

# NHS AT 70

# 3

## FUNDING



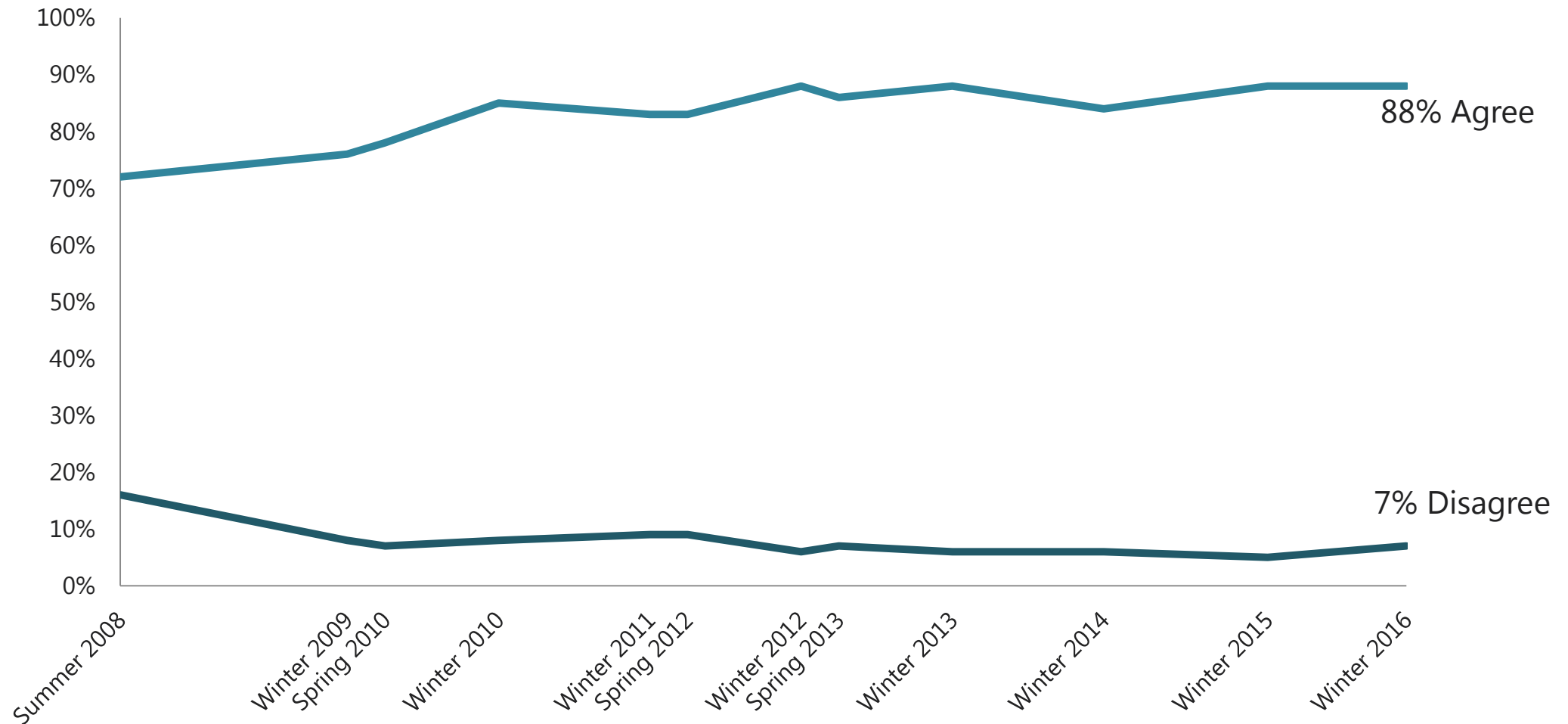
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A close-up photograph of a hand holding a pen and writing on a notepad. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue layer. On the left side of this layer, the text 'The public recognise that the NHS is facing funding challenges' is written in white. In the background, the word 'TAX' is faintly visible, written in a light blue color. The overall color scheme is monochromatic, dominated by shades of blue.

**The public recognise  
that the NHS is facing  
funding challenges**

# Most people think the NHS will face a severe funding problem in the future

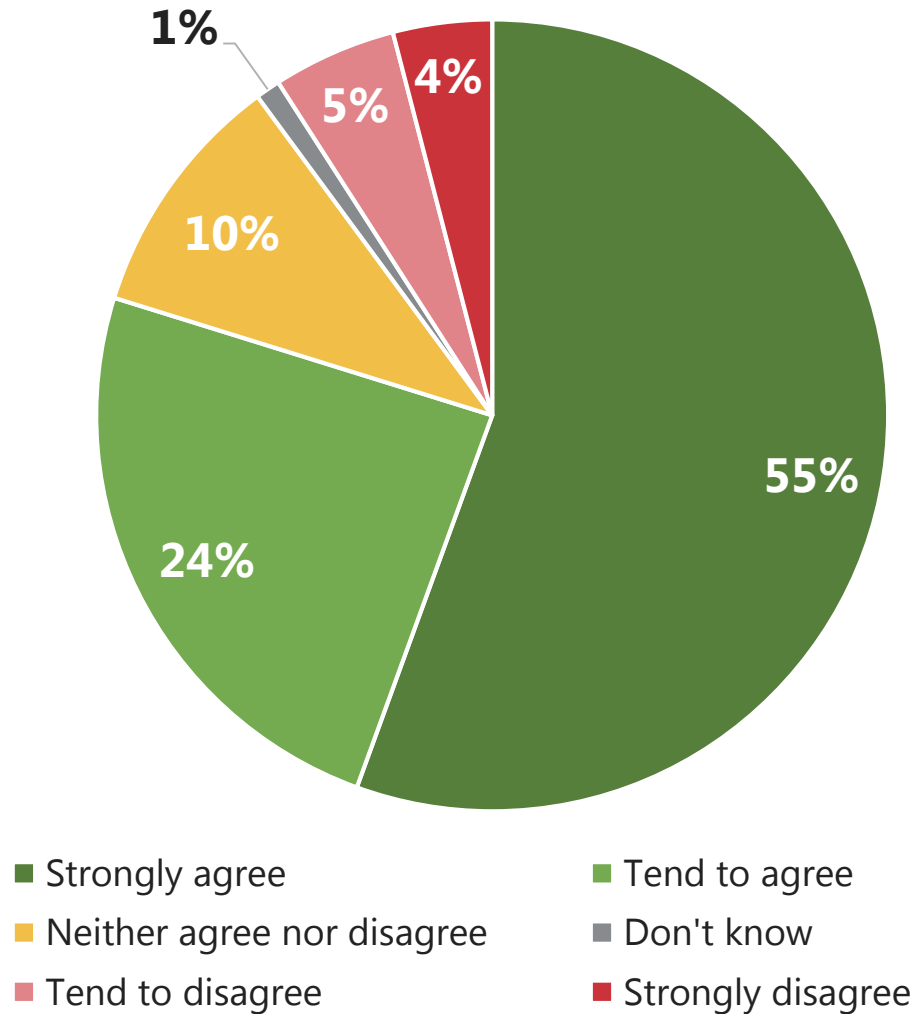
Please tell me whether on the whole you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...  
**The NHS will face a severe funding problem in the future**



Base: Adults aged 16+ in England (c. 1000 per wave)

# And agree that the NHS is currently underfunded

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the NHS is currently underfunded?



In deliberative events with the general public undertaken with the King's Fund, alongside acknowledging the pressures of a growing population and more older people needing care, reflections on frontline staff working in difficult circumstances stood out as particularly important to participants.

