



THE
COMMONWEALTH
FUND

The Commonwealth Fund 2004 International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care in Five Countries

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2004 International Health Policy Survey

- Topics: System Views, Access, Doctor-Patient Communication, Coordination, Emergency Room Care, Prescription Drugs, Preventive Care, and Chronic Illness Management
- Telephone survey of 1,400 adults ages 18 and older in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States, with an expanded sample of 3,061 in the United Kingdom (funded by The Health Foundation)
- Conducted by Harris Interactive and subcontractors March 29 to May 17, 2004.
- Margin of error + or - 3 percentage points for differences between countries and + or - 2% for country averages

Views of the Health Care System

Views of The Health Care System in Five Nations - 1998 to 2004

Percent saying:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Only Minor Changes Needed					
2004	21	21	19	26	16
2001	25	21	18	21	18
1998	19	20	9	25	17
Rebuild Completely					
2004	23	14	19	13	33
2001	19	18	20	18	28
1998	30	23	32	14	33

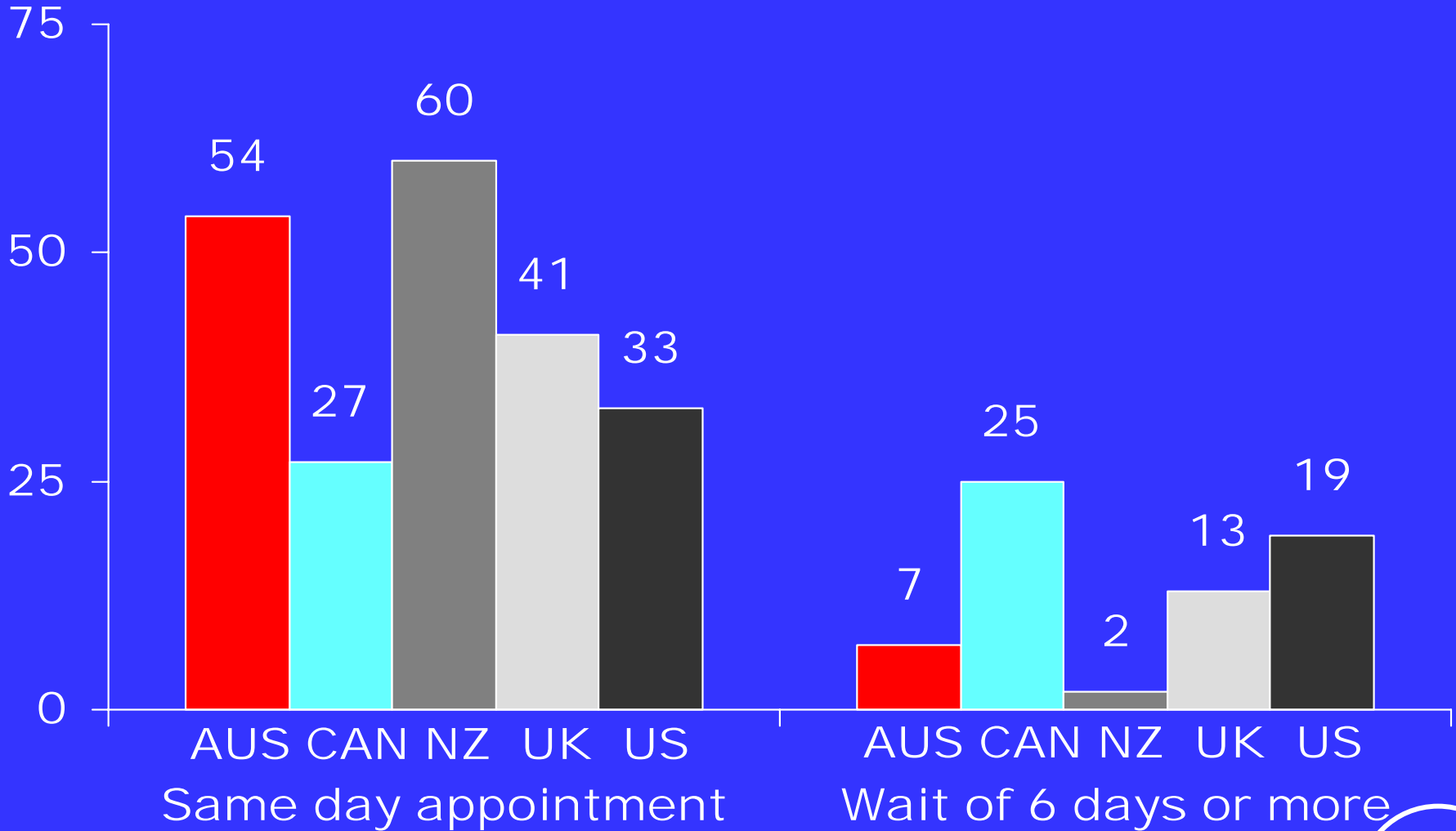
Access to Care

Length of Time with Regular Doctor/Place of Care

Percent:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Has Regular Doctor/Place	94	95	97	99	91
2 years or less	22	20	21	18	29
3-5 years	22	21	20	17	25
More than 5 years	50	53	56	63	37
No regular doctor/place	5	5	3	1	9

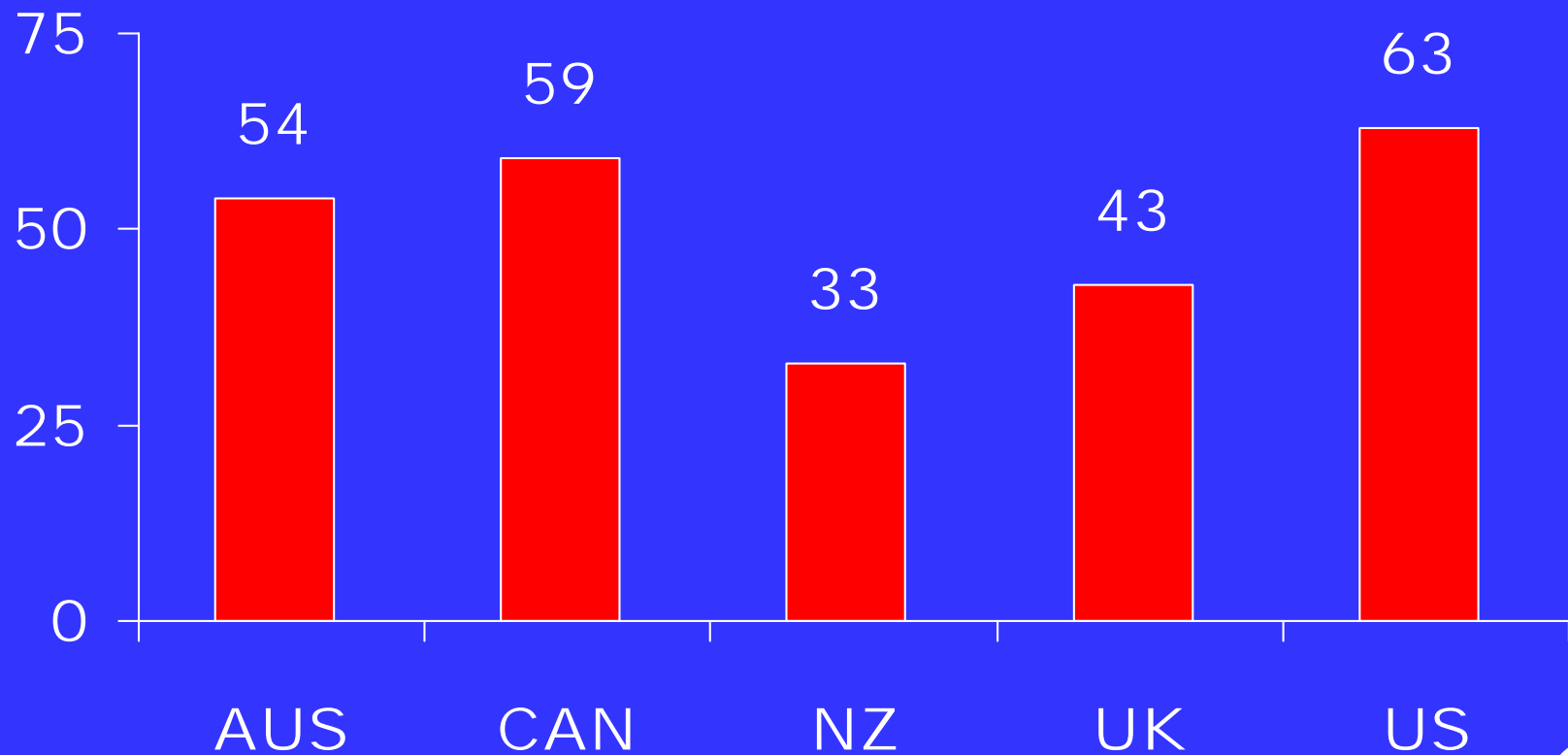
Access to Doctor When Sick or Need Medical Attention

