

# The Invisible White Coat: Pharmacist Awareness in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

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## Background

- Hospital pharmacists play an important role in improving patient outcomes and safety
- Many hospitalized patients and their families are unaware of the presence and role of the pharmacist
- Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP) 2015 objective: "50% of recently hospitalized patients or their caregivers will recall speaking with a pharmacist while in the hospital"

## Objectives:

- Increase families' awareness of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) pharmacist
- Describe topics families want to discuss with the NICU pharmacist

## Primary Outcome:

- The percentage of families who recall speaking with a NICU pharmacist prior to and during an intervention

## Methods

**Study Design:** Prospective study, convenience sample

## Surveys:

- Families surveyed at time of discharge: 4 weeks pre-intervention and 6 weeks during intervention
- Pharmacists surveyed: pre and post intervention period

**Intervention:** Pharmacist introduced self to families and provided verbal and written information (pamphlet)

- Role of the pharmacist
- Types of questions to ask the pharmacist

## Inclusion Criteria:

- Parents and/or primary caregivers of babies in the NICU

## Exclusion Criteria:

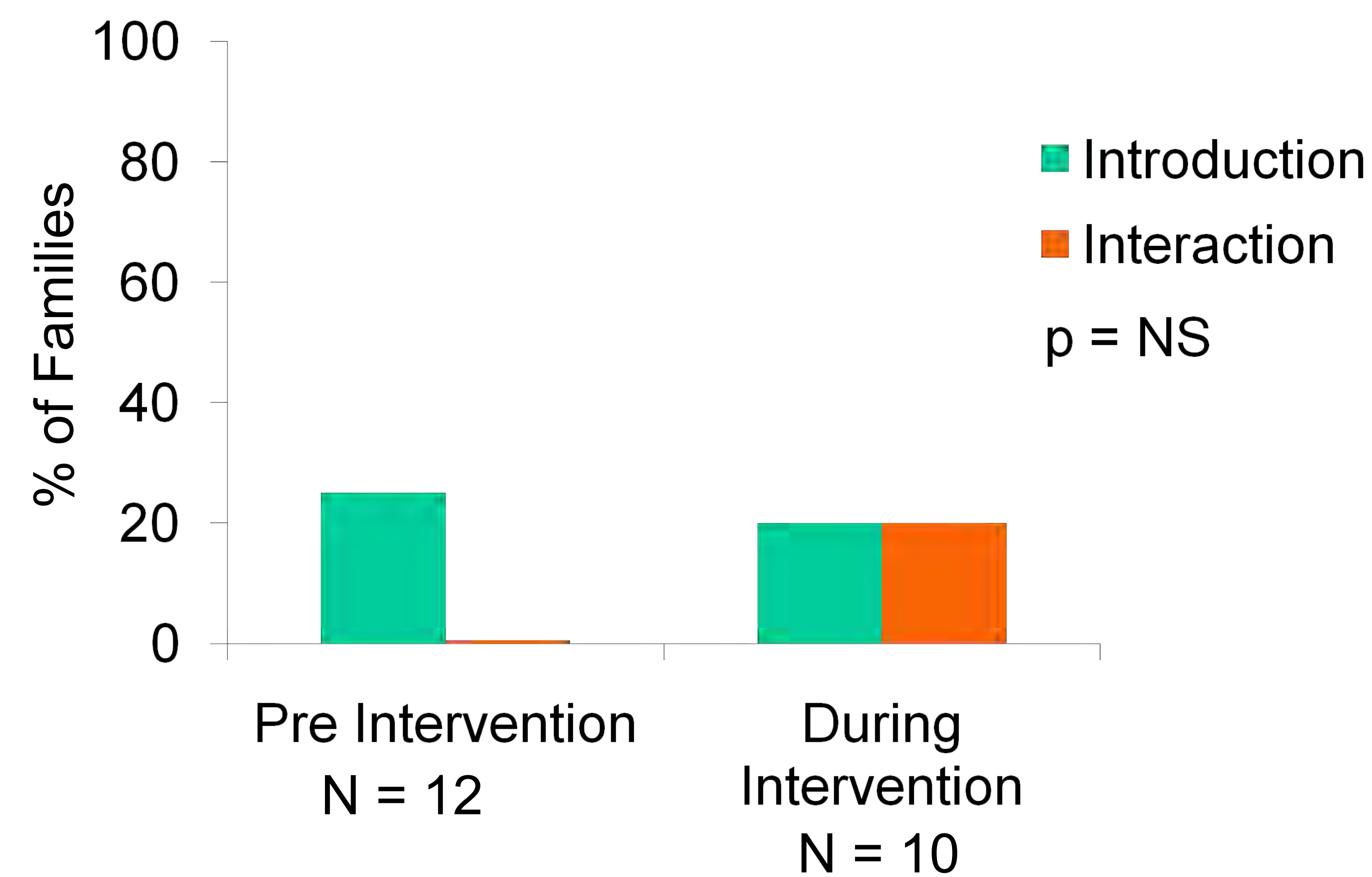
- Families unable to speak, read or write English
- Families of deceased patients