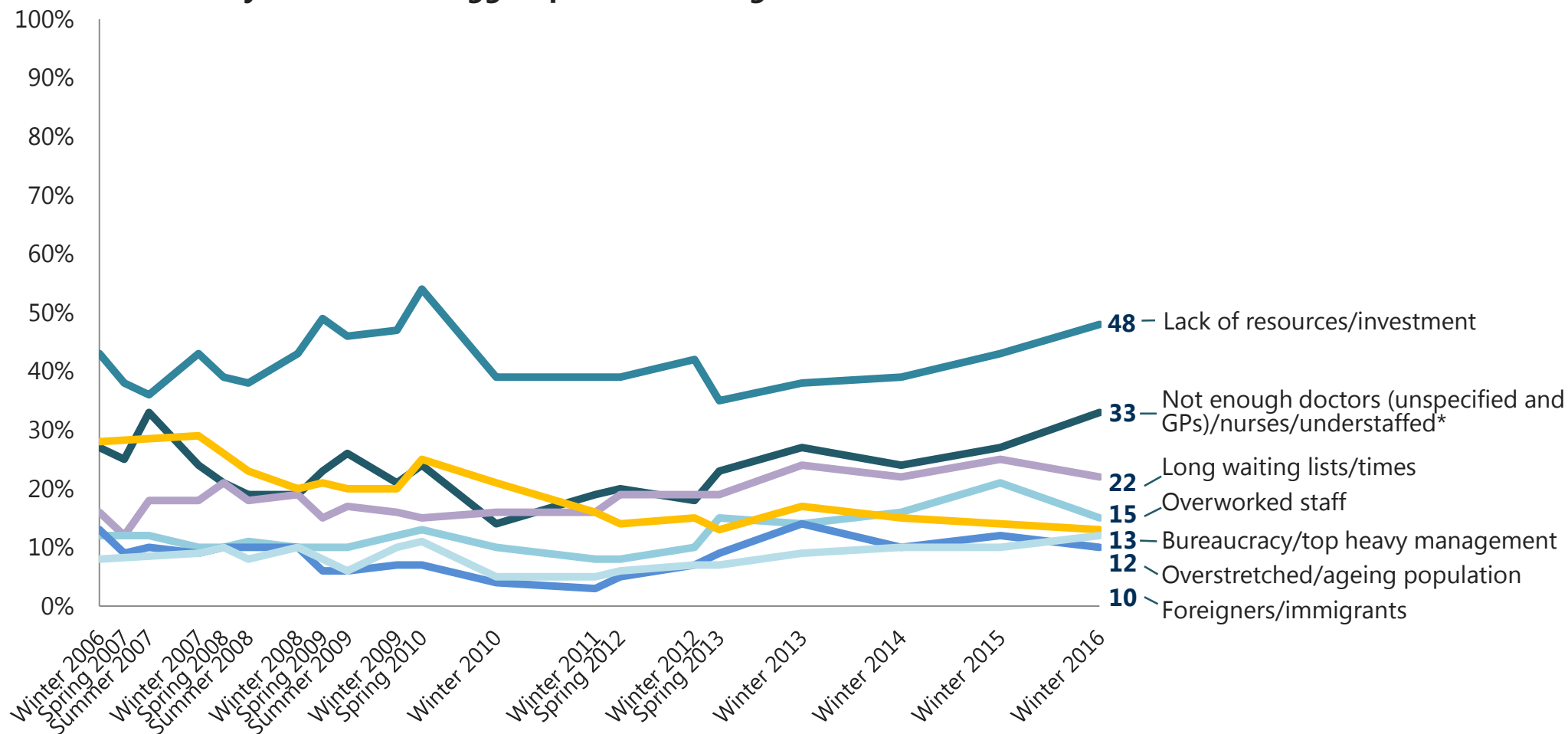
***"I think the whole of the NHS needs more money. More funding for nurses and stuff..."***

Base: 2,083 adults 15+ in the UK; 1,322 in England; 106 in Wales; 181 in Scotland; 60 in Northern Ireland, 2018

# A lack of resources / investment is seen as the biggest problem

## facing the NHS

Overall, what do you see as the biggest problems facing the NHS? What else?



This question was unprompted, meaning participants were not presented with a list of potential answer codes when answering this question. Participants are able to give more than one answer at this question. Spontaneous mentions of 10% or more.

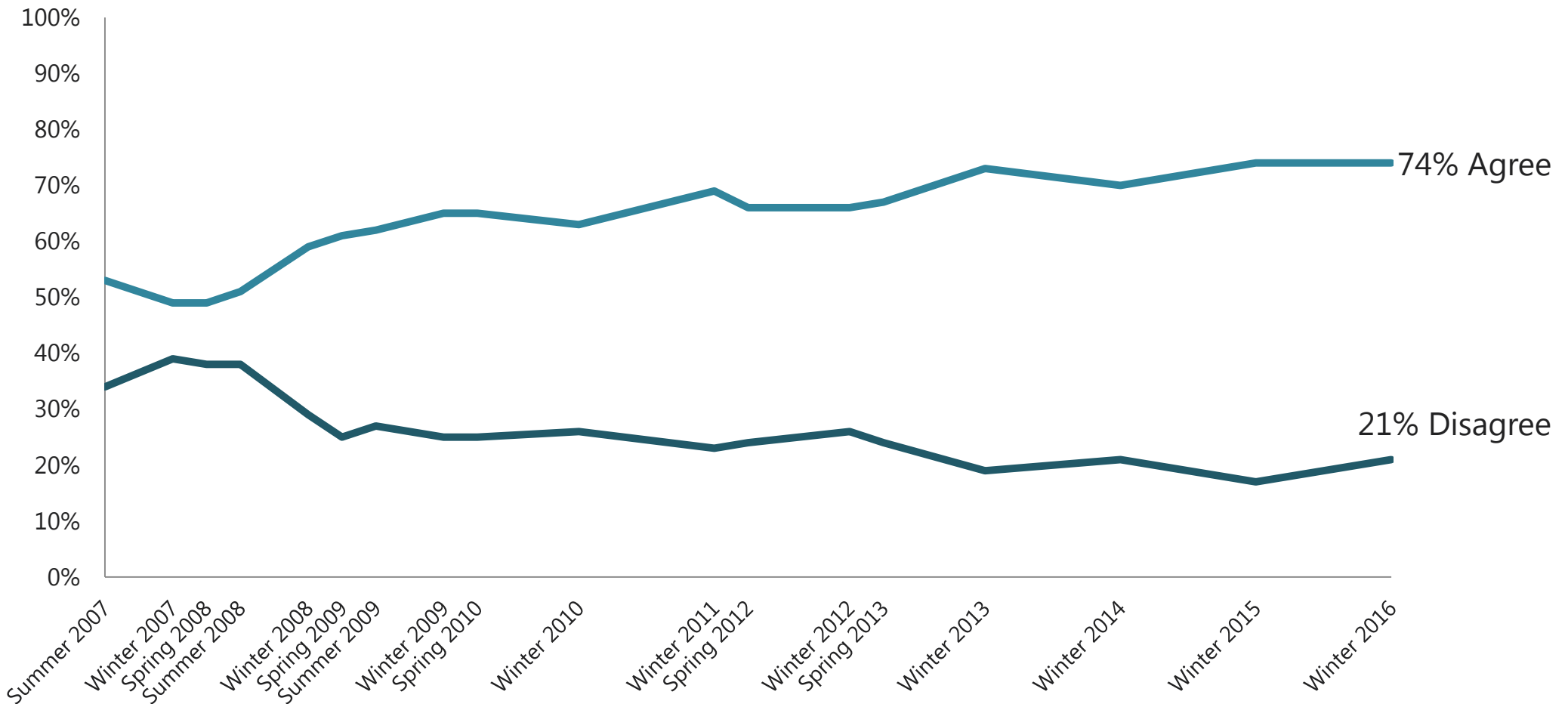
\* Prior to the Winter 2015 wave, this code was worded 'Not enough doctors/nurses/understaffed'

Base: Adults aged 16+ in England (c. 1000 per wave), 2006-2016

**They are keen to protect  
NHS funding above all  
other areas**

# Three-quarters think the NHS provides good value for money to taxpayers

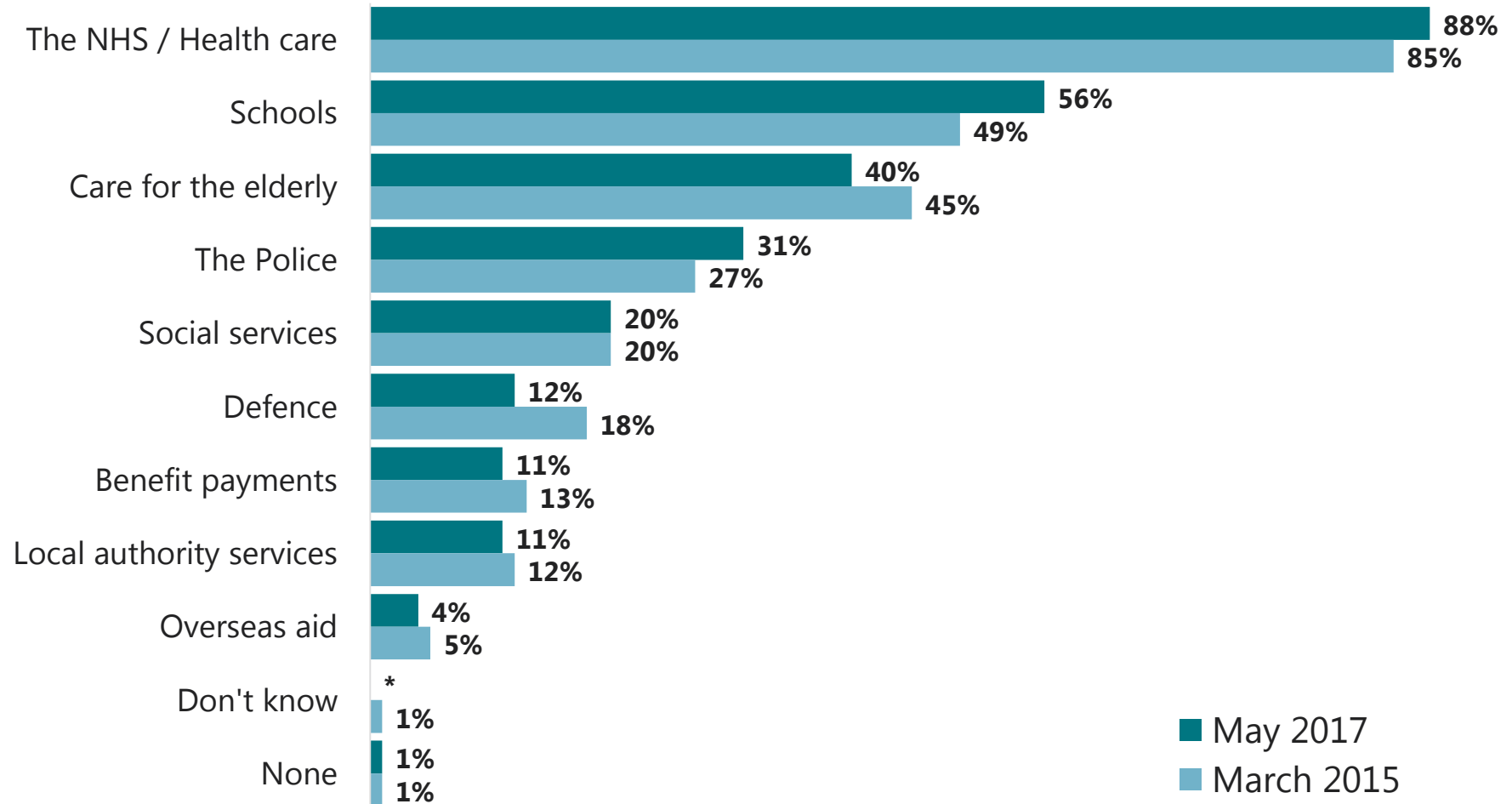
Please tell me whether on the whole you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...The NHS provides good value for money to taxpayers



Base: Adults aged 16+ in England (c. 1000 per wave for summer 2007 – winter 2015, 672 in winter 2016)

# And most think that the NHS' budget should be protected

Which two or three, if any, of the following main areas of public spending do you think should be protected from any cuts?



