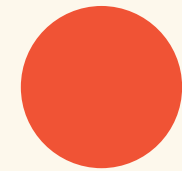
43.1%

Within past 12 months

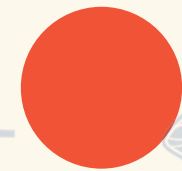
Recent*
experience of
BUH was more
common in:



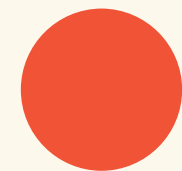
non males



non white ethnicity



those who were born in a
different country



med students and more junior
doctors

*within past 12 months

Risk factors for recent* BUH experience:

Gender

Females from all career grades were more likely to experience BUH except fellows + international fellows.

$p < 0.001$

Ethnicity

Non-white people from all career grades were more likely to experience BUH except residents.

$p < 0.001$

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation was associated with BUH experience only as a consultant

$p = 0.086$

Not working in country of birth

People born outside their country of occupation were more likely to experience BUH overall.

$p = 0.017$

Hospital setting and speciality were not associated with BUH at any stage

*within past 12 months

Personal experience of BUH during career.



37.3% as a medical student



47.3% as an intern



57.7% as a resident / fellow



50.3% as a consultant

Witnessed experience of BUH.



75.3%

Have ever witnessed BUH towards a colleague

>half have witnessed BUH within last 12 months

Similar proportions of each career grade witnessed BUH recently

Frequency and setting of BUH.

Most commonly:

Weekly basis (22.1%)

Consultant perpetrators (26.8%)

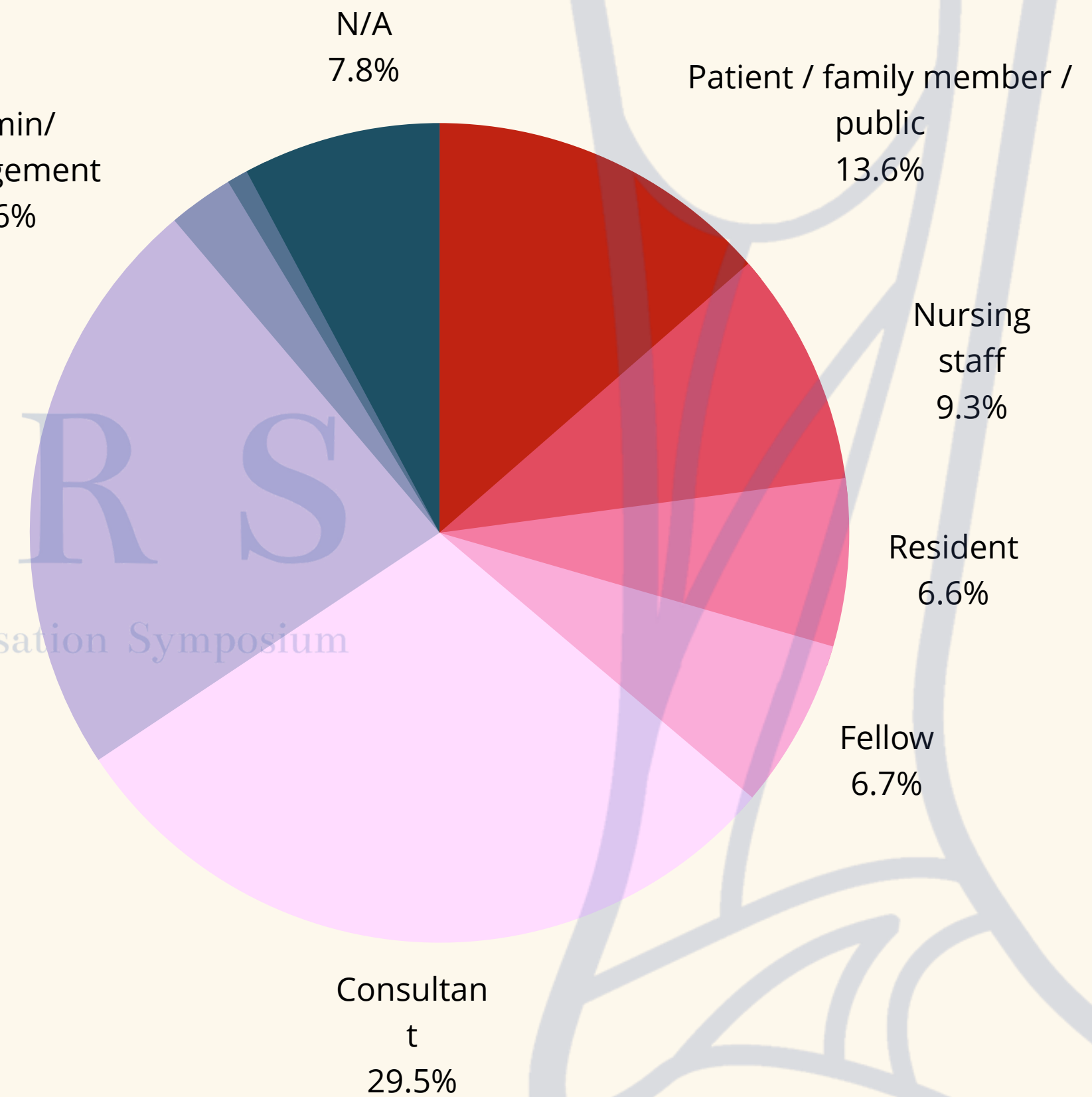
Operating room (31.3%)