Percent



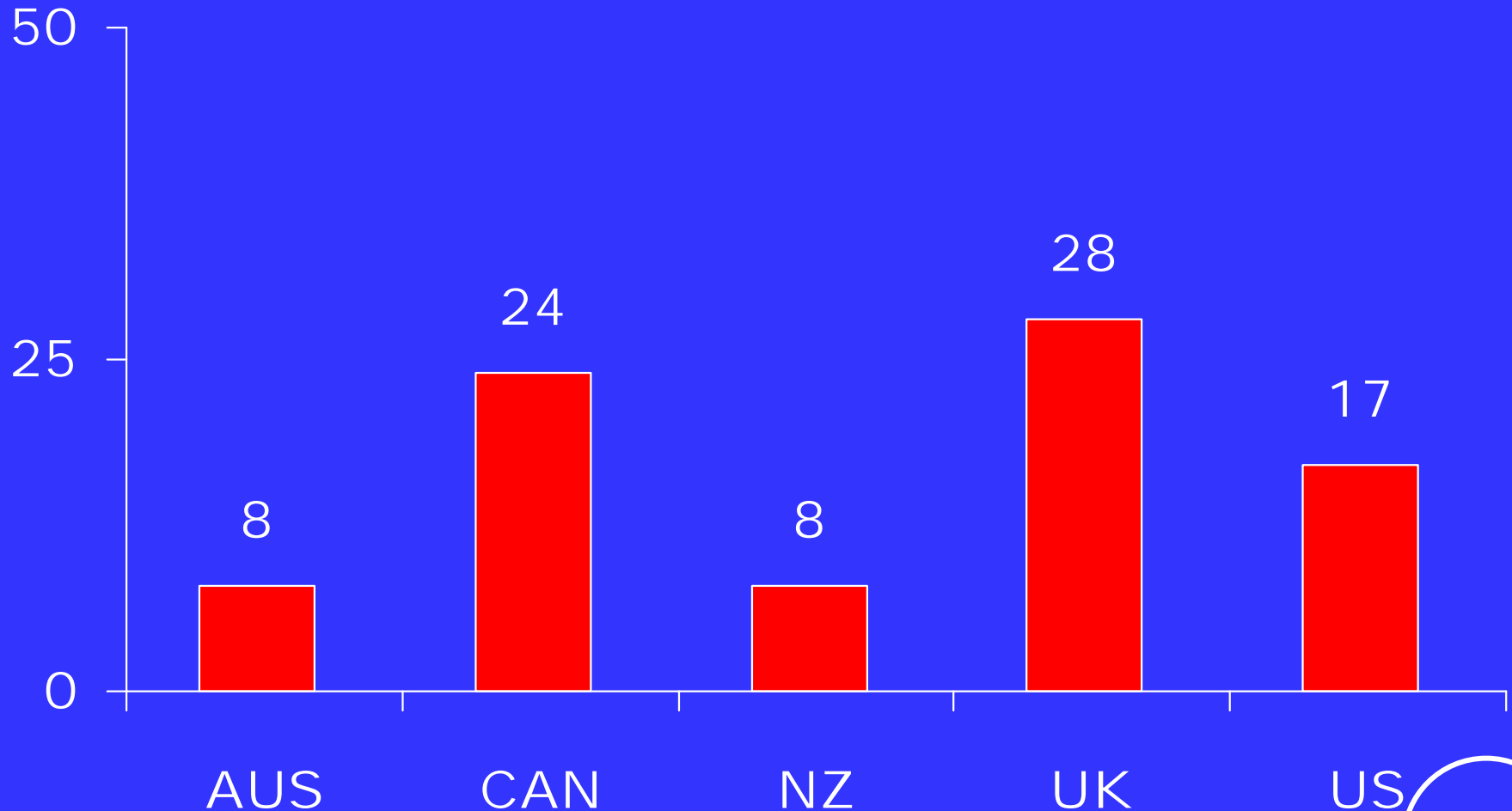
Difficulty Getting Care on Nights, Weekends, Holidays Without Going to The ER

Percent Saying "Very" or "Somewhat Difficult"