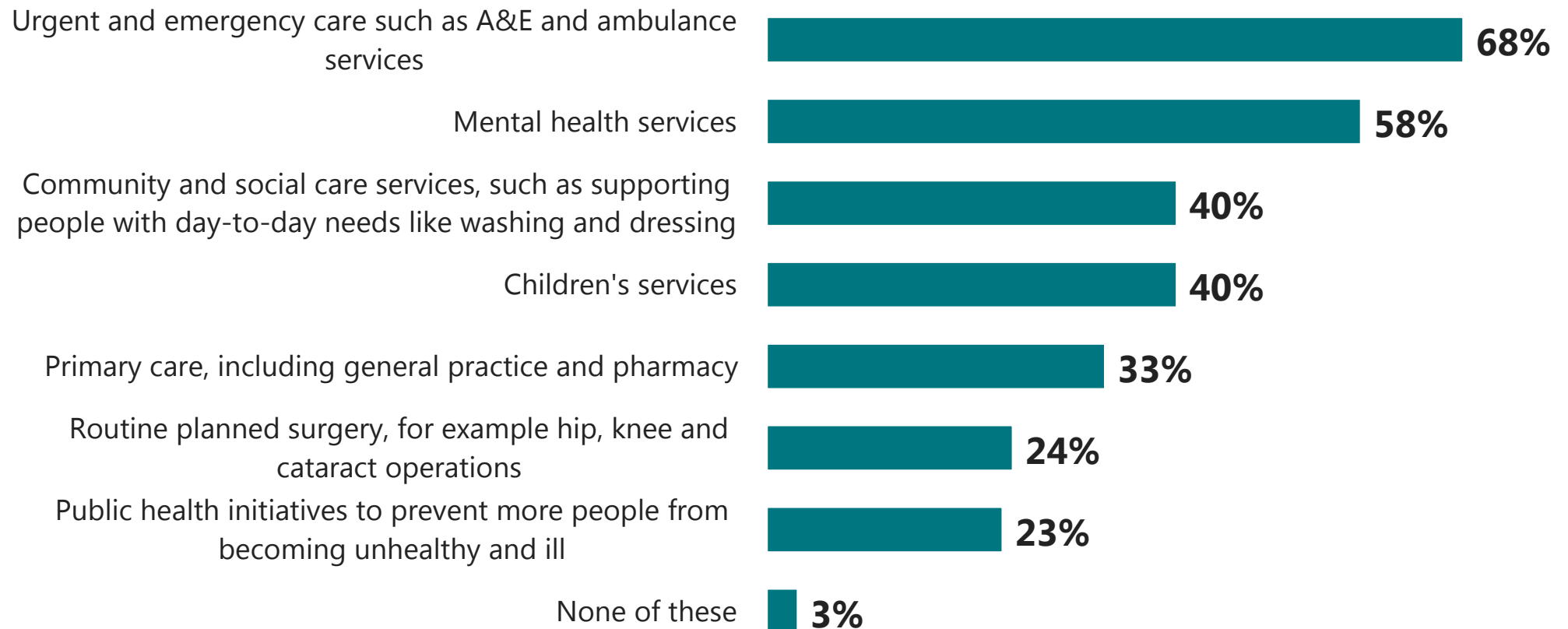
Base: 1,985 GB adults aged 15+, interviewed between 5-15 May 2017 and 1,792 GB adults aged 15+, interviewed between 13-23 March 2015.

\* = less than 0.5%



# The public's funding priority is for urgent & emergency care, with mental health second

**If the Government were to devote more funding to health and care services, which three, if any, of the following do you think it should prioritise in terms of spending?**



Base: 917 English adults 18+, interviewed between 26 – 29 April 2018

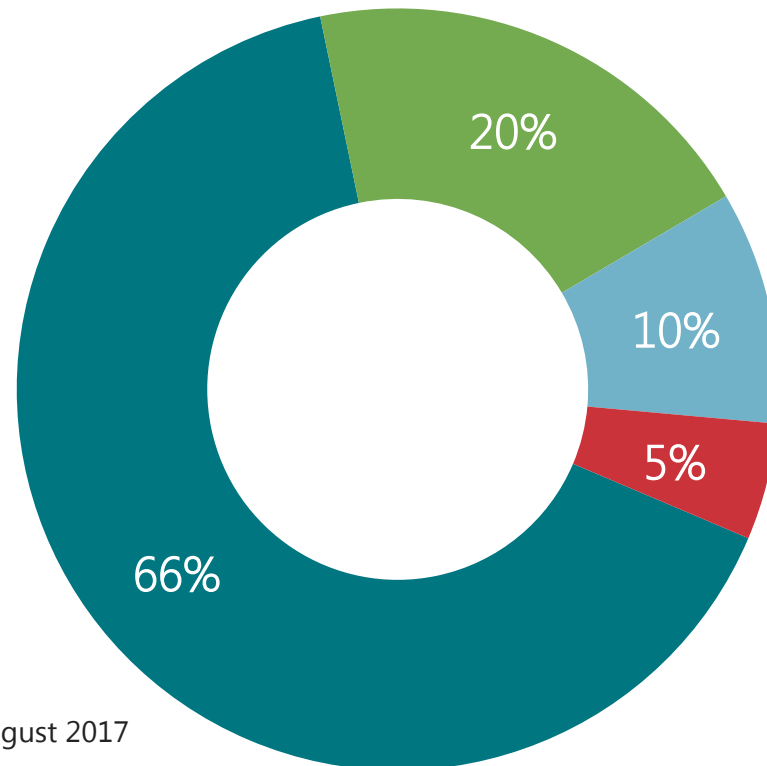
**This keenness to protect  
NHS funding translates  
into a willingness to pay  
more taxes**

# The public appear willing to put their money where their mouth is, saying they personally would be willing to pay more taxes

Many experts argue that it is becoming more expensive to fund the NHS because of increasing costs of treatments, an ageing population and several other factors. This means that even in order to maintain the current level of care and services provided for free by the NHS, spending on the NHS would have to increase. With that in mind, which, if any, of the following would you most like to see?

Reduce spending on other services such as education and welfare in order to maintain the level of spending needed to keep the current level of care and services provided by the NHS

I would be willing to pay more taxes in order to maintain the level of spending needed to keep the current level of care and services provided by the NHS



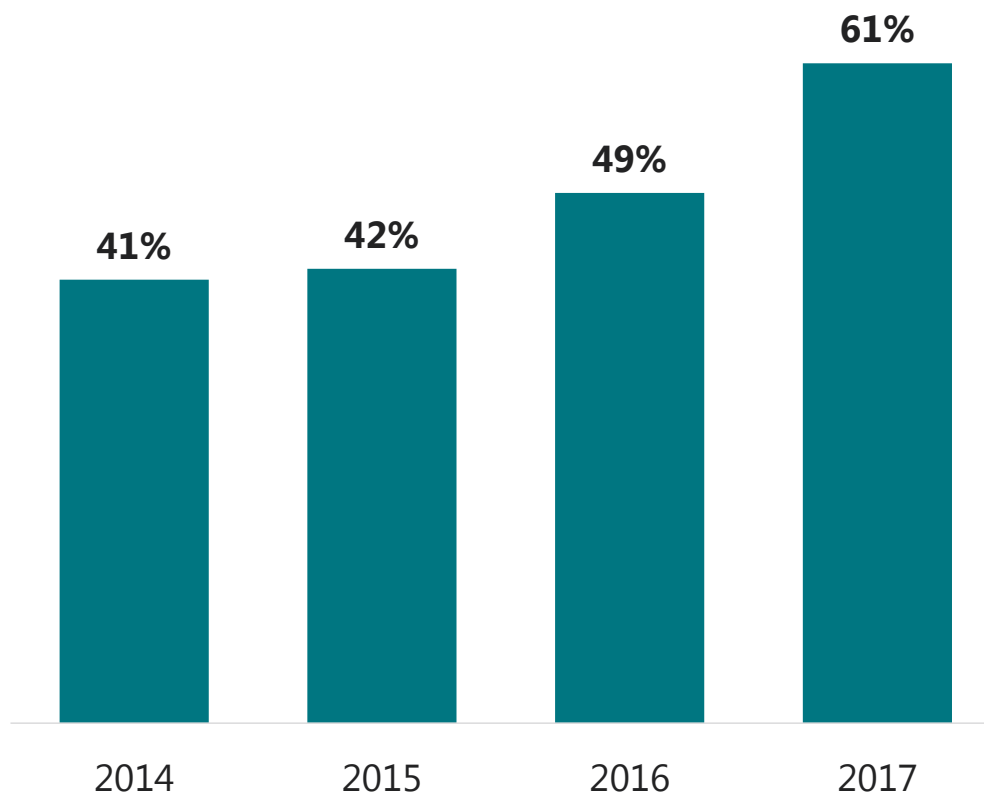
Reduce the level of care and services provided by the NHS so that you do not need to increase the current level of taxation and spending on the NHS

None

Base 568 English adults aged 15+, 4-10 August 2017

# And King's Fund analysis shows growing support for paying more taxes to increase funding for the NHS

If the NHS needed more money, which of the following do you think you would be prepared to accept? Pay more taxes...