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Perpetrators of BUH.

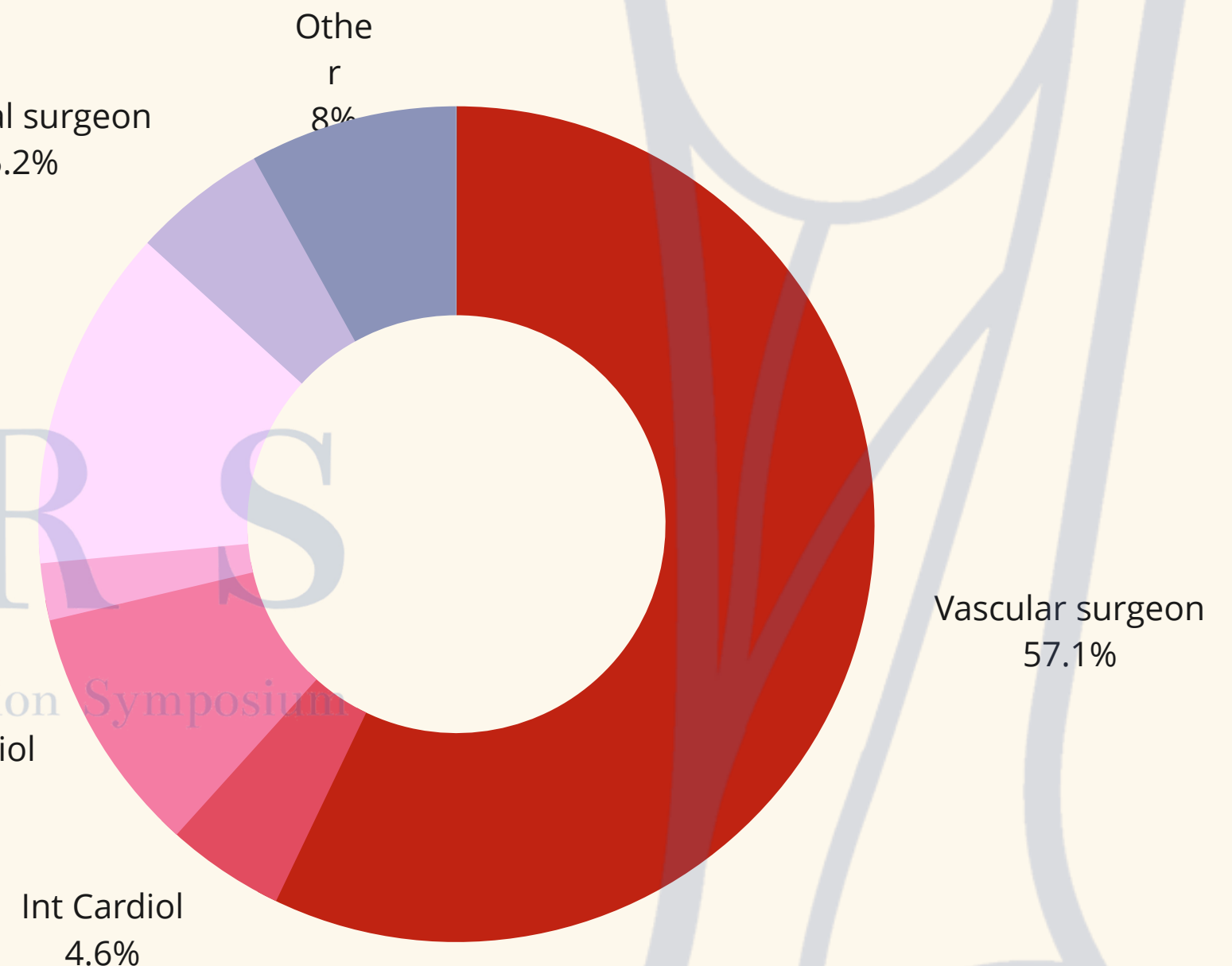
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41% reported perpetrators to be male only

