Suicide Prevention Screening to Decrease Suicide Rates in University-Aged Individuals

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PICOT

P	In 18 to 24 year olds
I	How does the use of a suicide prevention screening tool
C	Compared with no suicide prevention screening tool
O	affect suicide rates
T	Over 4 years

Literature Review

Databases used:
♦CINAHL ♦EBSCO
♦PubMed ♦Cochrane

Key terms:
♦Suicide ♦Suicide rates
♦Depression ♦Mental health
♦Anxiety ♦Screening
♦Identification
♦PHQ-9 ♦University ♦College
♦Referrals

Article selection criteria:
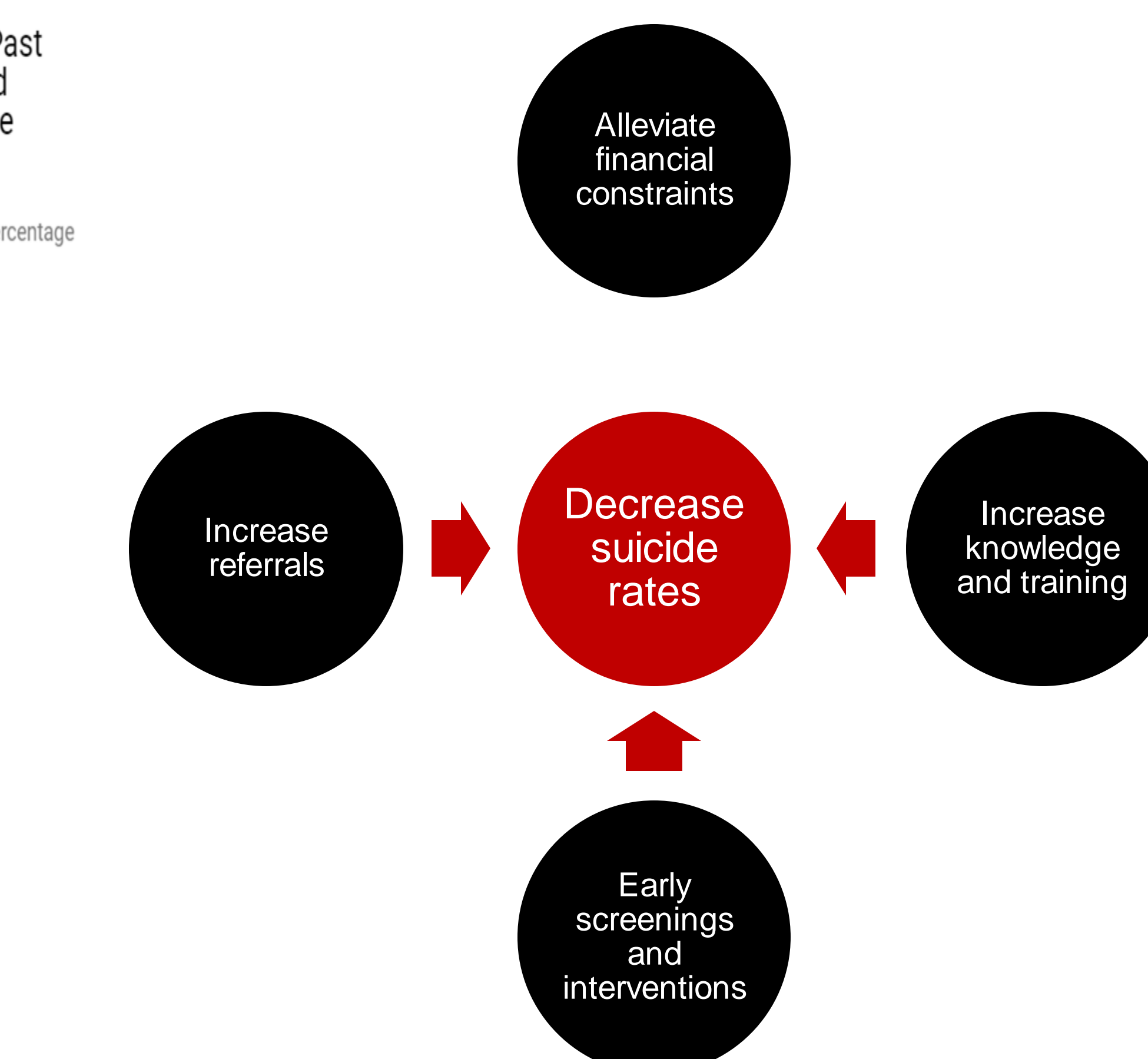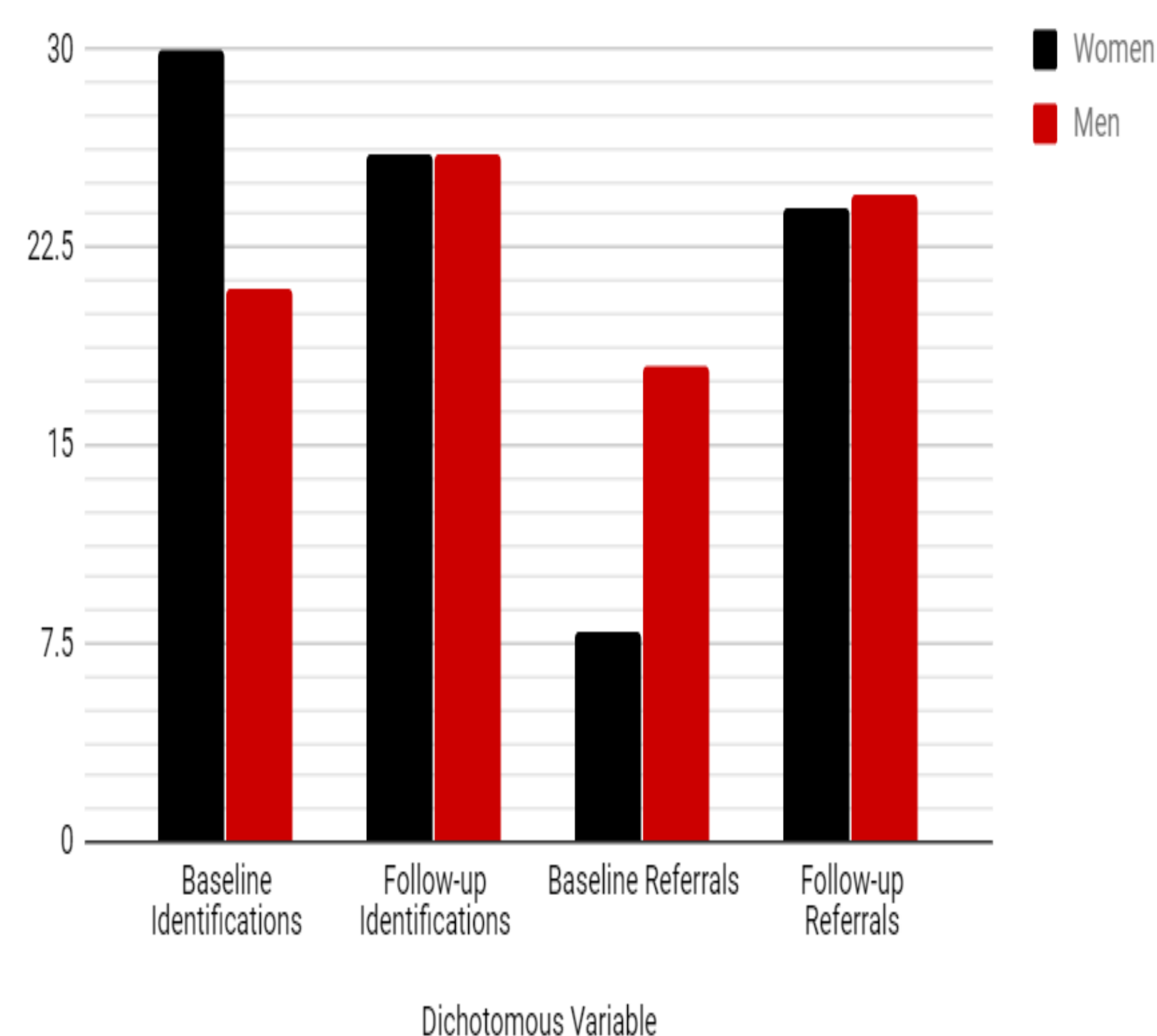Peer-reviewed articles published within the past 5 years