In deliberative workshops undertaken with The King's Fund, general public participants also generally expressed a readiness to pay more tax to fund the NHS – and they held this view before we had talked in detail about the challenges facing the NHS.

***I'd happily do it... If it's going to benefit me and my children and make this project fully viable, I'm happy to."***

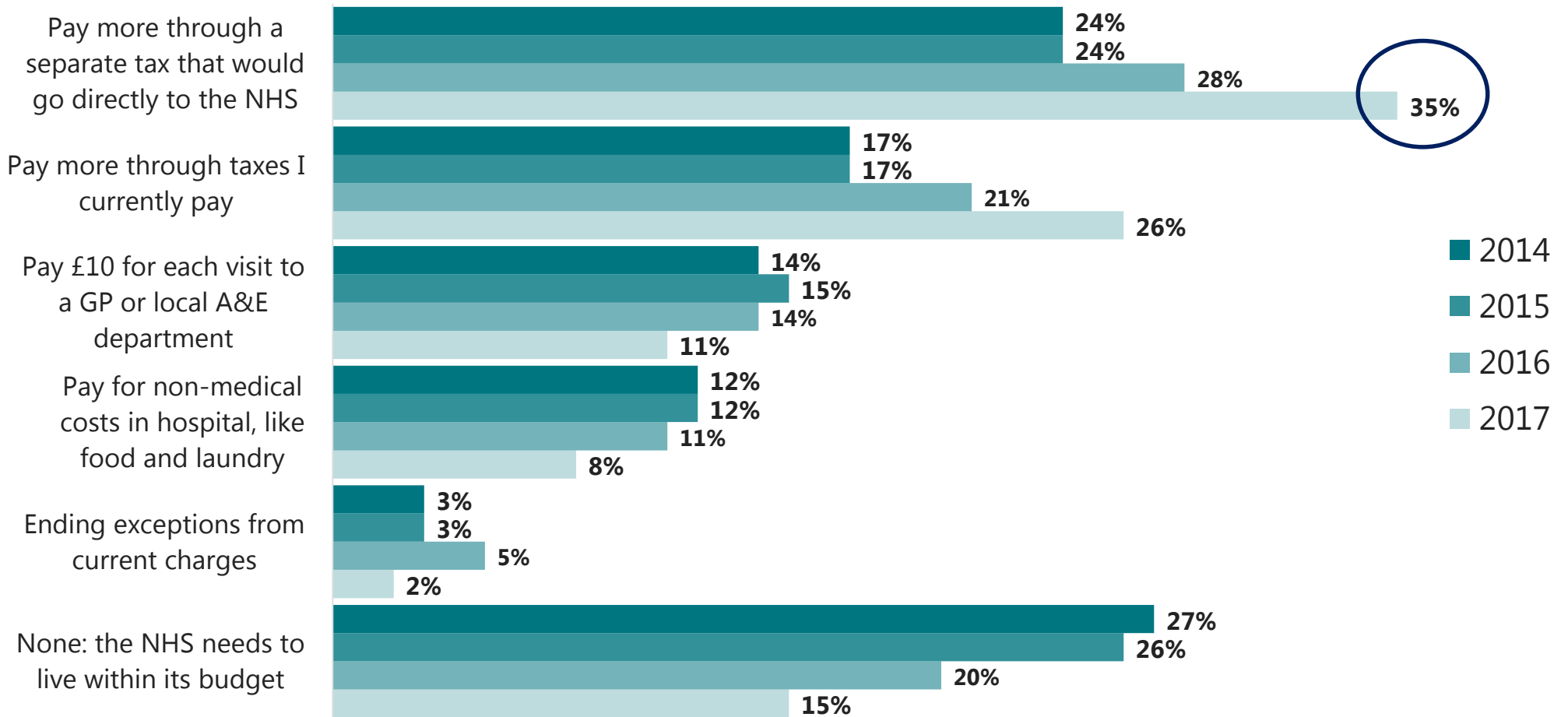
Although there were concerns about affordability.

***But some people can't afford to buy food and pay rent at the moment. Where will they get the money from? Times are hard."***

Base: c.1000 British adults aged 18+


# King's Fund analysis shows greatest, and increased, support for a hypothecated tax

If the NHS needed more money, which of the following do you think you would be prepared to accept?



Base: c.1000 British adults aged 18+

# Deliberative events suggest a ring-fenced tax appeals to the public because they would like clarity over where the taxes go

 ***I think I'd prefer it; I'd know at least that a percentage of my money is going to the NHS. I don't know where the [general] tax is going."***

Although some participants questioned how a ring-fenced tax would work in practice – and others argued that any dedicated NHS tax would need to be tailored to individuals' circumstances.

 ***I'd agree with the tax if it was means-tested, and it was a specific tax for the NHS."***

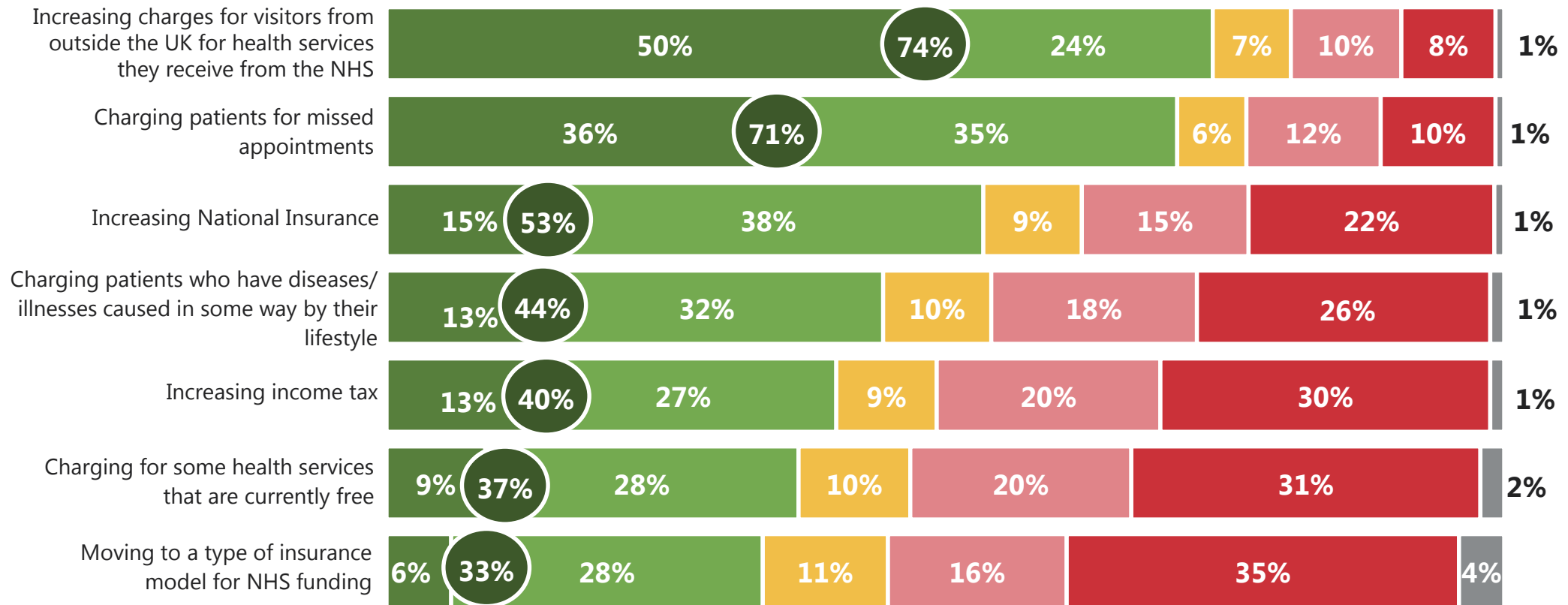
A small number of participants also challenged the principle of ring-fencing, questioning what value it would add, and suggesting it would simply add another layer of bureaucracy

 ***What's the point of that? It's just another layer."***

# But charges for overseas visitors and patients missing appointments are preferred to increasing taxes as ways of increasing funding

To maintain the current level of care and services provided by the NHS, funding for the NHS would have to increase. I am now going to read out some suggestions people have made about how funding could increase. With that in mind, how acceptable or unacceptable do you feel each of the following measures would be...?