## Statistical Analysis:

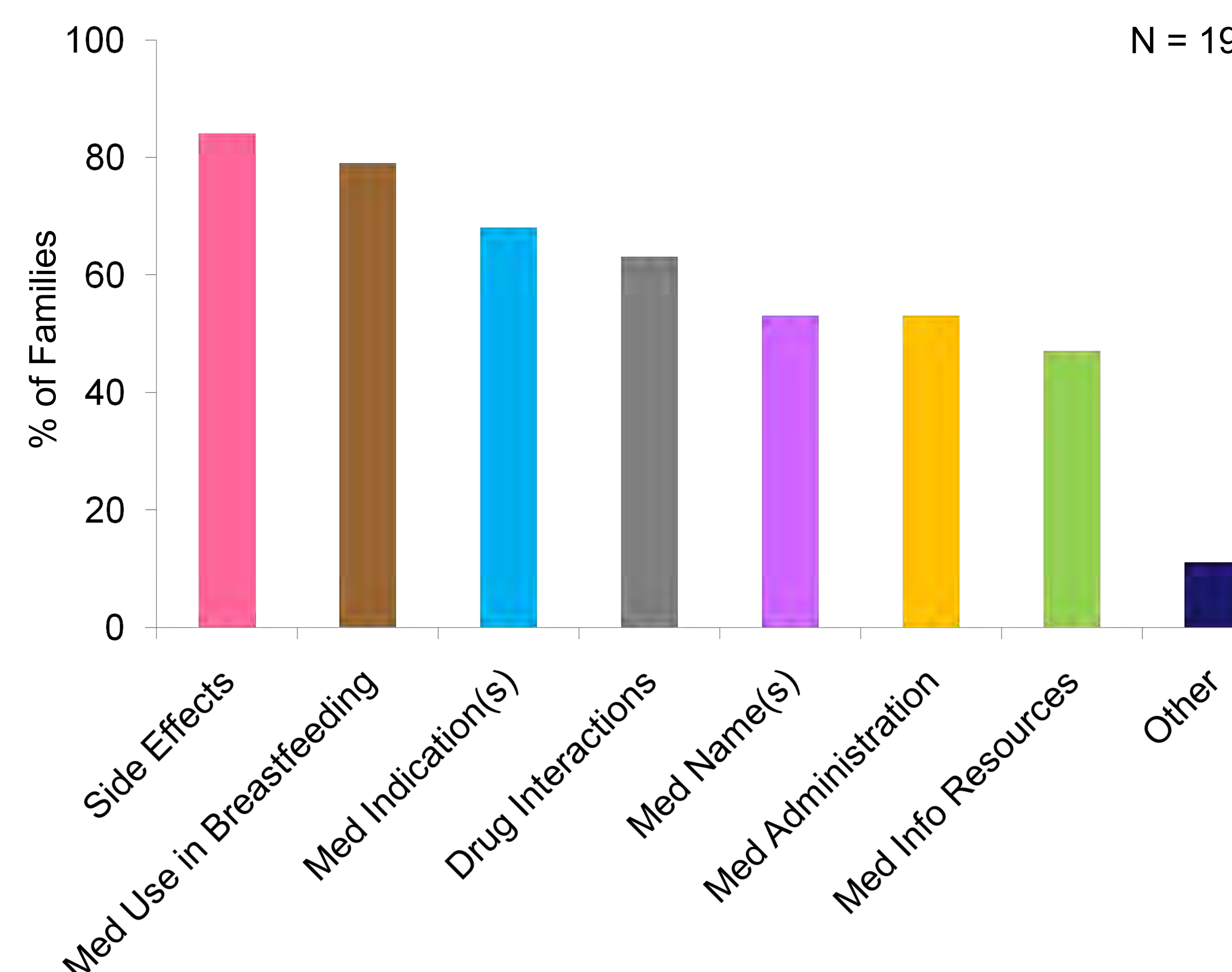
- Family data: Fisher's Exact Test (2-sided)
- Pharmacist data: Descriptive Statistics