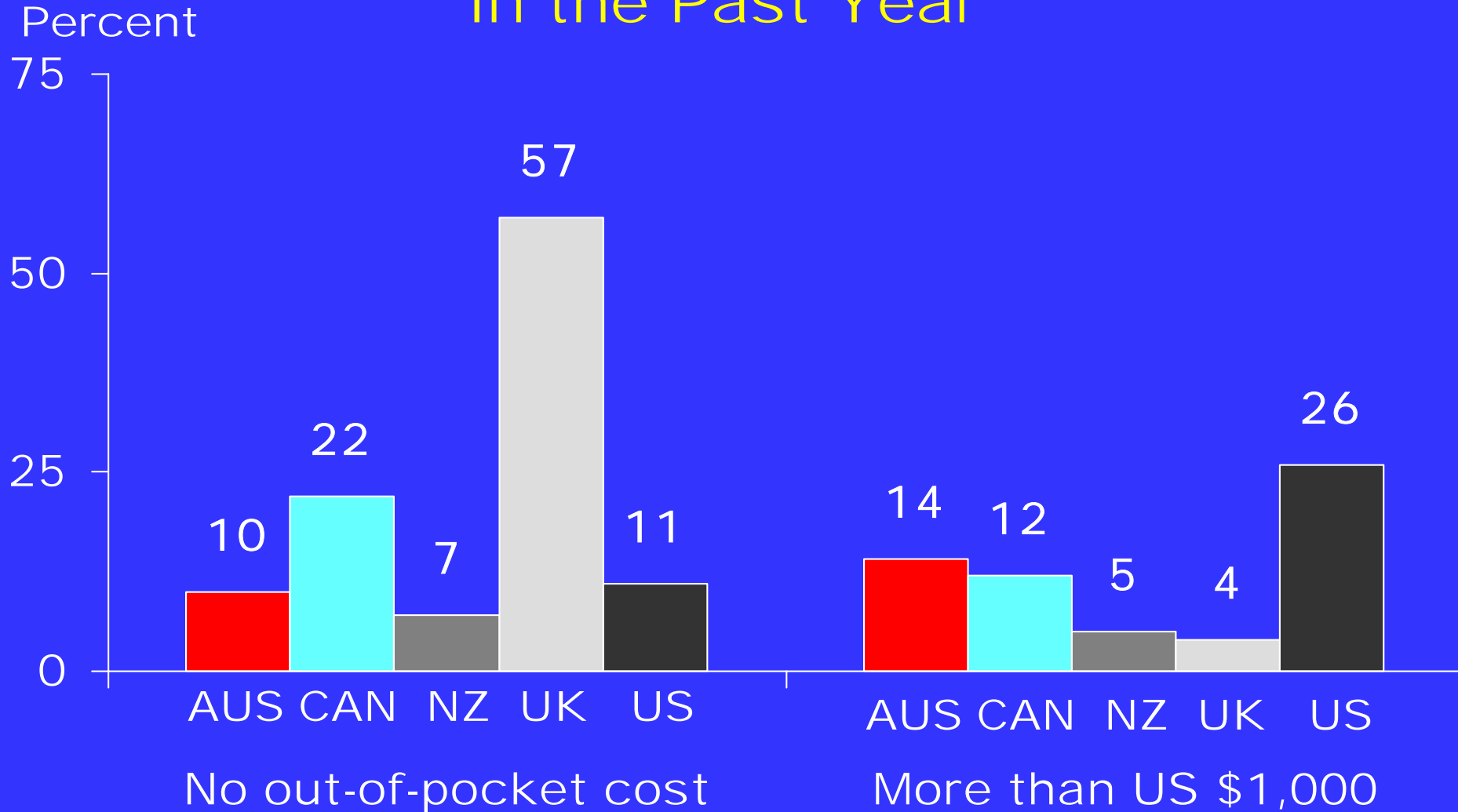


Called Help Line for Medical Advice in the Past 2 Years

Percent



Out-of-Pocket Medical Costs in the Past Year

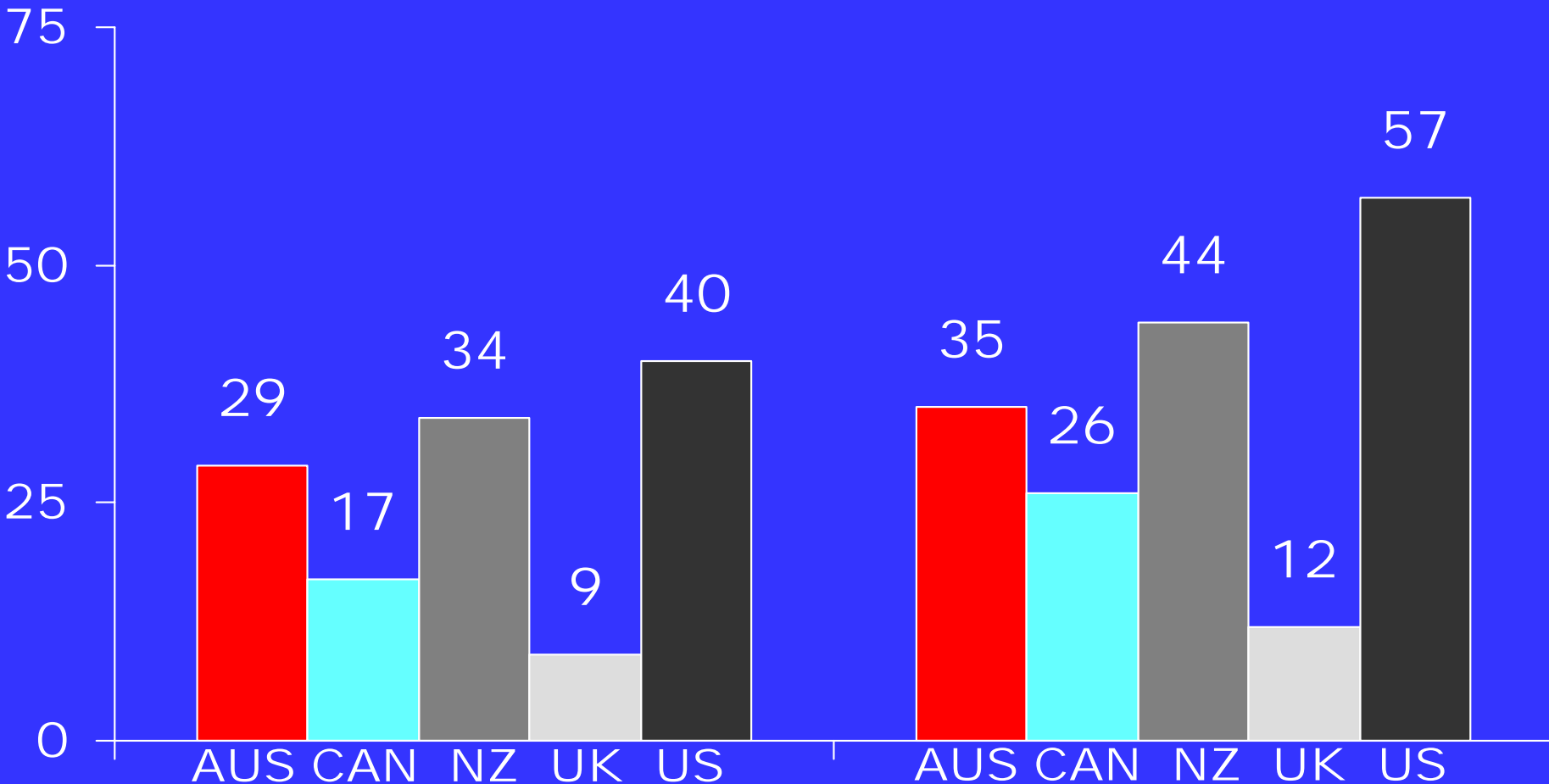


Cost-Related Access Problems

Percent in the past year who due to cost:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Did not fill prescription or skipped doses	12	9	11	4	22
Had a medical problem but did not visit doctor	17	6	28	4	29
Skipped test, treatment or follow-up	18	8	20	2	27
Percent who said yes to at least one of the above	29	17	34	9	40

Going without Needed Care Due to Costs, Total and Low Income

Percent went without care due to cost



All Adults

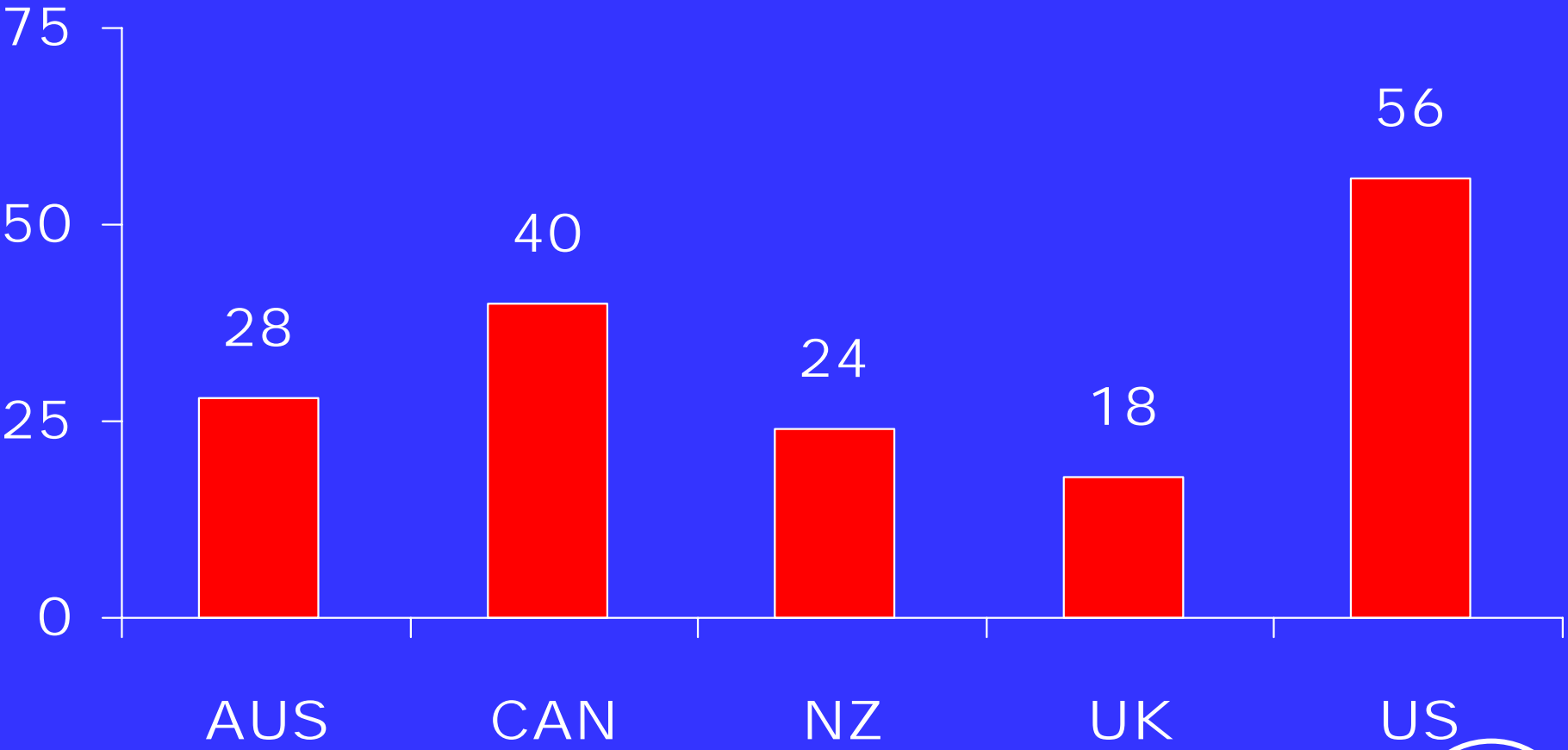
Adults with Below
Average Incomes

Satisfaction in Amount of Choice You Have in Doctors You See

Percent:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Very satisfied	40	30	48	44	39
Somewhat satisfied	40	40	37	35	39
Not very or not at all satisfied	17	27	12	18	20

Wanted Information on Quality of Care Doctor Provides When Had to See a New Doctor

Percent saying "Yes"



Access to Own Medical Records

Percent:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Currently have access	40	34	45	28	51
Do not have access:					
Would like access	40	48	35	42	37
Don't want access	17	15	15	25	10