- Completely acceptable
- Fairly acceptable
- Neither acceptable nor unacceptable
- Fairly unacceptable
- Completely unacceptable
- Don't know



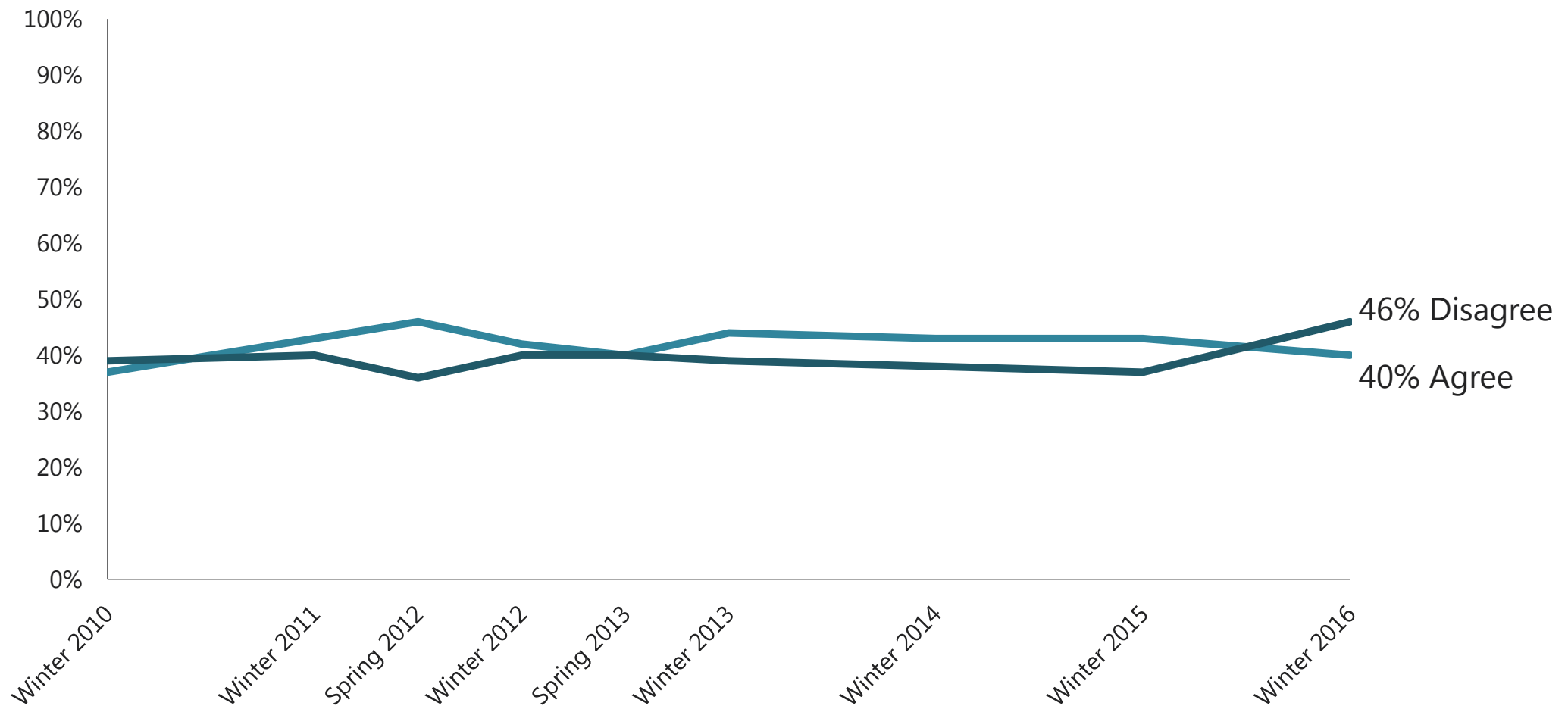
Base: 1,033 adults aged 18+ in the UK, 26 – 29 January 2017

**Yet there are some  
caveats to tax increases**



# People are now more likely to disagree than agree the NHS is doing everything it can to reduce waste and inefficiency

Please tell me whether on the whole you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...  
The NHS is doing everything it can to reduce waste and inefficiency



Base: Adults aged 16+ in England (c. 1000 per wave)

# And around half of the public think the NHS often wastes money

Thinking about the NHS as a whole, which of the following statements best reflects your views on the way the NHS uses money?

- The NHS almost never wastes money
- The NHS often wastes money

- The NHS generally doesn't waste money
- Don't know



**Deliberative events undertaken with the King's Fund exposes a lot of concern among the public about how well the NHS spends its money.**

Examples given included:

- spending on private hospitals
- private finance initiative
- waste of medication (e.g. dispensing of prescriptions not required) and equipment (e.g. crutches)
- procurement
- IT systems
- how the workforce is organised

Base: 1,944 GB adults aged 18+, interviewed between 5-15 May 2017

Survey source: Ipsos MORI / the Health Foundation 2017

Qualitative source: Ipsos MORI / The King's Fund

## The NHS still needs more money despite this view of waste and inefficiency

Despite this widespread perception of waste and inefficiency, in deliberative events conducted with The King's Fund **many general public participants still held the view that the NHS needs more money.**

However, a few participants argued that additional funding for the NHS should be **conditional on it reducing waste.**

*“However, if we did pay more money we would need more efficiencies, and if that doesn't happen, the public mood would swing.”*

Related to this, some participants also expressed enthusiasm for **greater transparency** over how the NHS uses its resources.

*“If it's our NHS then it should be completely transparent and we should all see where the money is going, and I think that would incentivise or encourage people to want to pay for it more.”*

## There were also other expectations attached to increased funding

For example, in exchange for more funding some people would expect to see **improvements in access to care.**

*“If I thought 'so I'm paying more tax for the NHS', I then expect to get an appointment to see a GP and get diagnosed that day... If I'm paying more though, I expect more.”*

And there was a recurring theme about **wanting the money to reach the frontline.**

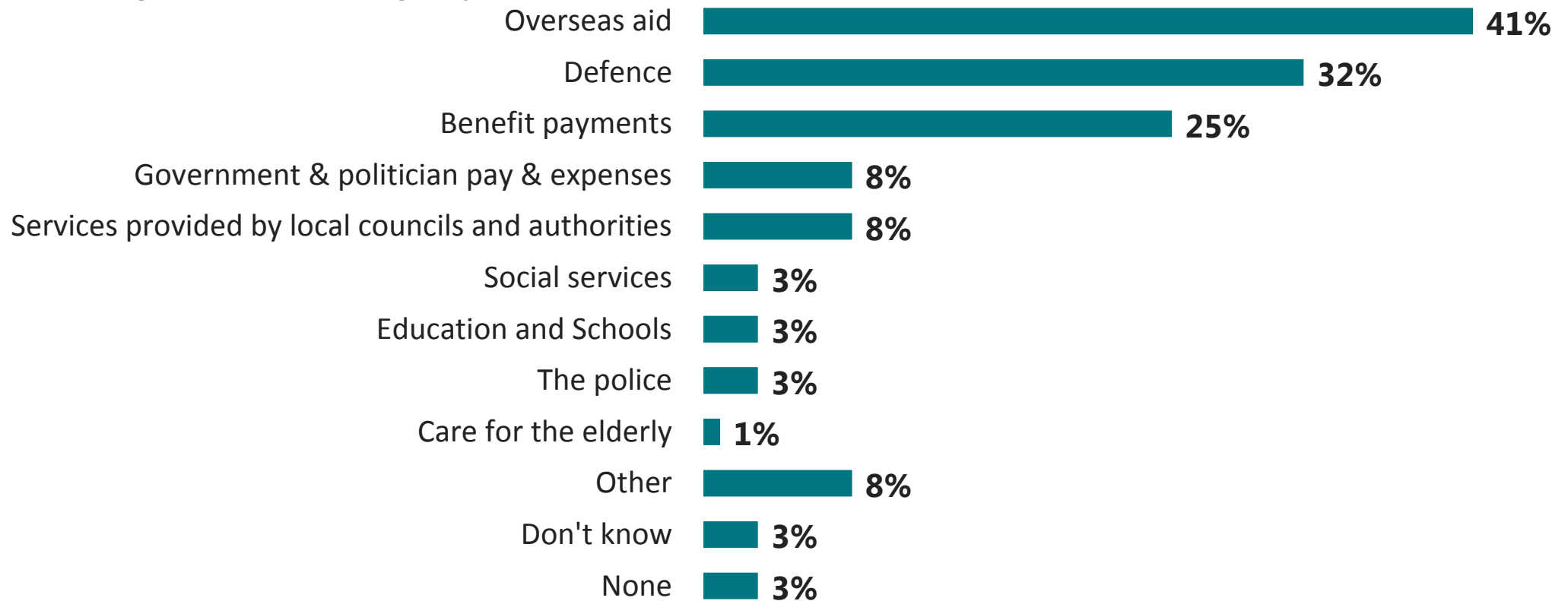
*“If they had more money, they could raise the wages of the nurses and doctors.”*

**There are also views on  
other ways of raising  
money**

# Where people think NHS increases should be funded via cuts

## elsewhere, they think cuts could be made to overseas aid & defence

You said that you think there should be cuts to other services to increase spending on the NHS. What areas of government funding do you think should be cut to do this?