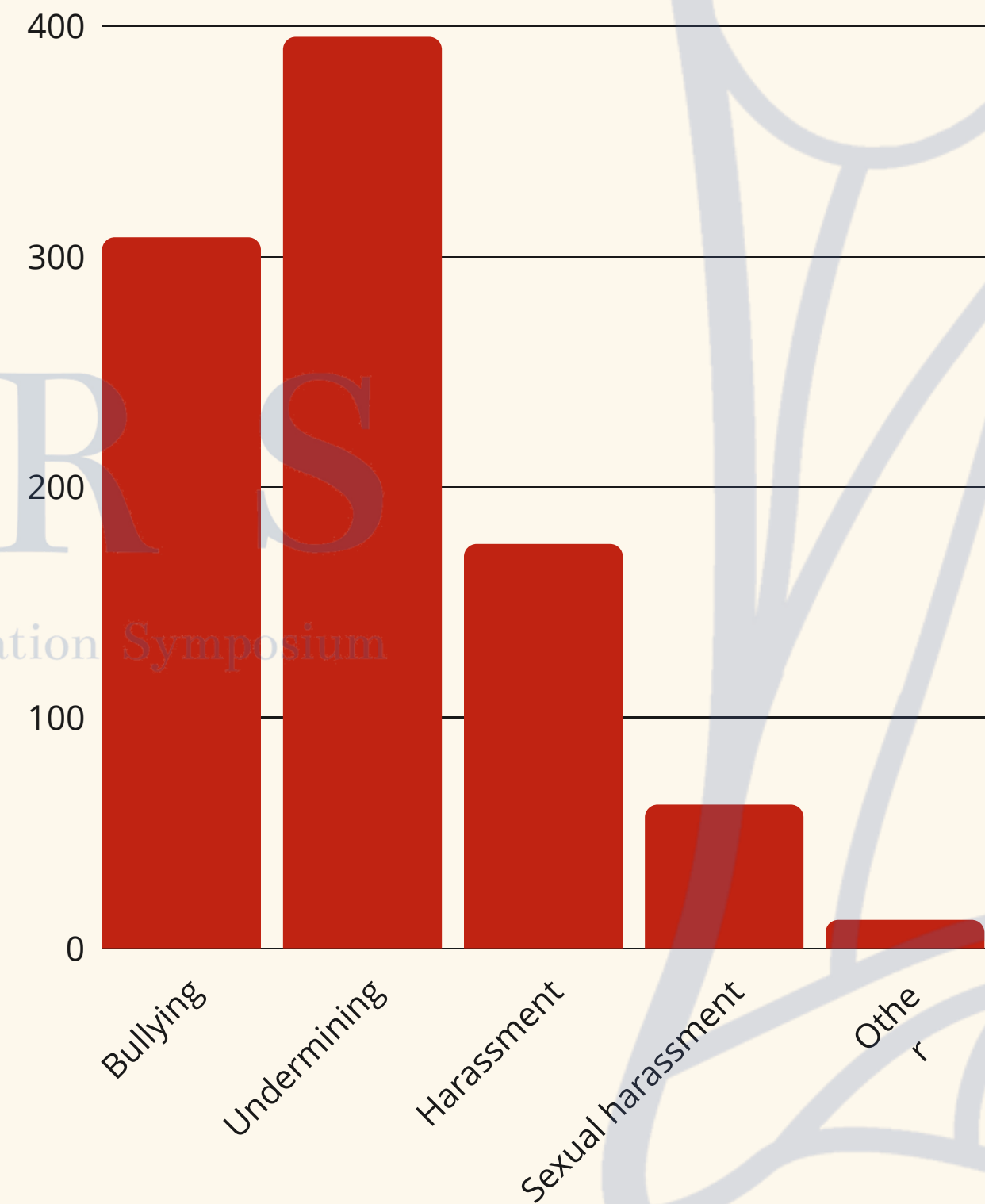
Medical perpetrators of BUH.

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Type of behaviour.