Email Communication with Doctor

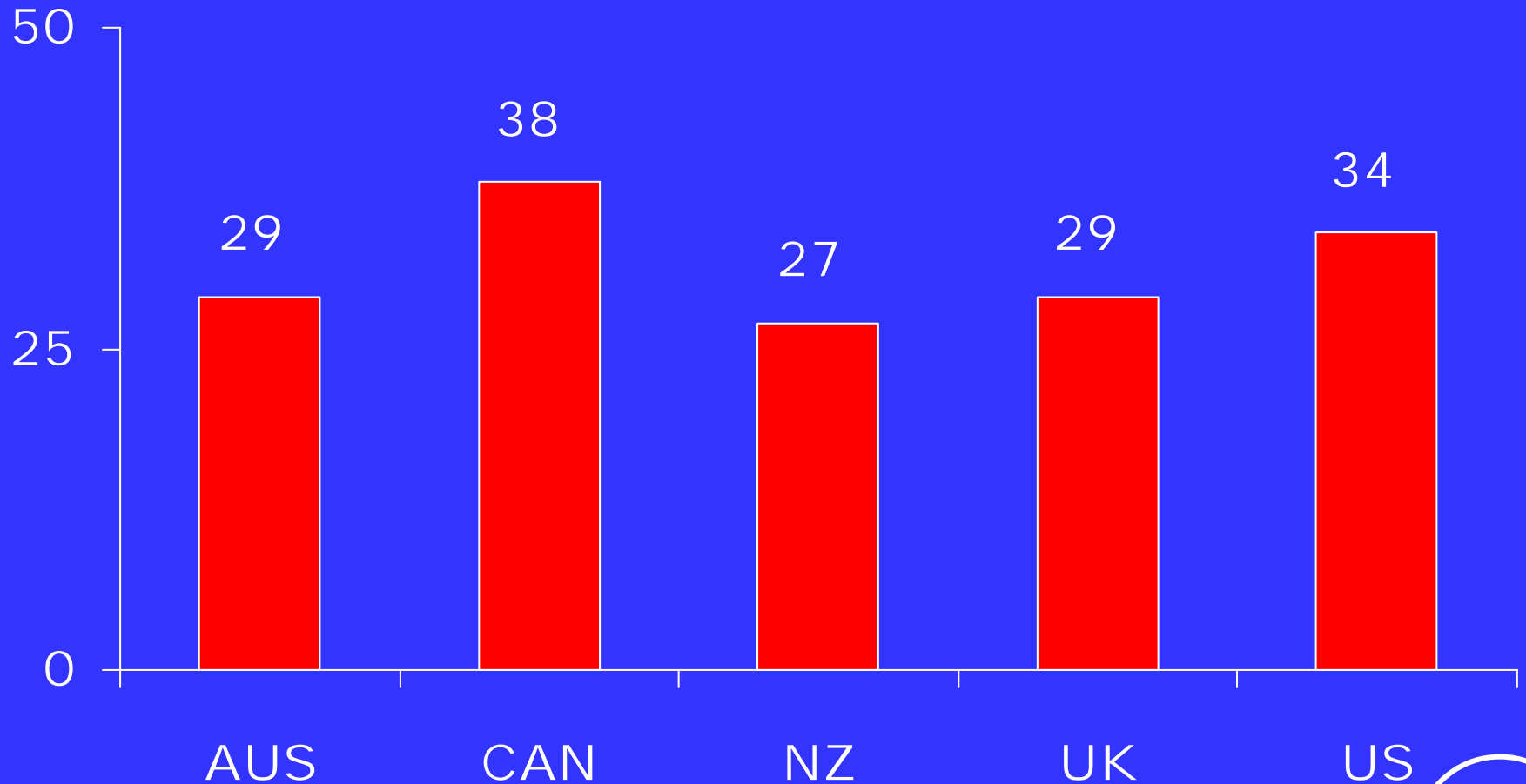
Base: Have regular doctor/place

Percent:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Currently can email doctor	16	10	22	13	20
Have internet, cannot currently email doctor:					
Would like to be able to email	15	28	18	27	25
Would not like to be able to email	43	39	40	37	33
Do not have access to internet	24	21	19	21	21

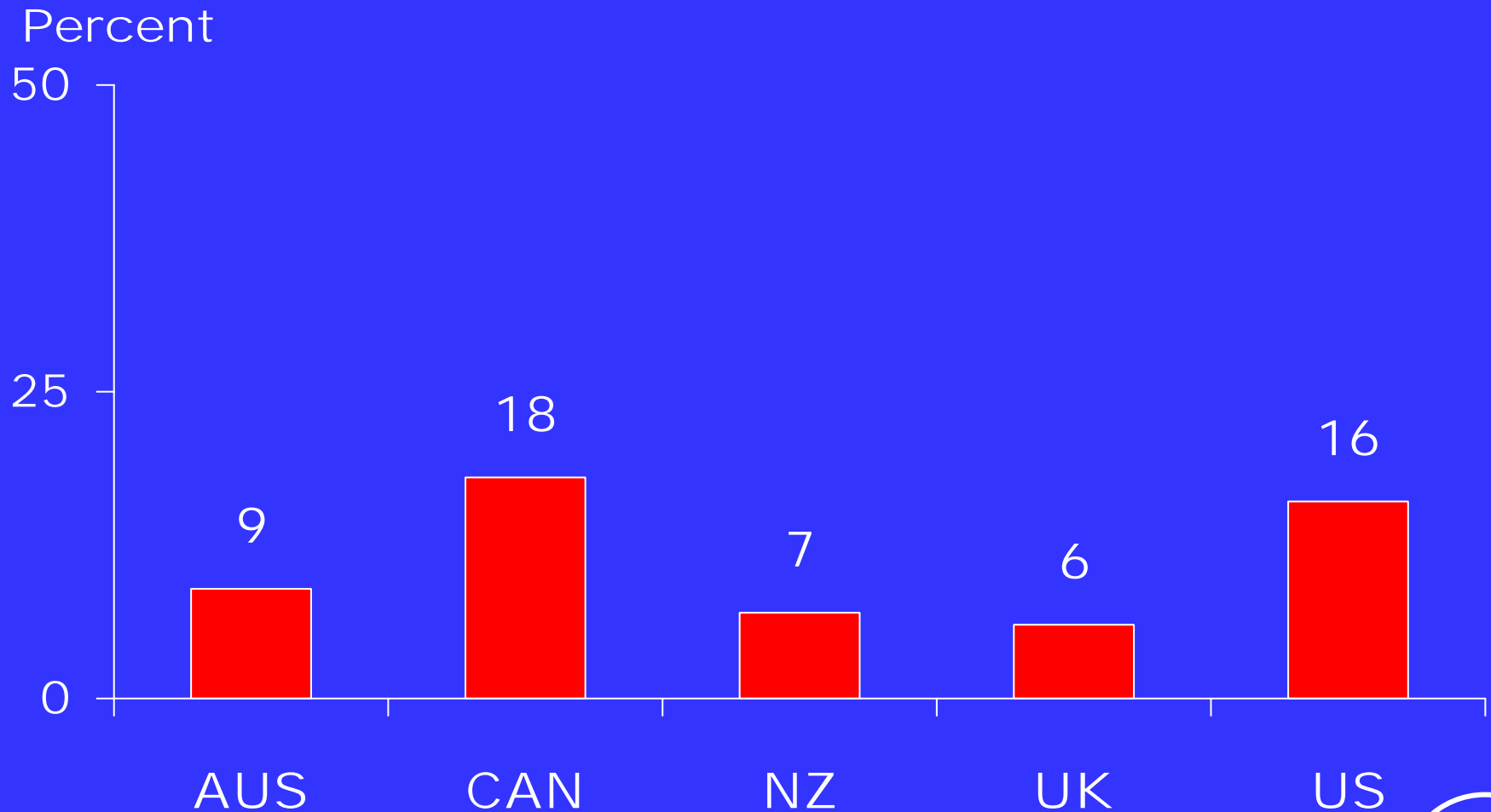
Emergency Room Use and Experiences

Emergency Room Use in the Past 2 Years

Percent with any visits

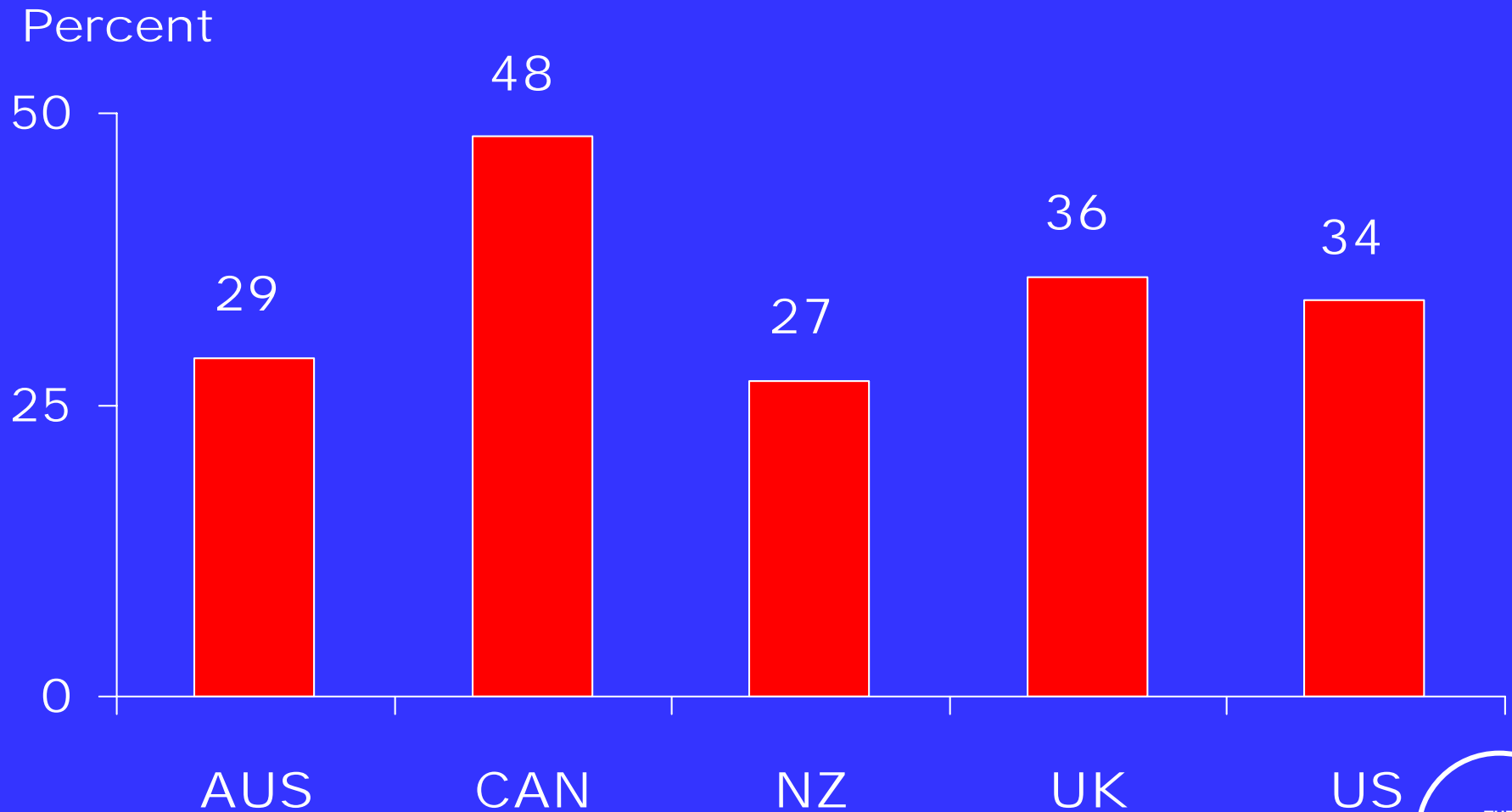


Went to the ER for a Condition That Could Have Been Treated by Regular Doctor if Available



