# Understanding Current Trends and Needs: Medical Information Contact Center Services

Michael DeLuca,<sup>1</sup> Evelyn Hermes-DeSantis,<sup>2</sup> and Keyur Brahmbhatt <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Senior Vice President, Medical Affairs, EVERSANA, Emeryville, CA, USA. <sup>2</sup>Director, Research and Publications/phactMI, AZ, USA. <sup>3</sup>Director, Medical Affairs, EVERSANA, Pune, India.

# BACKGROUND

- Medical Information (MI) plays a crucial role in addressing inquiries from healthcare professionals, payors, and patients/caregivers and ensuring pharmaceutical products' safe and effective use.
- Most MI departments have transitioned from in-house contact centers to leveraging a contact center(s)
  operated by a service provider(s).
- Partnering with the right global MI service provider is crucial to ensure appropriate customer satisfaction and that service levels are met.
- phactMI is a non-profit organization and collaboration of pharmaceutical company MI departments. The organization members represent small-, mid-, and large-sized pharmaceutical and device companies.<sup>2</sup>
- EVERSANA is the leading provider of global commercial services to the life sciences industry. EVERSANA's MI Contact Center team has supported pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical device, over the counter, and digital therapeutic companies for 20+ years.
- EVERSANA™, in collaboration with phactMI™, conducted a survey to assess current trends and areas of consideration when selecting and partnering with a global MI Contact Center service provider.

## METHODS

- A questionnaire was sent to all phactMI member companies (N=30) using SurveyMonkey® during August 2021.
- The survey contained 11 multiple-choice questions covering a range of topics related to MI Contact Center service, including priority areas for evaluation and reasons for switching providers.

# RESULTS

- A total of 21 (70%) participants responded to this survey; responses to individual questions varied. Participants represented a range of companies (**Figure 1**).
- Overall, 95% (19/20) reported outsourcing medical inquiry management to an external MI Contact Center service provider.
- The US, Canada, EU/UK were the top locations for MI Contact Center services (**Figure 2**). For the US markets, 84% (16/19) of participants reported that the MI Contact Center services were delivered from the centers based solely in the US and 16% (3/19) from a combination of the US and other countries.
- Interestingly, 55% (11/20) of participants provided MI Contact Center services globally. These participants reported having two or more separate MI Contact Center service providers to support global needs. Only one participant (9%) reported having a single provider for their global needs (**Figure 3**).
- When considering and evaluating MI Contact Center service providers, the features and services identified as most important (weighted average ≥4 on 5-point Likert scale, from not important to very important) are represented in **Figure 4**.
- Even though most responders, 68% (13/19), stated that they have been with their current provider >3 years, 68% (13/19) reported switching their contact center service provider at some point in time.
- The top reasons to switch included service issues, improving customer experience, consolidation needs due to merger/acquisition, and cost reduction (Figure 5).

Figure 1: Participant's organization size (n=20)