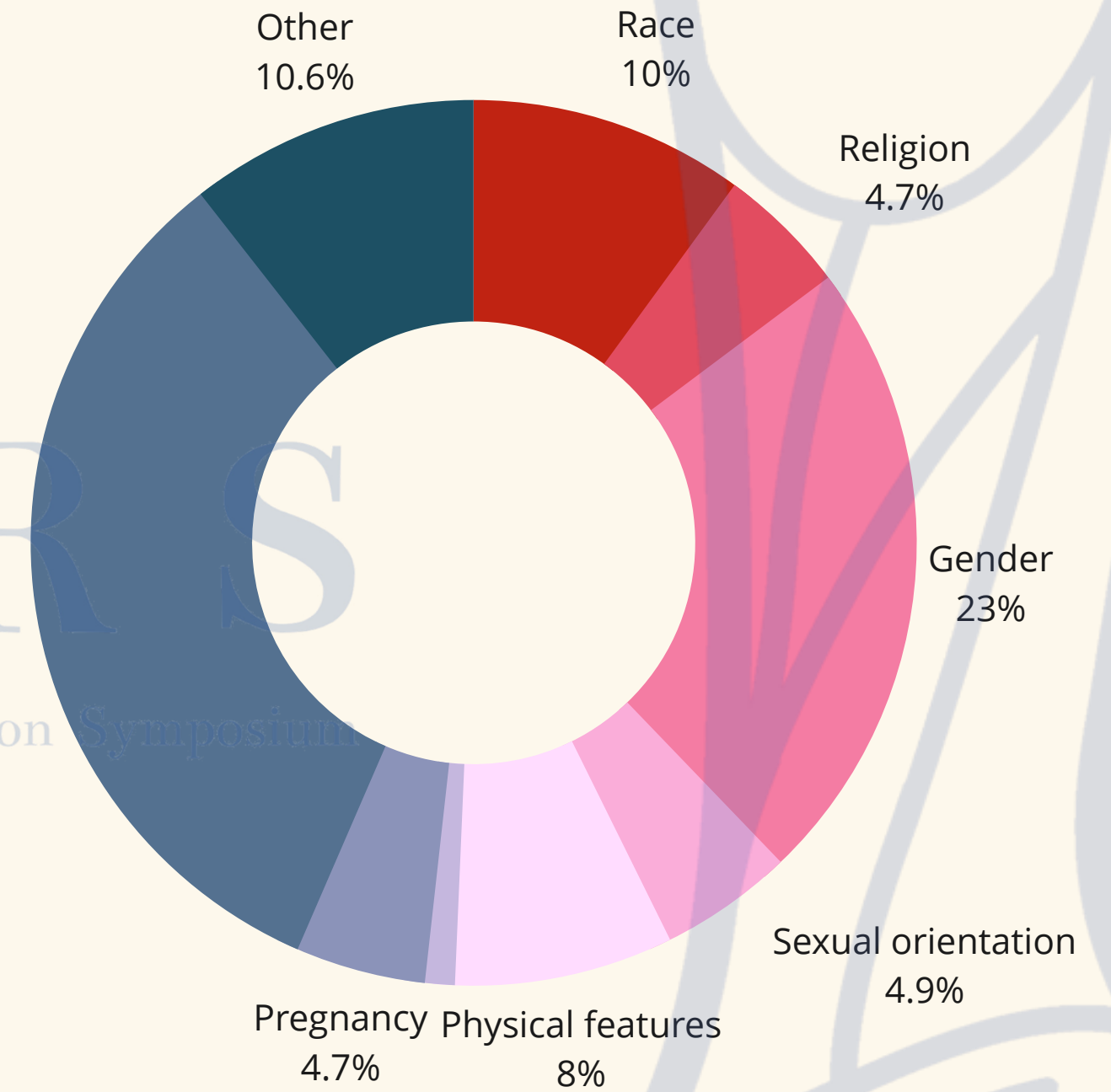
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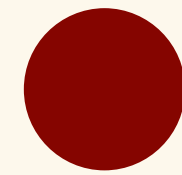
BUH related to
personal /
professional
characteristic.



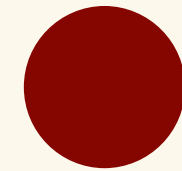
Academic / scientific experience
32.9%



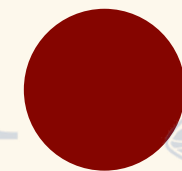
In response to experiencing BUH:



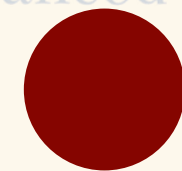
People most commonly waited for BUH to stop (23.6%)



BUH continued in 75.7% of cases where no direct action was taken



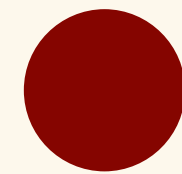
Only 10.3% wrote a formal complaint / letter



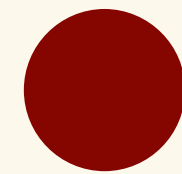
Almost one fifth remained silent (19.3%)