***I think they should cut the defence budget... We have a new aircraft carrier and we can't afford to get planes on it. I feel strongly about it. Cut foreign aid; it's abused."***

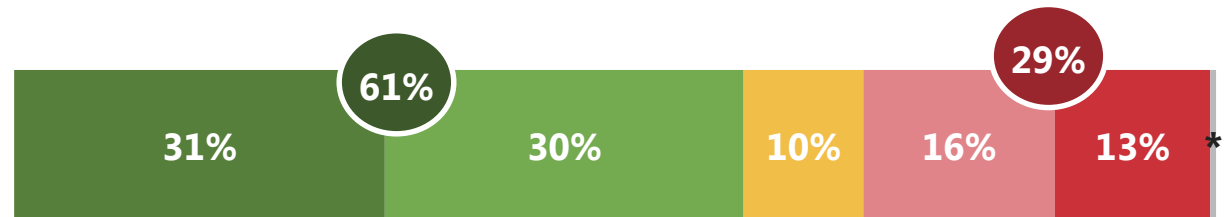
Base: All UK adults who would fund NHS increases through cuts elsewhere (321 adults 15+ in the UK 2018)

# Fines for missed appointments are more popular than charges for visiting GPs

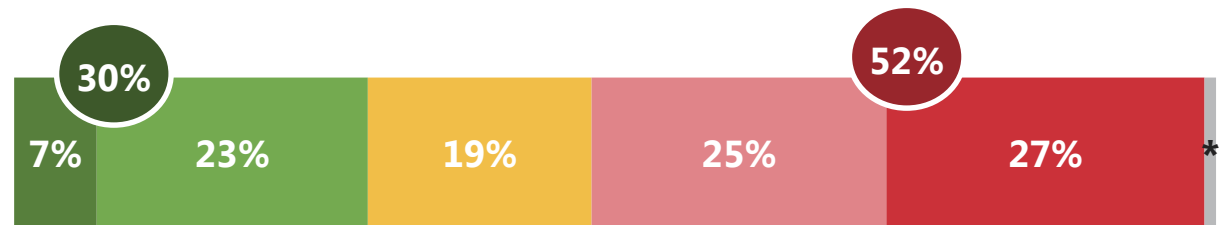
To what extent do you support or oppose each of the following as a way of securing additional funding to maintain the NHS...?

■ Strongly support   
 ■ Tend to support   
 ■ Neither/nor   
 ■ Tend to oppose   
 ■ Strongly oppose   
 ■ Don't know

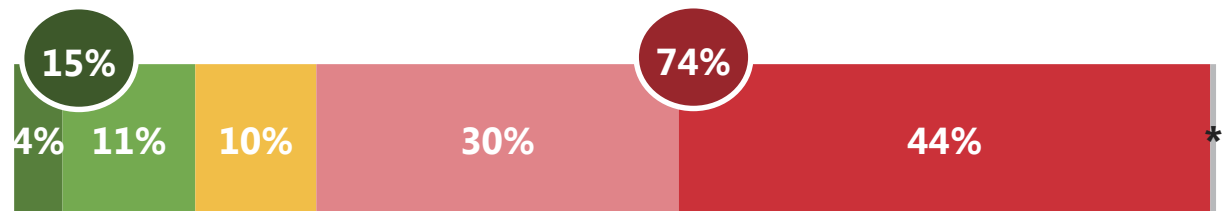
...a £10 fine for missed appointments (e.g. GP, hospital appointments)



...increasing prescription charges to £10 (the current prescription charge is £8.05)



...being charged a £10 fee to visit a GP



Base: 1,792 adults aged 15+ in Great Britain, 13 – 29 March 2015

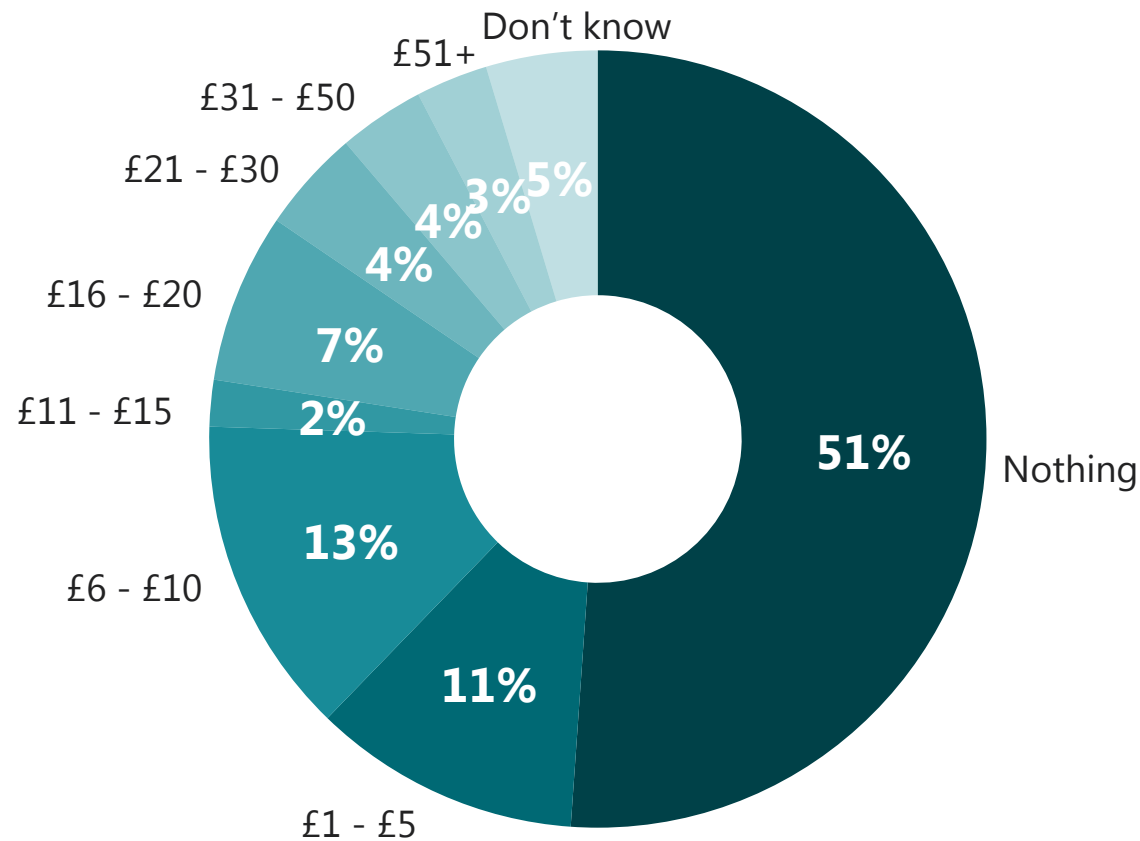
\* = less than 0.5%

# Around half would not be willing to pay in order to guarantee

## a GP appointment

Imagine now that you were experiencing symptoms of a health condition and you decided that you need to see your GP within the next 24 hours. How much, if anything, would you be willing to pay in order to be guaranteed an appointment with your GP within the next 24 hours?

Mean: **£11.08**

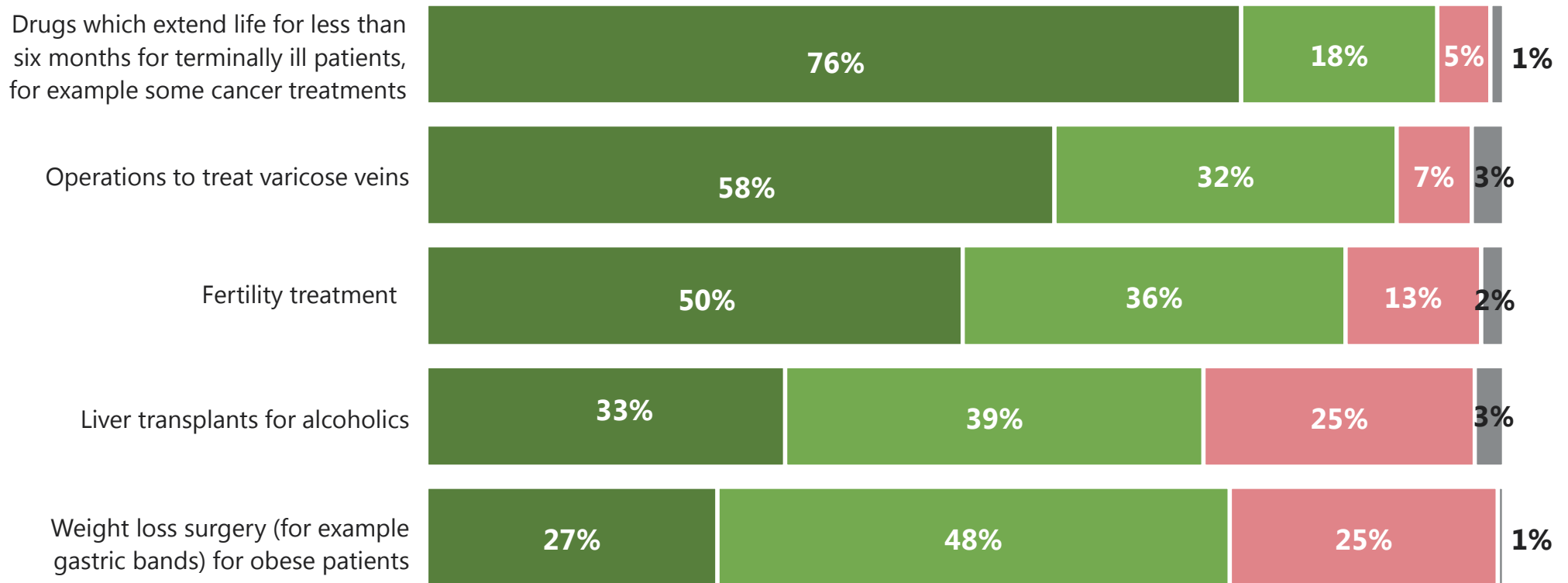


Base: 1,033 adults aged 18+ in the UK, 26 – 29 January 2017

# And there is support for rationing some services

The following treatments I will read out are generally available for free on the NHS in the United Kingdom. For each, please state whether you think it should: be available for free to everybody who needs it, be available for free only for some people who need it, or no longer be available for free for anybody who needs it...?