## Results

**Figure 1. Family Recall of Pharmacist Introduction and Interaction**



**Figure 2. Topics Families Would Like to Discuss with a Pharmacist**

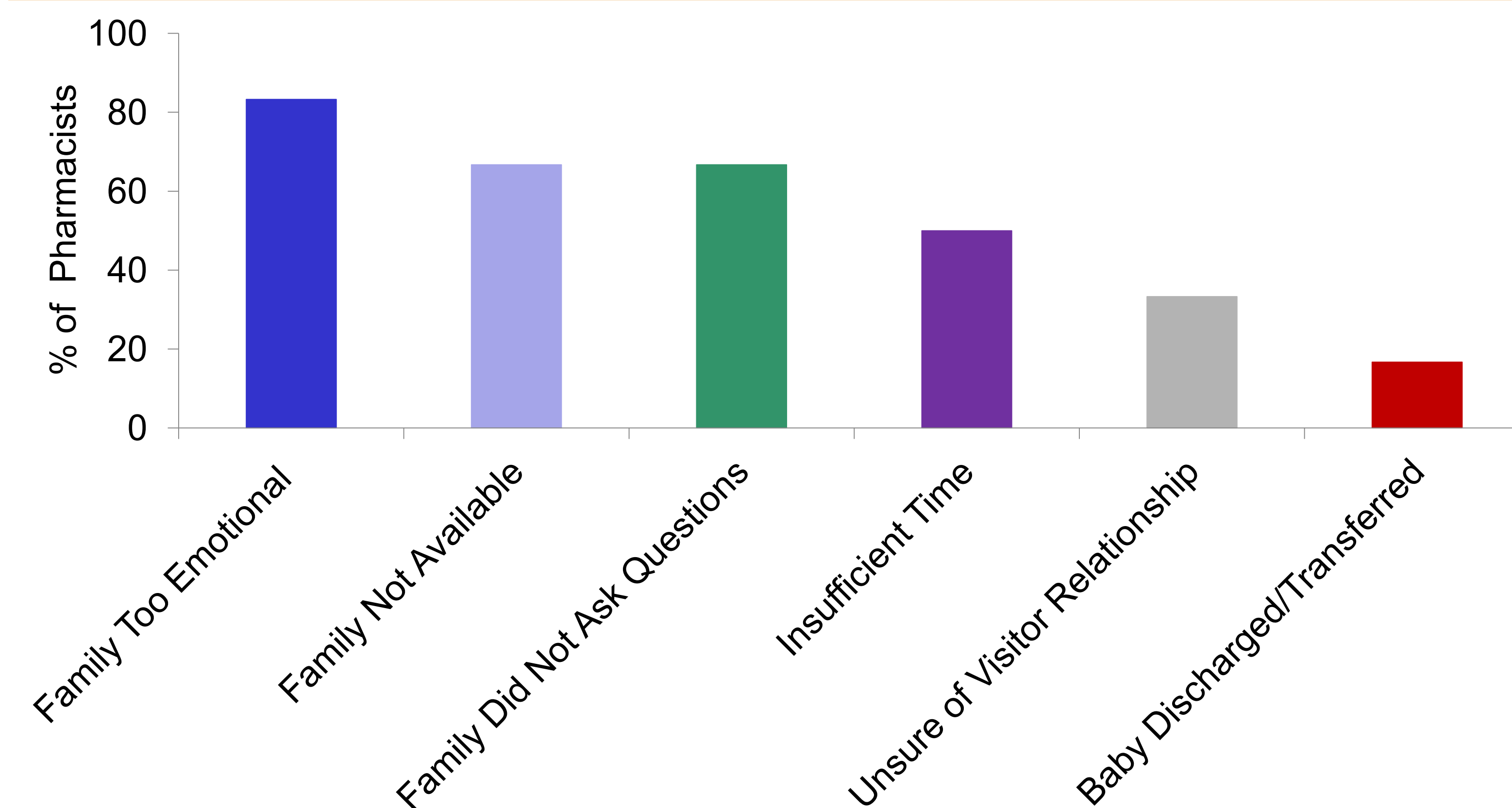


**Table 1. Pharmacist Recall of Introduction and Interaction with Families**

	N = 6	Pre-Intervention (Median % Families) (range)	Post-Intervention (Median % Families) (range)
Introduction		4 (0-15)	4 (1-25)
Interaction		5 (0-20)	4 (0-40)

- 143 babies in NICU during intervention period
- 35 pamphlets handed out to families by NICU pharmacists

**Figure 3. Pharmacist Reported Barriers for Performing Intervention**



## Limitations

- Small sample size
- Short intervention period
- Participation in intervention not optimal: internal and external factors

## Conclusions

- The percentage of families who recall speaking with a NICU pharmacist prior to and during the intervention was similar
- 86% of surveyed families in the NICU indicated they would like to speak with a pharmacist
  - Families identified several medication related topics of interest
- Future initiatives needed to assist pharmacists to achieve CSHP 2015 objective