Waited 2 Hours or More in ER Before Being Treated

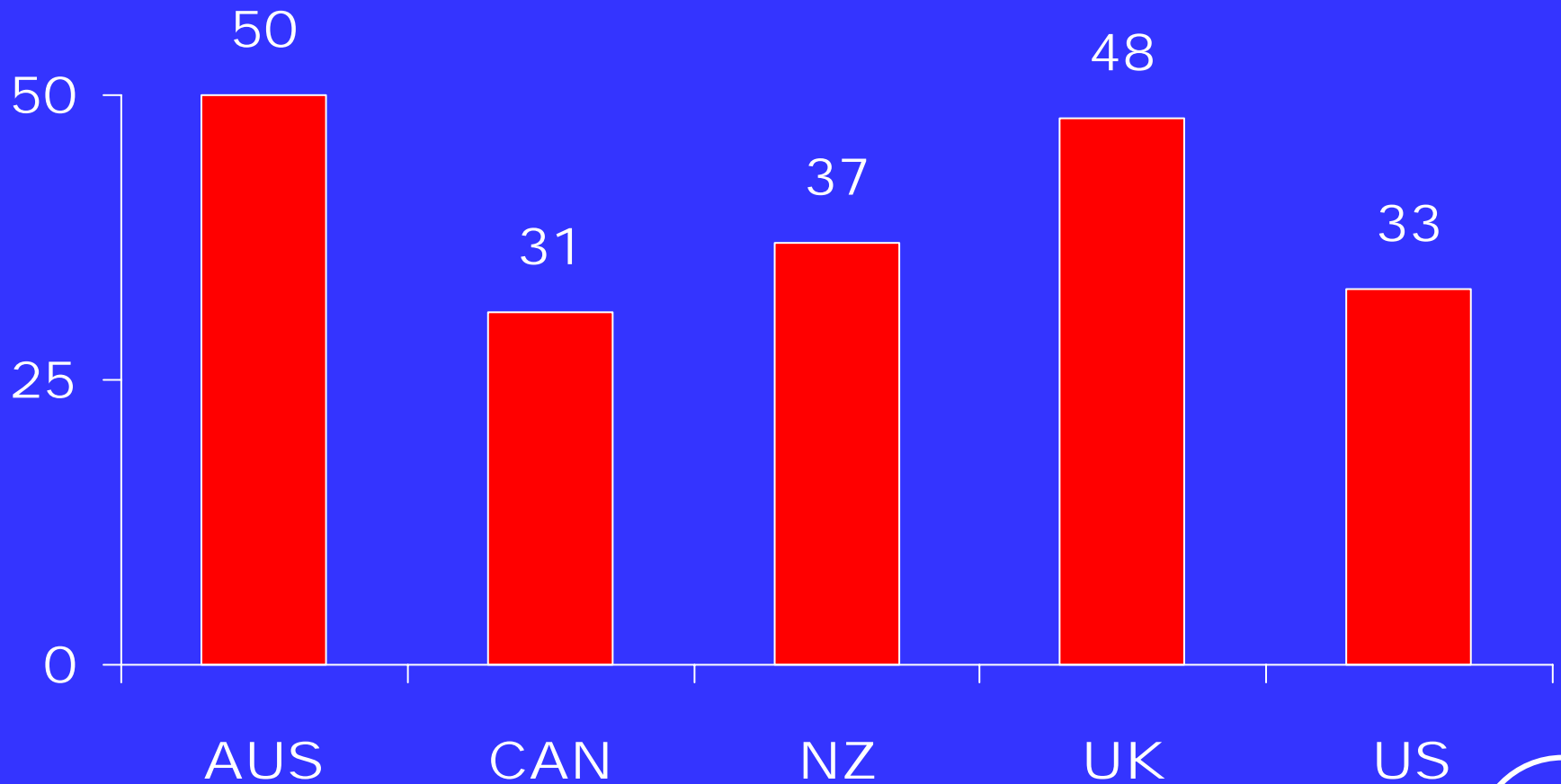
Base: Adults with ER visit in past 2 years



ER Staff Did Everything They Could to Help Control Pain

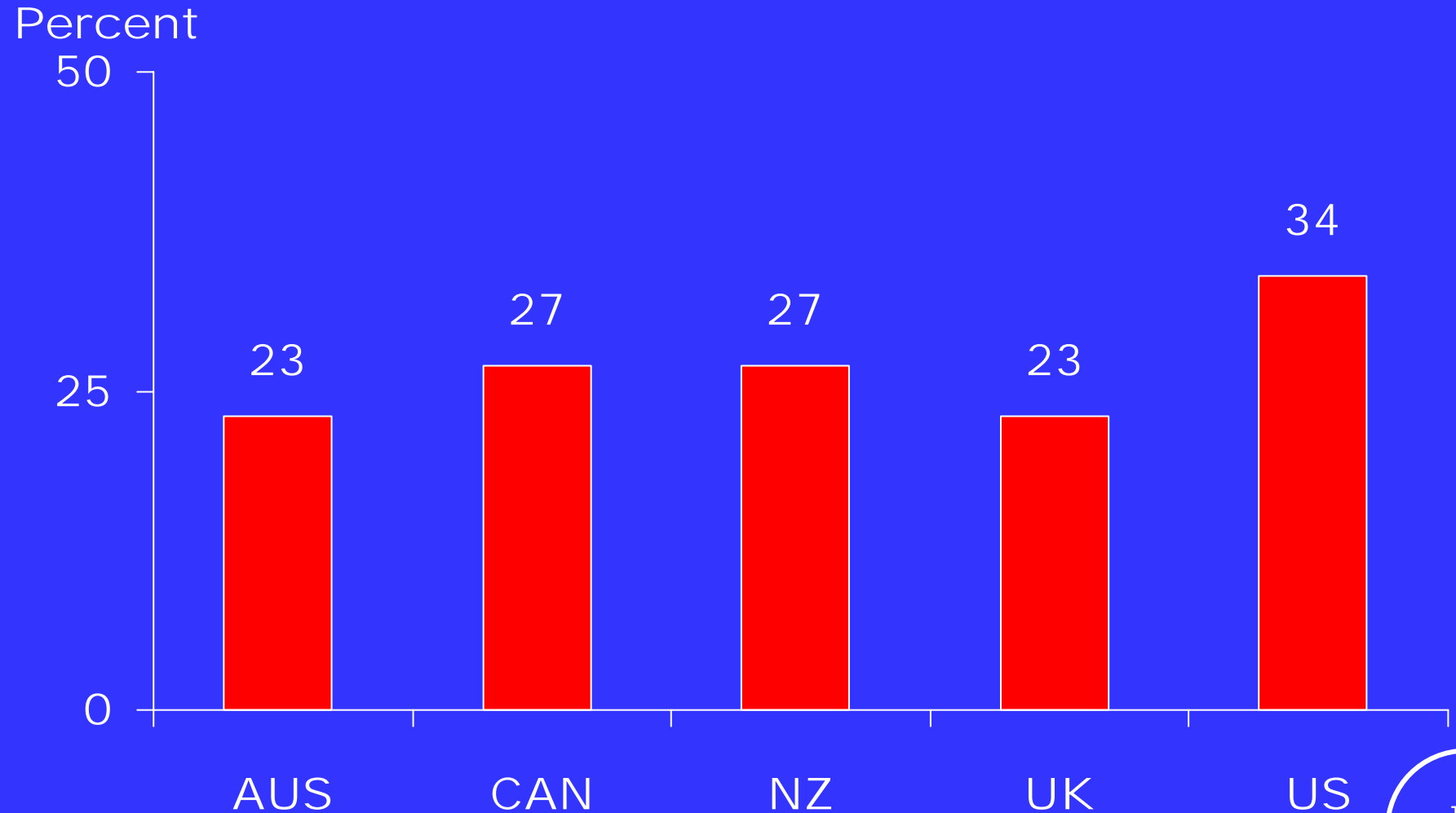
Base: Adults with ER visit in the past 2 years and in pain