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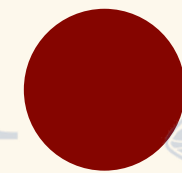
In response to witnessing BUH:



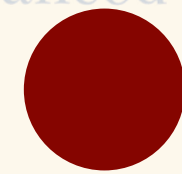
People most commonly acknowledged BUH but took no action (23.3%)



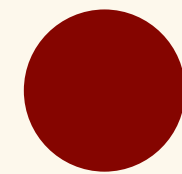
Only one fifth tried to interrupt / stop BUH (20.7%)



Almost half experienced consequences themselves (44.8%) if tried to intervene



If reported, BUH taken seriously in only 12.3%



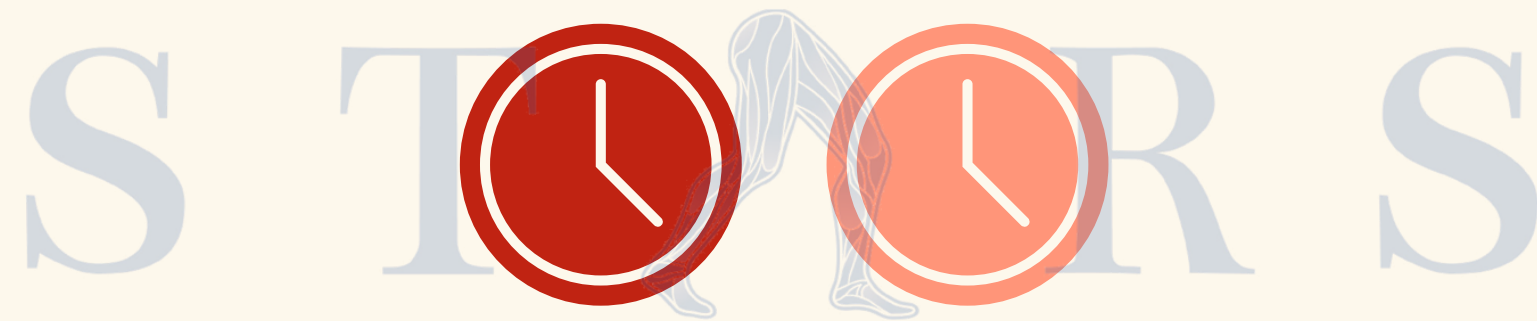
BUH continued in over one third of cases despite being reported (37.1%)

As a result of BUH:



1 out of 2

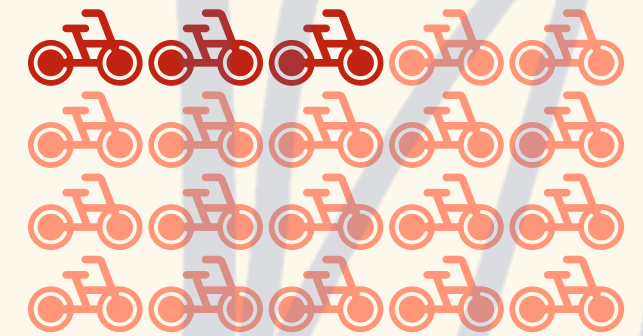
Said it affects their everyday practice (49.9%)



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1 out of 2

Have considered resigning (51.1%)



3 out of 20

Have resigned or left post (15.0%)

Examples.

“

As a **female**, being told that I was too emotional to be a surgeon, should go part time and that I should be a breast surgeon.

“

A patient said that it was not possible for me to be the surgeon **because of the colour of my skin**.

“

I was not offered a position because the Head of Department found out my **sexual orientation**.

“

Preferential treatment for **sexual favours** and hostile treatment if they are refused.

“

Threat of **non-renewal of contract** when I wanted to take holidays.

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Examples.

“

Taking photos of complications and sharing them on social media.

“

Emailing the whole team to tell them that I should not do certain operations.

“

Male surgeon asking a trainee to sleep with him during operations while touching her hand.

“

I was told that I was too fat to be a surgeon.

“

Being punched in the chest or slapped on the hand.

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Examples.

“

Telling a female trainee **not to wear underwear** at a conference.

“

Blackmail from senior colleague to give them data to use.

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Telling me to **“f**k off”** repeatedly.

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“

Threatening to stop me from passing the vascular exam and getting promoted.

“

Constant undermining and belittling **behaviour excused as “character building”**.

But what now?



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Do something

Do nothing

“

Workplace bullying is...the perfect antidote to self-worth and job satisfaction... the perfect crime that leaves no visible marks but effectively destroys one's ego, identity and resilience

Pei KY, Cochran A. Workplace Bullying Among Surgeons-the Perfect Crime.
Ann Surg. 2019;269(1):43-4