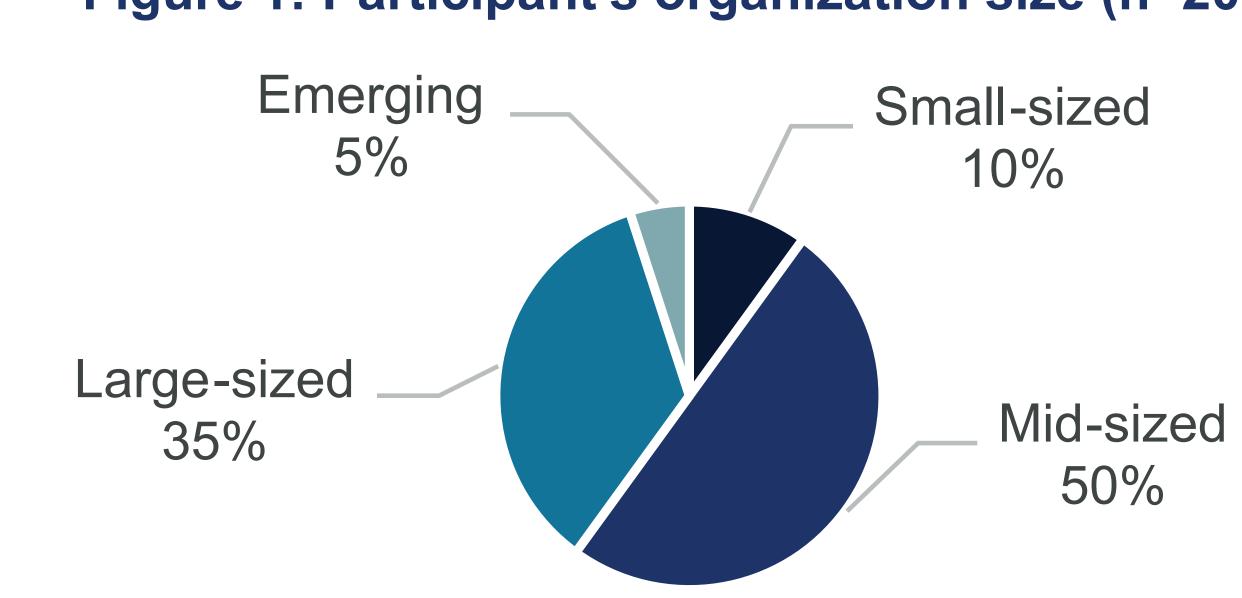
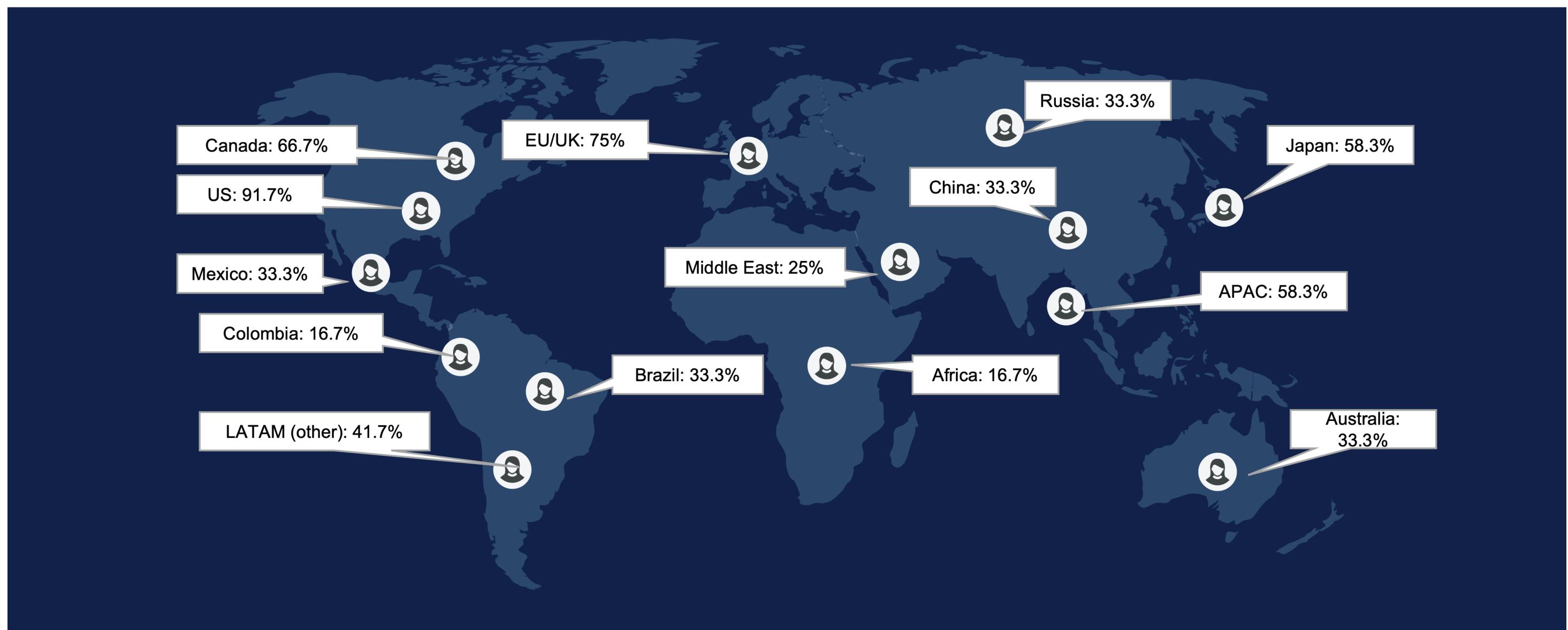