Percent



Rated Overall Quality of Emergency Care Services as Fair or Poor

Base: Adults with ER visit in the past 2 years



Doctor-Patient Relationship and Communication

Doctor-Patient Relationship

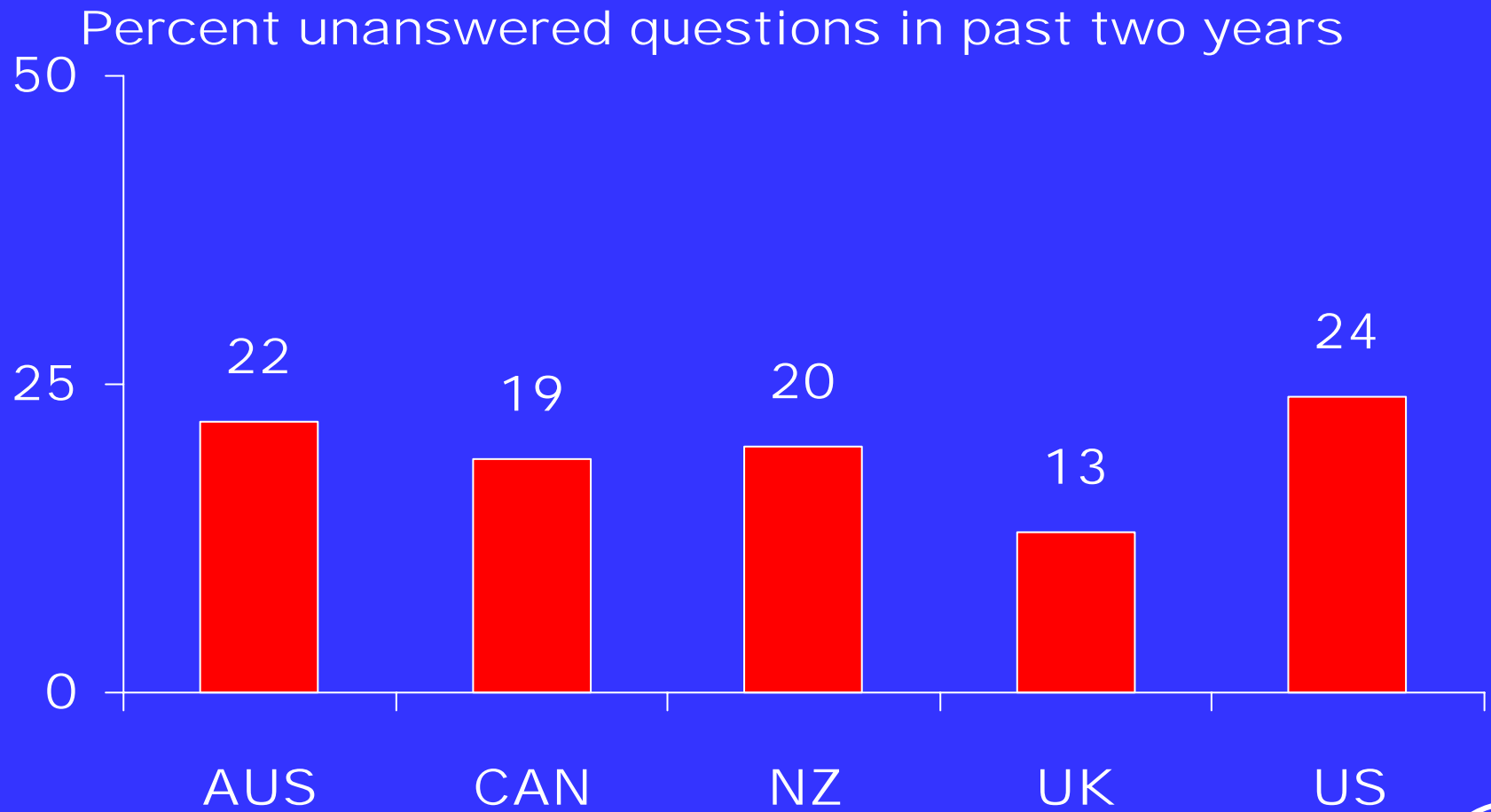
Percent saying doctor:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Always listens carefully	71	66	74	68	58
Always explains things so you can understand	73	70	73	69	58
Always spends enough time with you	63	55	66	58	44

Missed Opportunities to Engage Patient in Care

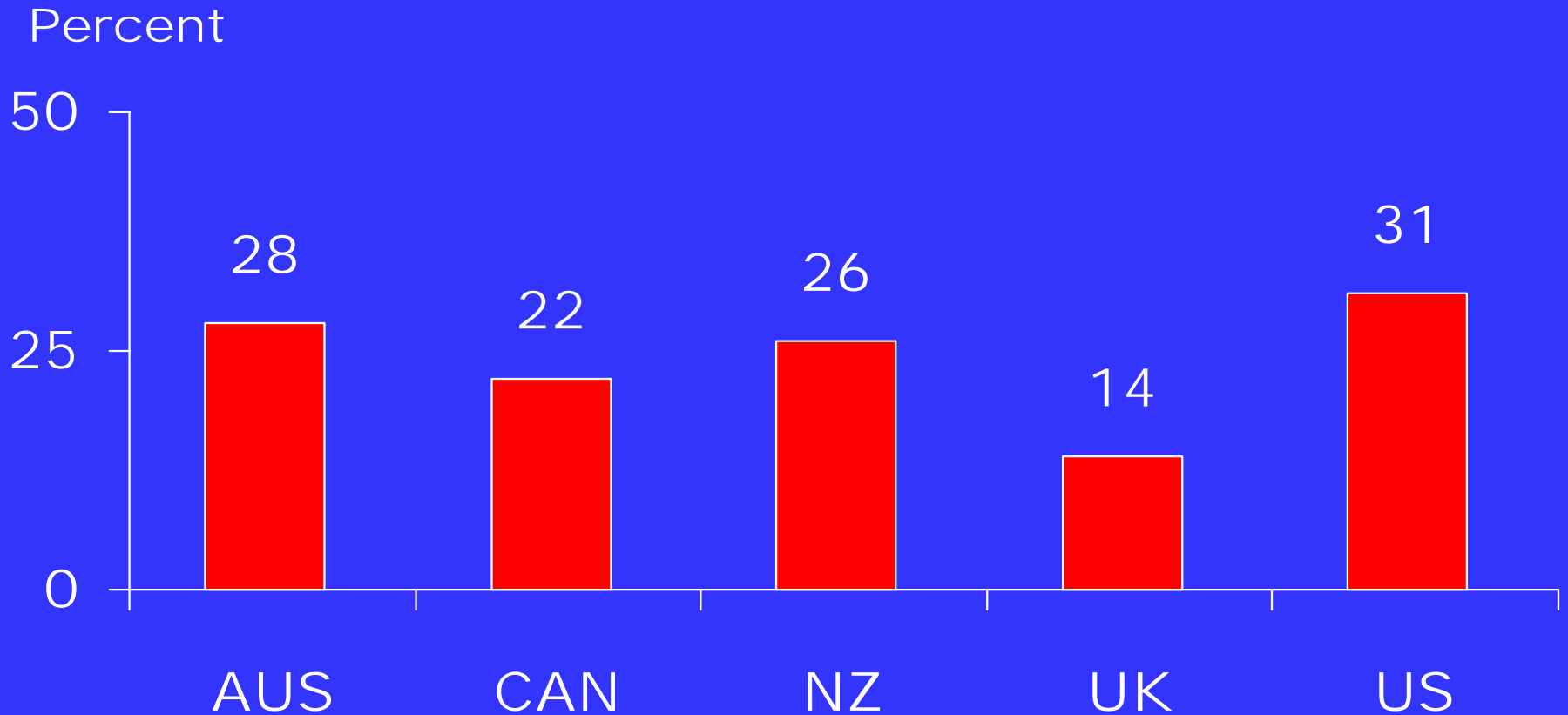
Percent saying doctor:*	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Does NOT give you clear instructions	10	12	8	13	13
Does NOT make goals and plans clear	14	15	13	19	20
Does NOT tell you about treatment choices or ask your opinions	35	35	30	50	44

*Doctor only sometimes, rarely or never

Left Doctor's Office Without Getting Important Questions Answered



Have NOT Followed Doctor's Advice or Treatment Plan in Past 2 Years



Areas of Patient Non-Adherence

Base: Respondents who have not followed doctor's advice

Percent who:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Did NOT take medicines as prescribed	38	35	49	48	35
Did NOT follow advice on diet, smoking, drinking or other lifestyle changes	33	40	24	24	37
Did NOT get follow-up appointment or see specialist	10	10	14	7	13
Did NOT get diagnostic test or have recommended surgery or procedure	11	7	7	9	11

Main Reasons for Non-Adherence

Base: Respondents who have not followed doctor's advice

Percent saying:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Disagreed with recommendation	35	21	37	43	30
Too difficult to do	32	28	28	26	34
Cost too much	8	11	14	1	18
Condition improved	8	15	4	8	4
Concerned about risks/side effects	3	2	6	3	5
Did not understand what to do	2	10	2	5	2