- Should be available for free to everybody who needs it
- Should be available for free for only some people who need it
- Should not be available for free for anybody who needs it
- Don't know



Base: 1,033 adults aged 18+ in the UK, 26 – 29 January 2017



## Although fines for missed appointments were seen as a good deterrent, the public pointed to practical issues

Potential issues identified in general public deliberative events conducted with The King's Fund included:

- It would be **difficult and potentially expensive**, e.g. it would need to consider individual circumstances for why an appointment was missed.
- Some people will **not be able to afford** a fine.
- There could be an **unintended consequence** of increasing A&E attendance.

*But if you're the type of person who continually misses appointments, you probably won't be able to pay anyway. The people who can pay will show up. If they haven't got the money you can't get the money from them; you can't get blood from a stone."*

## And views of rationing were very mixed in deliberative events

Some were **receptive**, while others expressed **deep unease**.

Views also hinged on **what element of healthcare** was being discussed.

For example, participants generally **supported the idea of requiring patients to purchase low-cost medicines** that are easily available without a prescription.

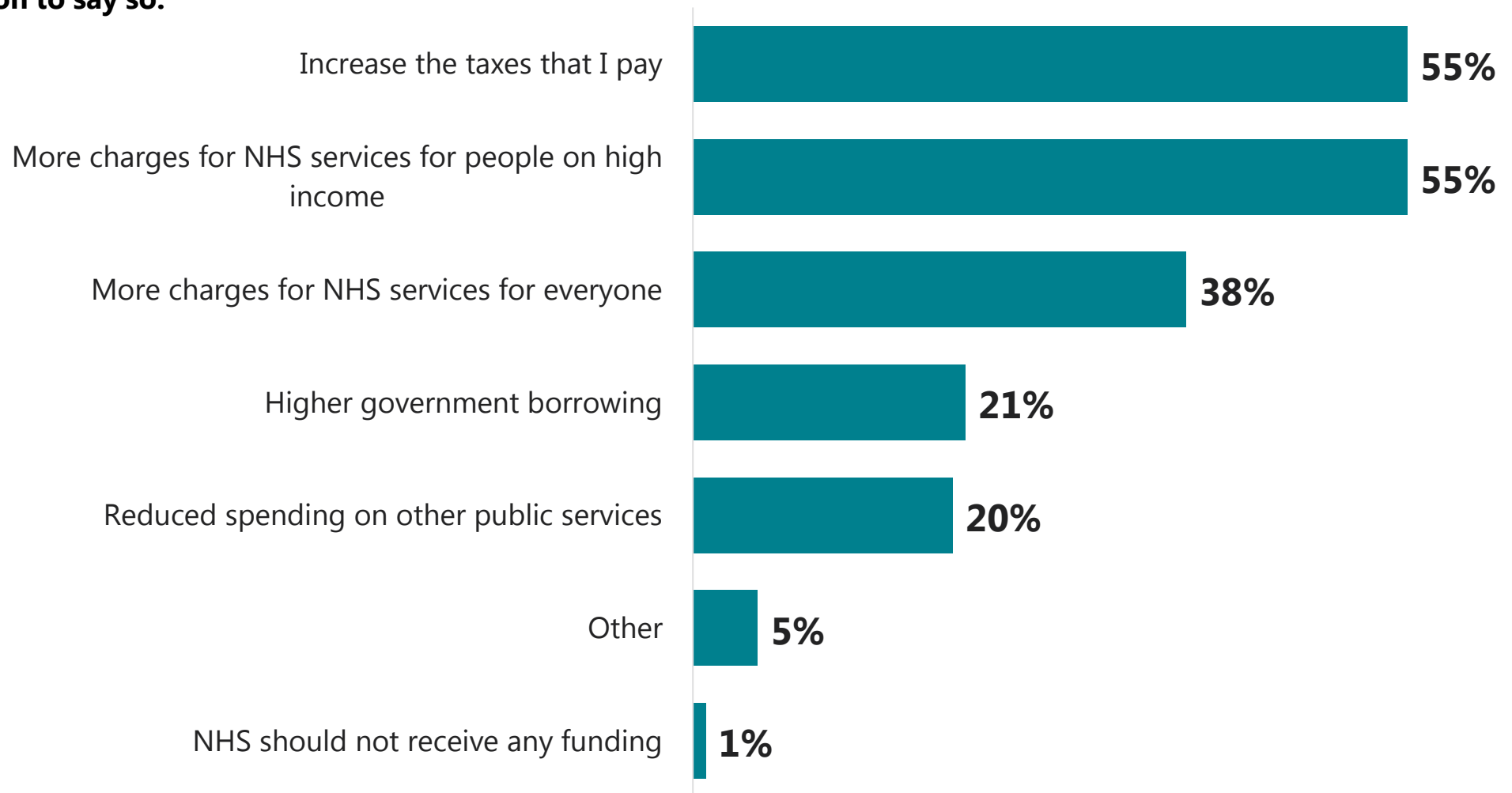
But on other issues such as IVF or not treating people with conditions caused by lifestyle, **views were mixed and often depended on their own circumstances**.

*Anyone who's had kids will say scrap fertility [treatment]. [But] I don't think any one person can dictate what someone should and shouldn't provide treatment for."*

**Following the  
announcement of  
increased funding for  
the NHS...**

# Of a range of options for funding the increase, higher taxes are most preferred

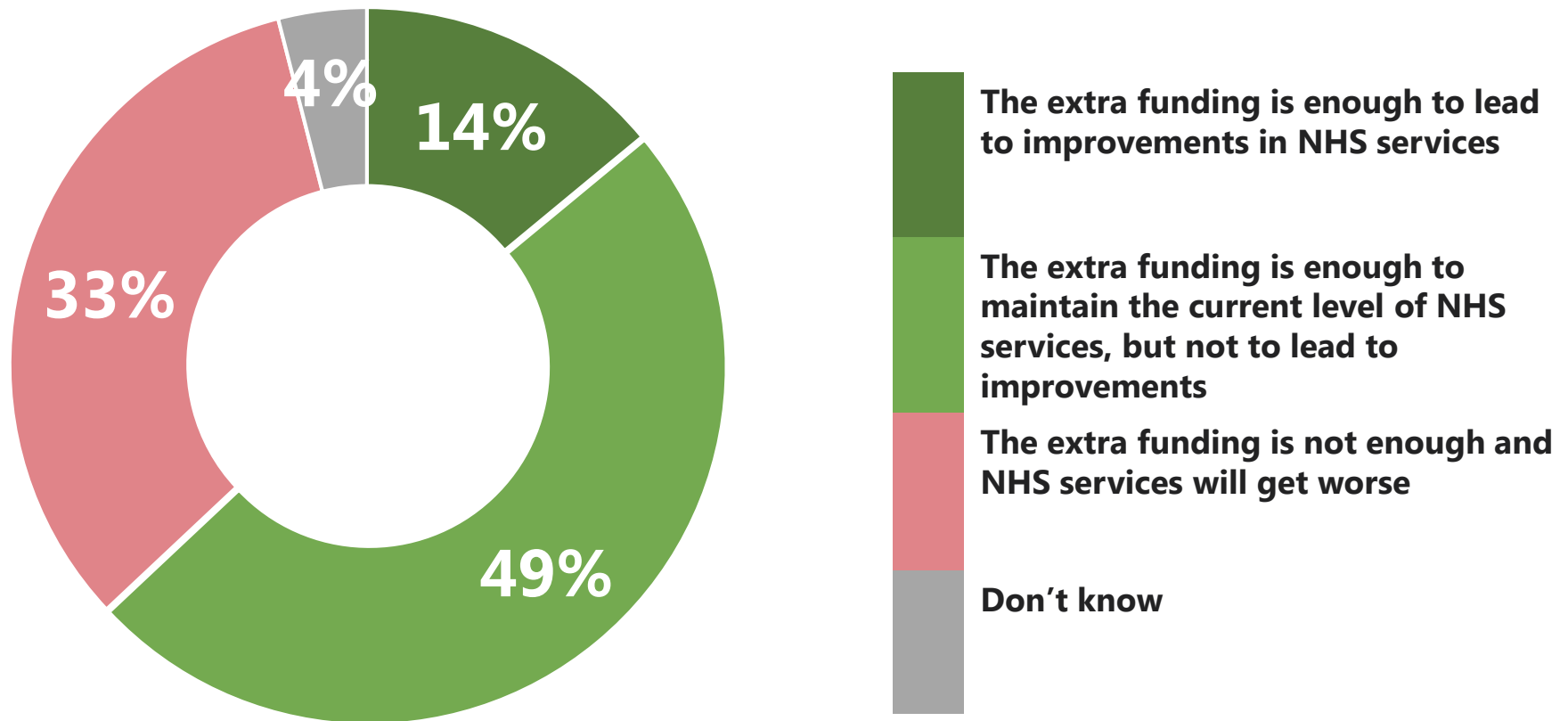
Which of the following, if any, would you support to pay for the increased funding for the NHS the Government has announced? Please pick all that apply, or if you think the NHS should not receive any funding there is an option to say so.