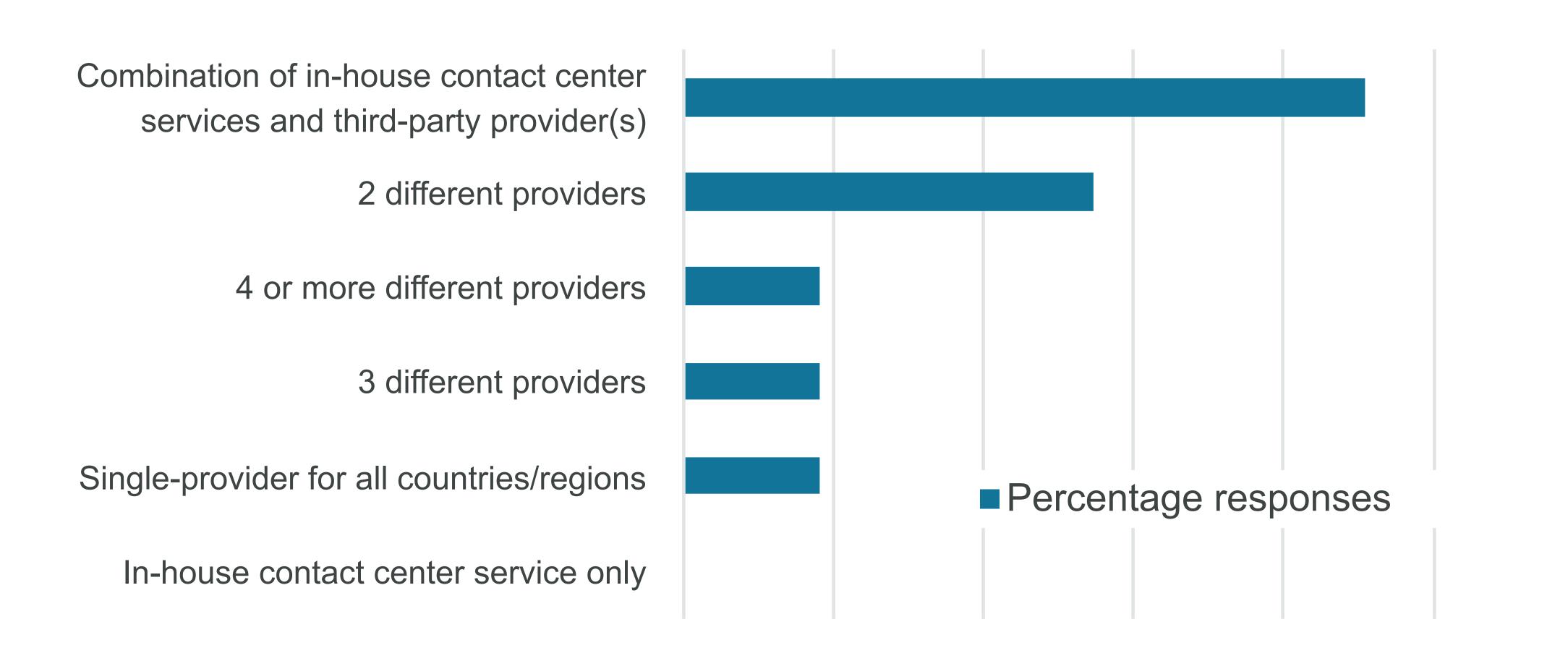