Coordination

Care Coordination

Base: Have seen a doctor in past 2 years

Percent saying in the past 2 years:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Test results or records not available at time of appointment	12	14	13	13	17
Duplicate tests: doctor ordered test that had already been done	7	6	7	4	14
Received conflicting information from different doctors	18	14	14	14	18
Percent who experienced at least one of the above	28	26	25	24	31

Prescription Drugs

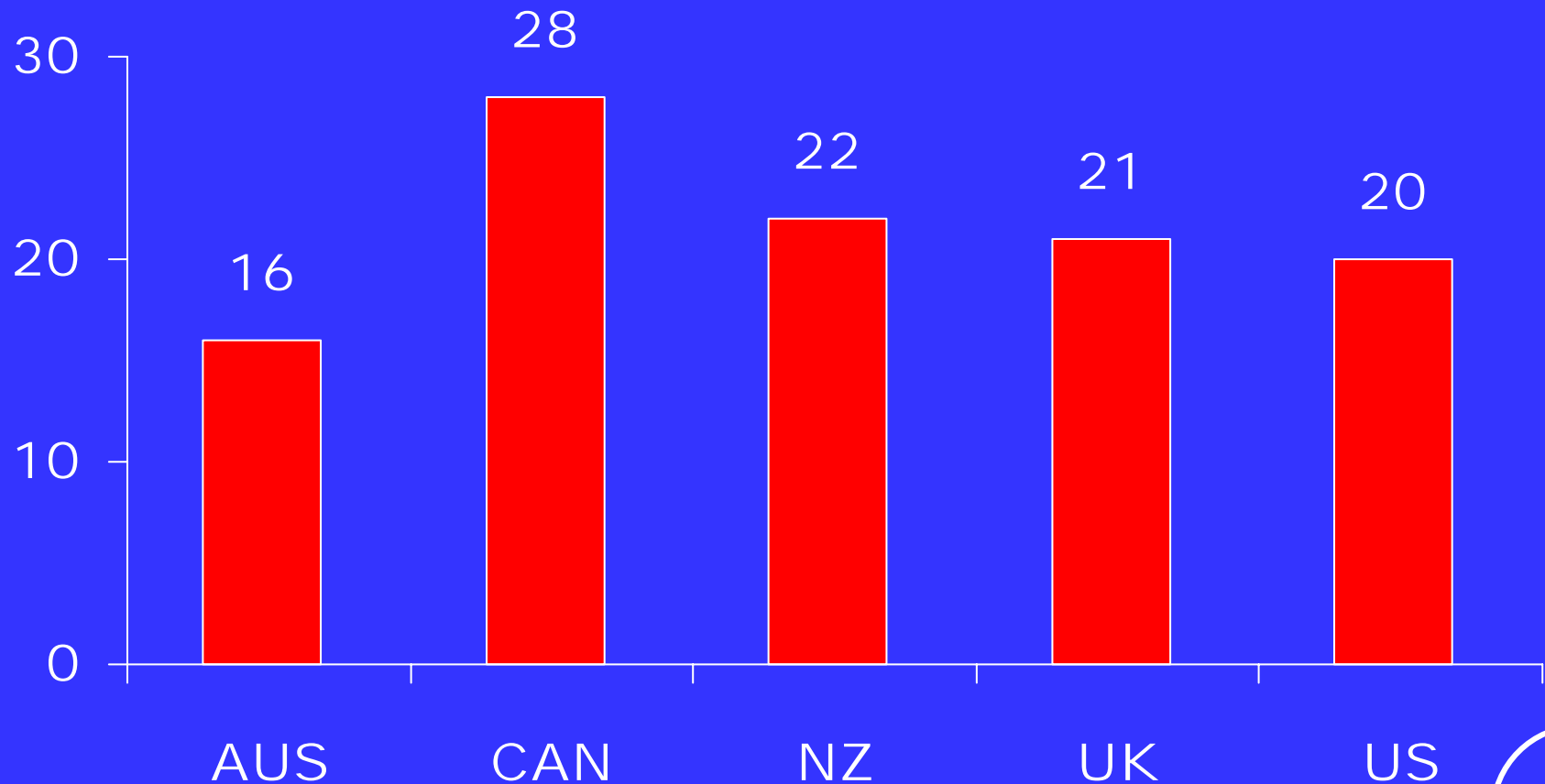
Base: Adults taking prescriptions regularly

Percent saying in the past 2 years doctor:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Has NOT reviewed the medications you take	29	25	31	37	25
Has NOT explained the side effects of medications	25	28	27	39	30
% who said doctor has not done one of the above	42	39	42	55	41

Did Not Receive Lab Tests/X-Ray Results or Results Not Clearly Explained

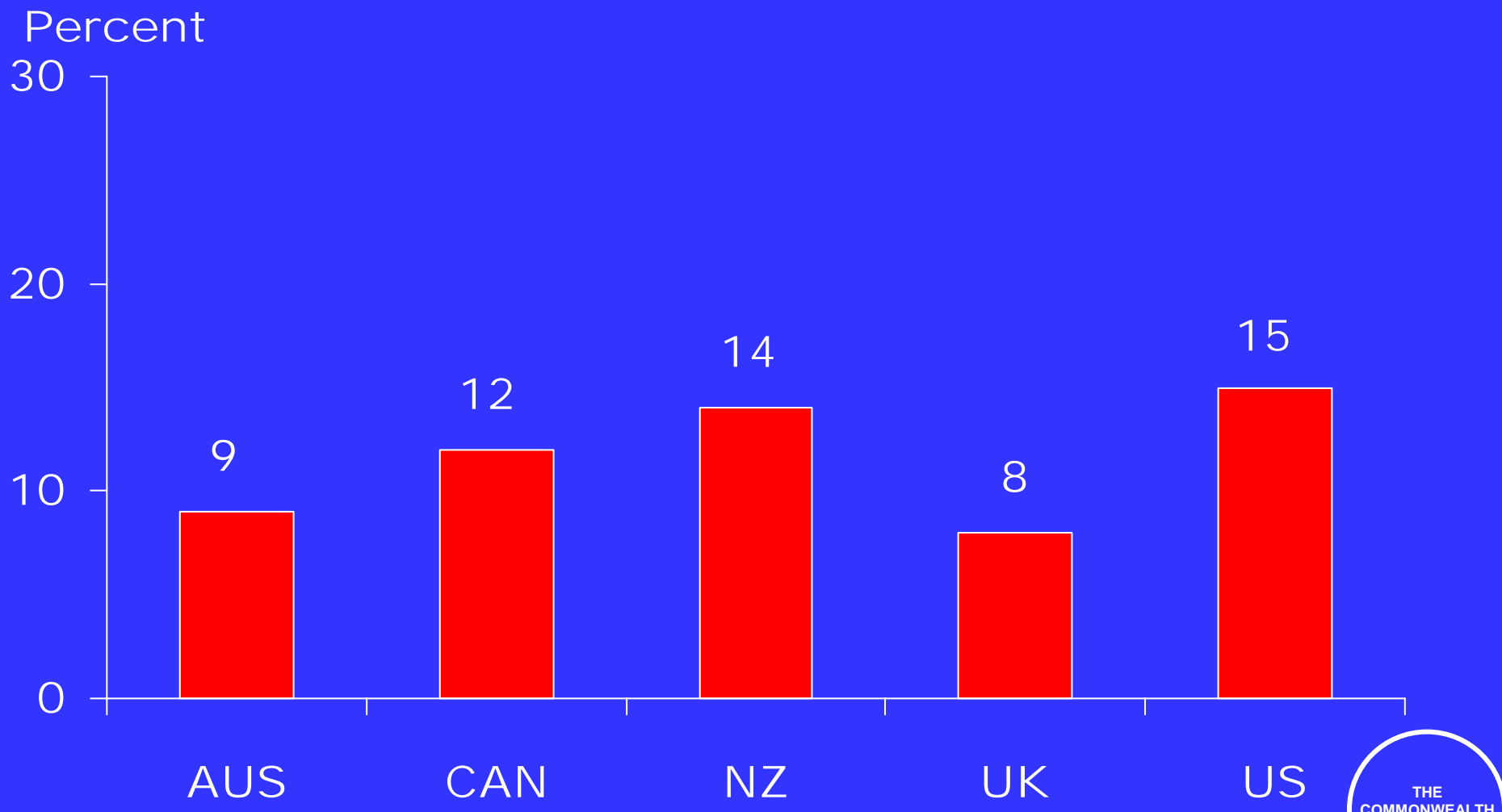
Base: Have seen a doctor in past 2 years