Base: 1,026 British adults 18+ 22 – 27 June 2018

# Although few think the amount of money is enough to lead to improvements in the NHS – the public seem realistic

As you may know the Government has recently announced that it will be providing an extra £20 billion a year for the NHS for the next five years, an increase of 3.4%. When thinking about the effect this extra funding will have on the NHS, which of the following is closest to your opinion?

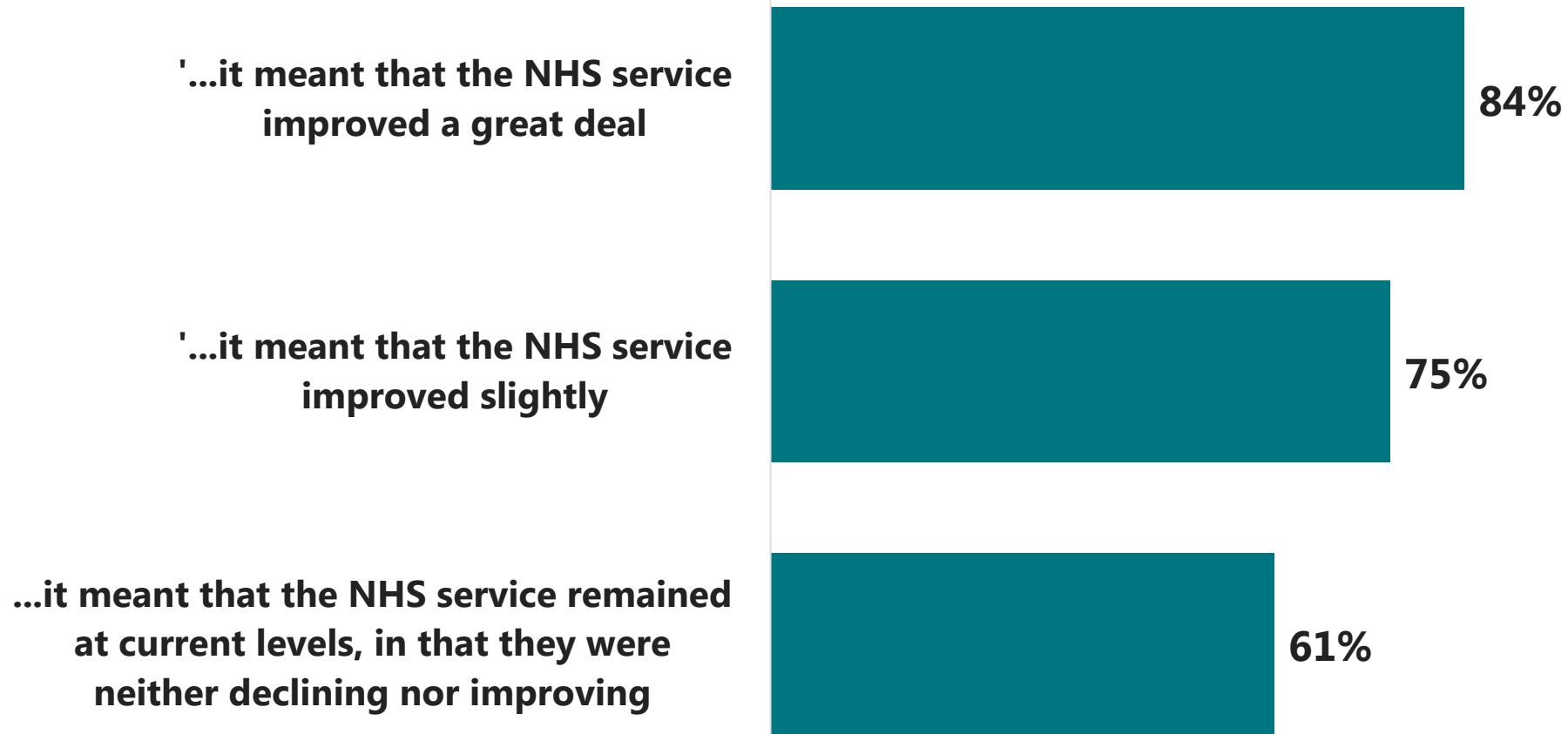


Base: 1,026 British adults 18+, 22 – 27 June 2018

# And they are most likely to be willing to pay more tax if it means services improve a great deal

Thinking about investment in the NHS, how willing if at all, would you be to pay more tax if ...?

% Very / fairly willing



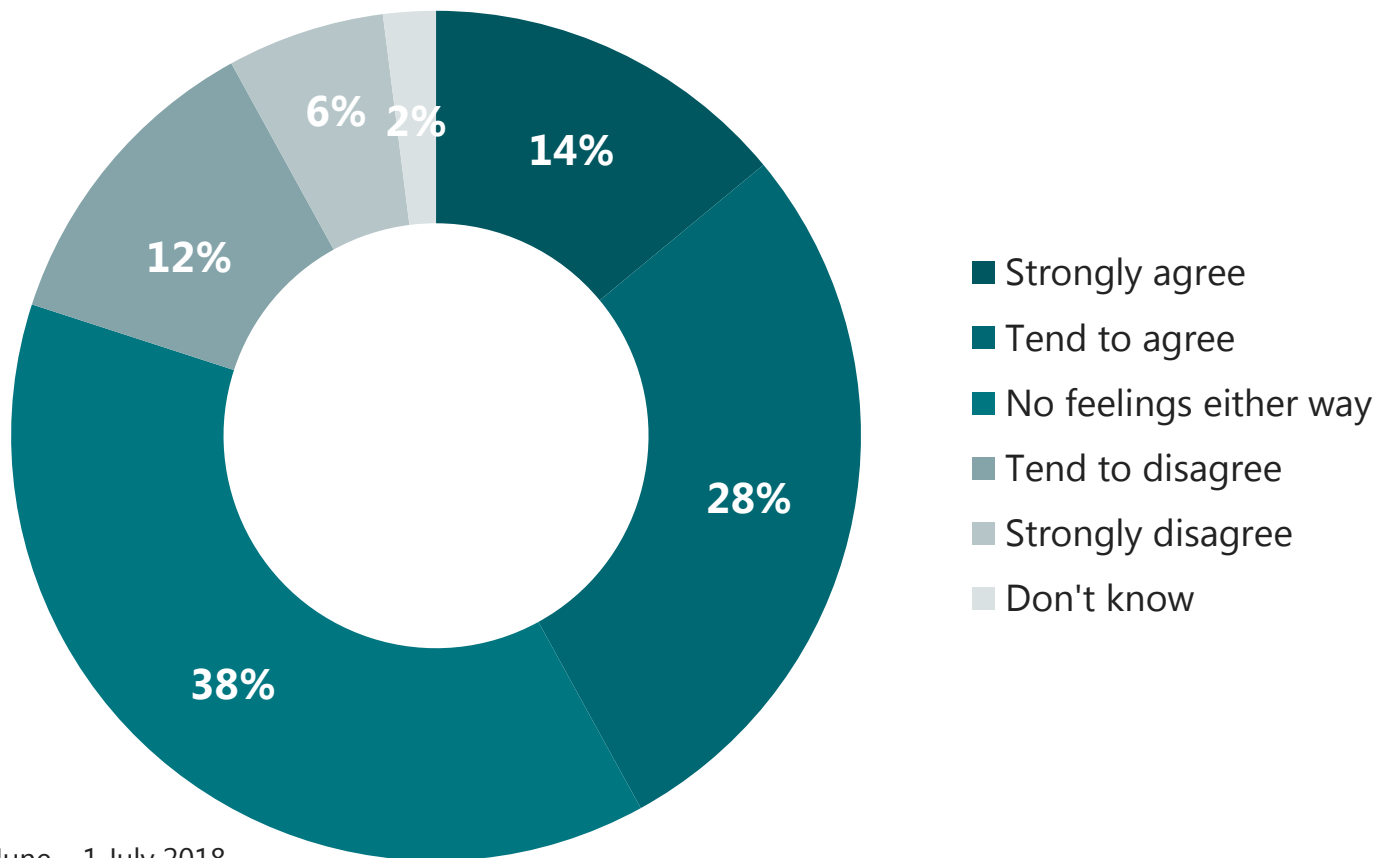
Base: 1,004 British adults, 28 June – 1 July 2018

# But there are mixed views about spending the money on care close to home rather than hospital care

The Prime Minister in a recent speech announced more funding for the NHS.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement.

Any extra funding within the NHS should focus MORE on providing care closer to home and less on hospital care.



Base: 1,004 British adults, 28 June – 1 July 2018

Source: Ipsos MORI / NHS Confederation 2018

# NHS AT 70

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