Figure 2: Countries/regions where MI Contact Centers have been established for participants' companies (n=12)



APAC = Asia-Pacific; LATAM = Latin America

Figure 3: Number of different MI Contact Center service providers used by participants (n=11)



0.00% 10.00% 20.00% 30.00% 40.00% 50.00%

Figure 4: Most valued criteria for evaluating MI Contact Center service providers (n=19)

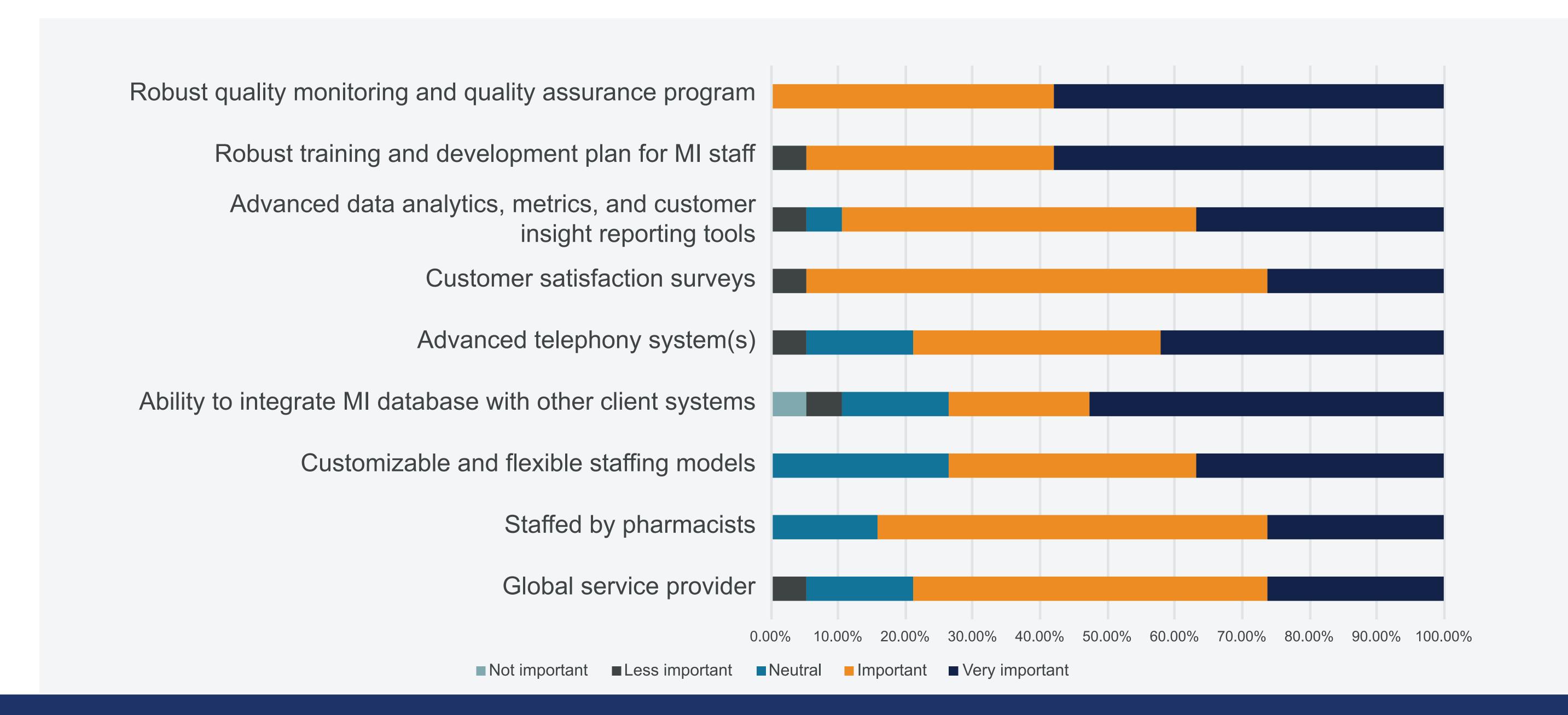
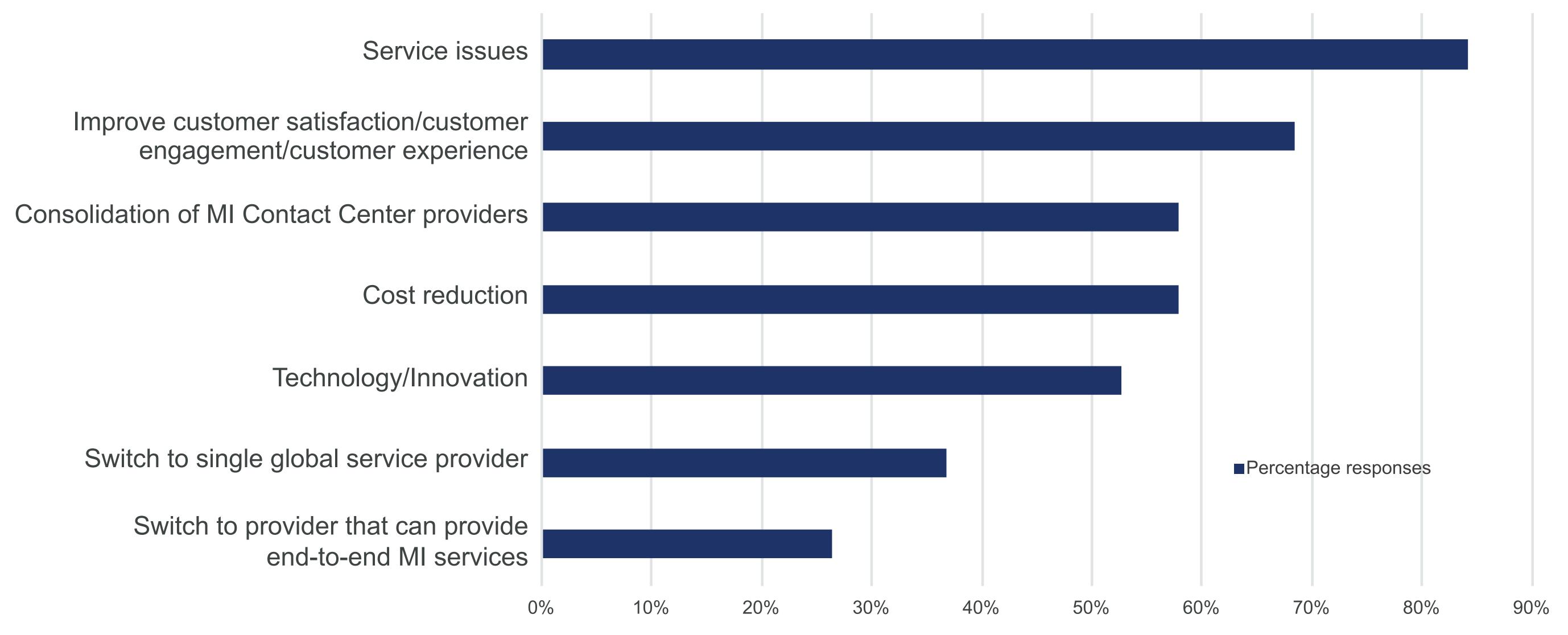