Synthesis of Research

- An association was found between early suicide identification and intervention, and decreased suicide rates. [1, 2, 5, 9, 10]
- Implementation of a suicide screening tool is effective in decreasing suicide rates among 18 to 24 year olds, improving retention rates and grade point averages (GPA). [3, 9, 10]
- Financial burden of seeing a mental health clinician is the most frequently reported reason for not seeking care. [2] (Graph 1)
- University-wide suicide identification and prevention programs resulted in an
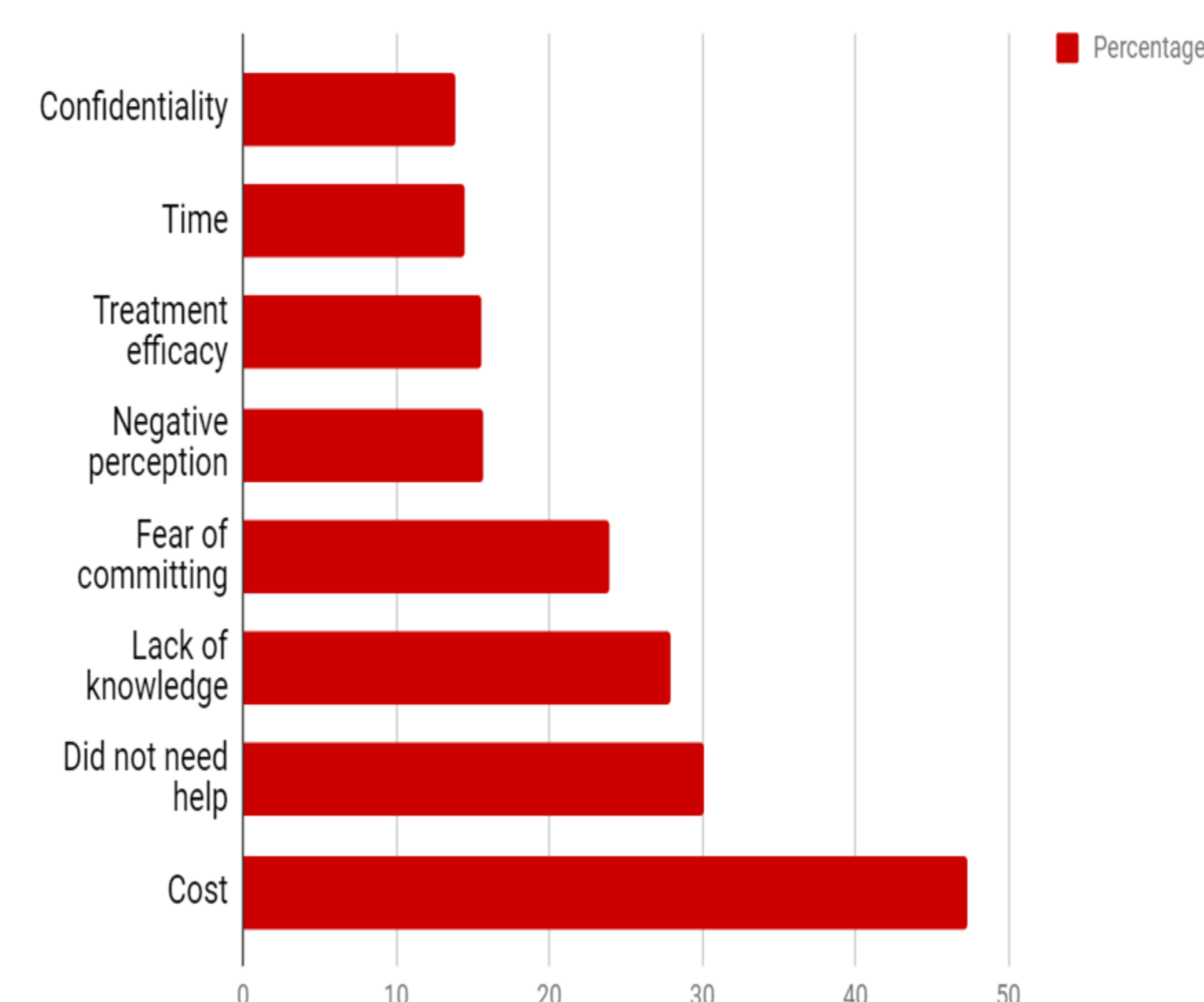
Graph 1: Reasons for Not Seeking Mental Health Care by Czyz, E. K., Horwitz, A. G., Eisenberg, D., Kramer, A., & King, C. A. (2013) *Journal of American College Health, 61*(7), 398-406.

Graph 2: Suicide Education and Referrals by Rallis, B.A., Esposito-Smythers, C., Diabato, D.J., Mehlenbeck, R.S., Kaplan, S., Geer, L., Adams, R., and Meehan B. (2018) *Journal of Clinical Psychology.* 74(7)

- Providing leaders with knowledge and a suicide prevention tool, led to a reduction in suicide attempts and an increase in mental health referrals. [7,8] (Graph 2)
- Maladaptive behavioral responses to stress are commonly seen in individuals aged 18 to 24 and result in a higher incidence of mental health issues. [4]
- Screening and identifying students at risk for suicide, providing early interventions for those in need improved education outcomes. [7, 9, 10]
- Mental health screening created a bridge for university students to access services in a timely manner. [1, 2, 9]

Evaluation

Decision to Change

- Implement suicide prevention screening tool during college admission and annually until graduation.
- Utilize information technology and software to screen large volumes of students on admission.
- Develop protocols and procedures including a flow sheet for referrals that include avenues for interventions and follow through for students at high risk.

Acknowledgements

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