Percent



Given Incorrect Test Results or Delays in Being Notified about Abnormal Results

Base: Adults with test in past 2 years



Lack of Hospital and ER Coordination

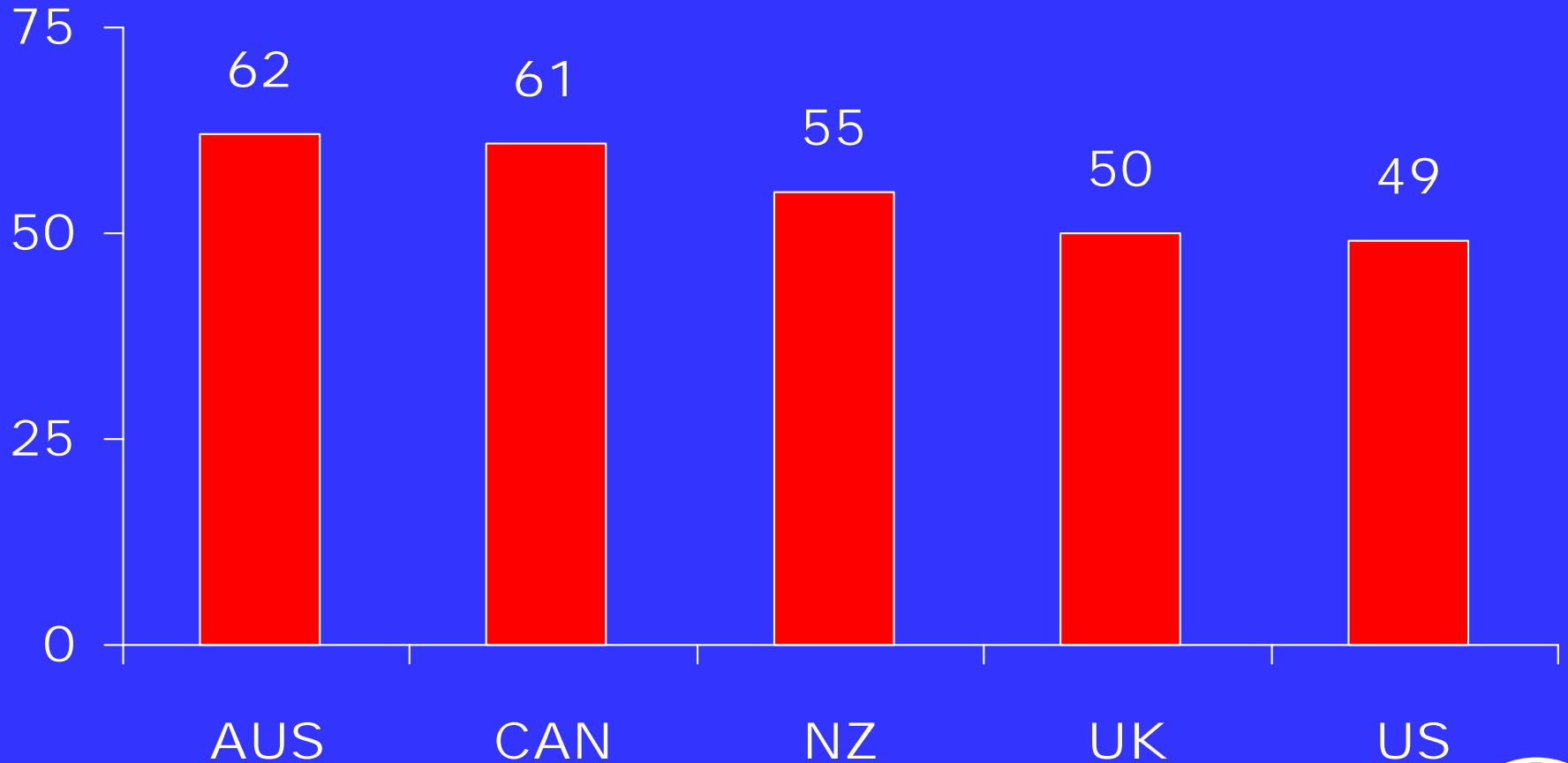
Base: Have regular doctor/place and hospitalized or used ER in past 2 years

Percent saying regular doctor:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Was NOT well informed about plans for follow-up care after hospital	19	21	23	23	13
Was NOT well informed about the care you received in the ER	30	36	28	32	30

Preventive Care

Do NOT Receive Reminders for Preventive Care

Percent



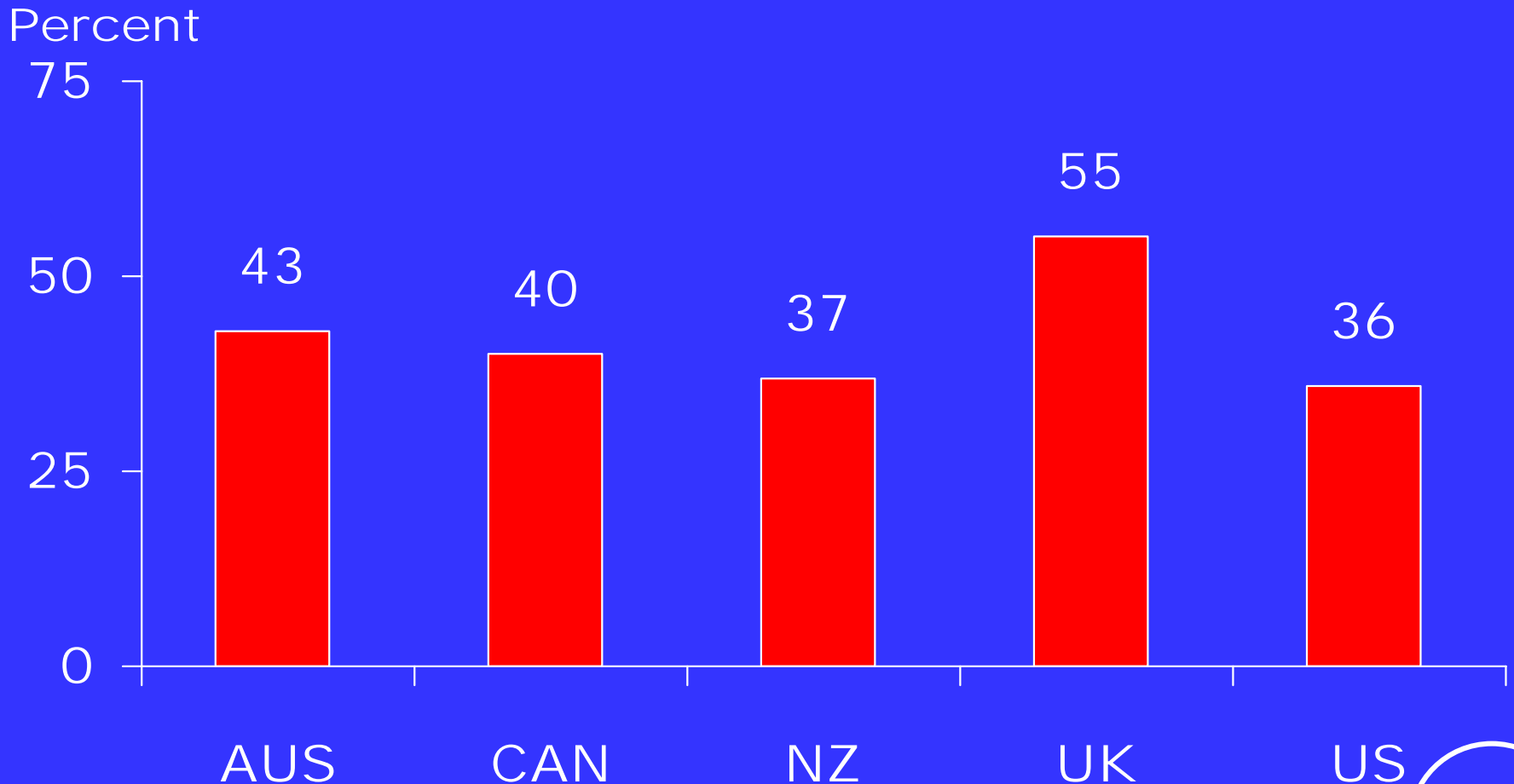
Missed Opportunities to Promote Health

Base: Have regular doctor/place of care

Percent said in past 2 years doctor:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Has NOT provided advice on weight, nutrition or exercise	62	55	67	72	48
Has NOT asked if any emotional issues may be affecting your health	67	62	71	72	63

Adults with Chronic Condition: Doctor Did NOT Give Plan for Self-Management

Base: Adults with chronic disease



Preventive Care

Percent received:	AUS	CAN	NZ	UK	US
Pap in past 3 years, age 25-64	78	77	81	77	89
Mammogram in past 3 years, age 50-64	80	79	81	77	86
Flu shot in past year, age 65+	77	66	67	74	72

Summary and Implications

- Primary care shortfalls in all countries.
 - Gaps in patient-centered care, access, safety and coordination of care.
- Access concerns in all countries, but notable country variations on wait to see doctor and cost.
 - Lack of prompt access to doctor linked to higher ER use in U.S. and Canada.
 - Cost sharing can undermine timely care.
- Safety and risks in ambulatory care a challenge.
 - Includes prescription drugs reviews and diagnostic tests.
- Missed opportunities for preventive care.
- Issues amenable to policy action.

Country Initiatives

- 24/7 Access to Care
 - NHS Direct (U.K.)
 - After-hours Primary Medical Care Program (Australia)
 - Primary Care Transition Fund (Canada)
- Incentives for Quality and Primary Care
 - GP Contract (U.K.)
 - Primary Health Organizations (New Zealand)
 - CMS Doctor's Office Quality, P4P, Leapfrog (U.S.)
 - Collaboratives
- Information Technology (EMR+)
 - National Programme for IT (U.K.)
 - Canada Health Infoway