Figure 5: Major reasons for switching MI Contact Center service providers (n=19)



## CONCLUSIONS

- MI plays a crucial role in addressing inquiries from healthcare professionals, payors, and patients/caregivers and ensuring pharmaceutical products' safe and effective use. Therefore, partnering with the right global MI service provider is crucial to ensure appropriate customer satisfaction and service levels are met.
- The survey highlighted the critical criteria that pharmaceutical companies' MI departments consider when selecting the right MI Contact Center service provider.
- Notably, a high percentage of MI departments have switched providers, impacting resources and management time.
- Insights from the survey will help pharmaceutical companies with the proper partner selection for medical inquiry management.
- One global contact center with multi -language support capabilities can ensure consistency, reduce
  duplication of effort, and streamline processes. Therefore, it is crucial to leverage the efficiency gains and
  cost advantages by selecting the right single service provider to support global markets.
- Overall, future research will be important to review and compare the trends in relation to the evolving needs of MI departments, as there is a shift to finding solutions for globalization, automation, digitalization, personalization, demonstrating value, and switching to a more customer and patient-centric approach.

#### References

- 1. Griffin SA, Shah R, Soloff A, et al. Pharma collaboration for transparent medical information (phactMI) benchmark study: trends, drivers, success factors, and value of globalization in medical information. *Ther Innov Regul Sci.* 2019;53(3):332 –9.
- 2. phactMI: Pharma Collaboration for Transparent Medical Information website: https://www.phactmi.org/PortalAboutUs



