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# Members' Insights Report Membership Wage Survey

May 2024

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**BCVTA**

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# Survey methodology

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## Distribution

A survey was distributed to 1475 BCVTA members in February 2024.

## Response

784 members completed the survey:

- Response rate is 53%

This is a fantastic response rate!

Average completion time was 15 minutes.

## Notes

- The n per question is 784 unless otherwise specified.
- **Green text** (positive difference) and **red text** (negative difference) mean statistically significant.

*n = number of respondents*



Employers can have a profound impact on the quality of life of an RVT, primarily through offering sufficient wages and extended benefits.

### Key measures

Satisfaction as  
BCVTA member



Membership satisfaction is driven by BCVTA's industry advocacy, and the Board's performance & communications.

Satisfaction with  
current employer



Satisfaction with employer is correlated with wage, number of extended benefits offered and amount of CE funding provided.

Satisfaction with  
current wage



Satisfaction with current wage is correlated with quality of life, likelihood of remaining in the industry and level of earnings.

### Key learnings

Overall good quality of life\_\_\_\_\_48%

Have secondary income\_\_\_\_\_32%

Average # of years as RVT\_\_\_\_\_14 years

RVTs working 40+ hours a week\_\_\_\_\_51%

RVTs likely to apply for management role\_\_\_\_\_26%

Percent of practices with non-RVT  
staff performing RVT duties\_\_\_\_\_44%



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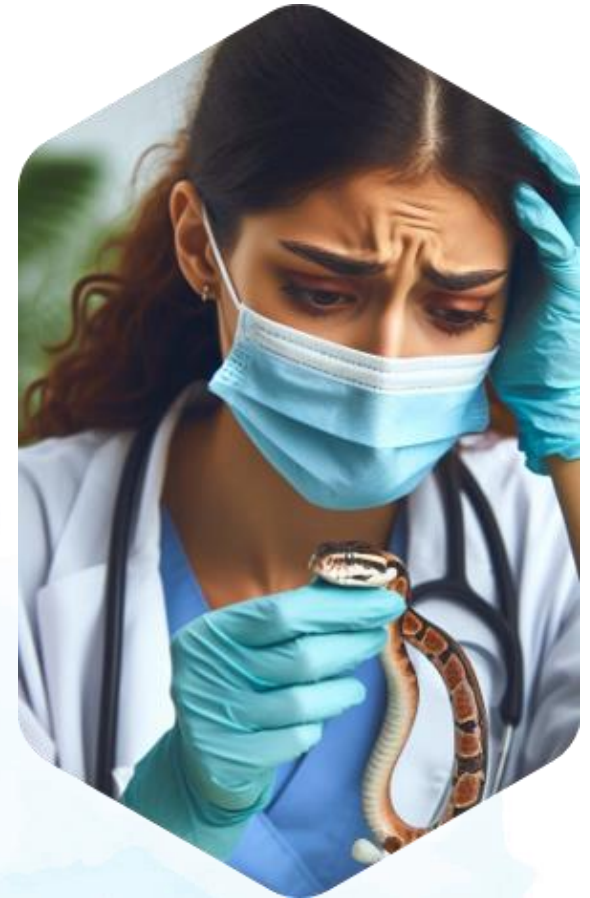
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## RVTs are struggling to remain in the industry and live comfortably...

**52%** of RVTs do not have a good quality of life.



With about half of RVTs working fewer than 40 hours per week and making less than \$30/hour.



*"My hourly wage of \$25 is considered good in this career. The economy we live in now is highly difficult to survive in with \$25 an hour, especially if an individual is on a single income."*

...and yet nearly half of RVTs report non-RVT staff are performing RVT duties in their clinics.



## This is leading to moderate-to-low satisfaction in the industry.

RVTs who are least satisfied generally are in the middle of their industry tenure (11-15 years), have lower incomes, receive fewer benefits from employers and are undecided about their RVT career path.



RVTs who are most satisfied generally have the most tenure, more than one additional certification, love the field and are not planning on leaving, have the highest wages and receive the most extended benefits from their employers.

The passion among RVTs for the role they play for vets, pet owners and pets themselves is strong, which is seen in the dedication to the field and frustration with employers.



## This clarifies the important role of the BCVTA...

...as the broker between employers and RVTs to demonstrate to employers what successful, long-term RVT-Vet partnerships can look like and how employers can benefit, while advocating for better employment conditions for RVTs, leading to better quality lives.



Wages for RVTs making less than \$28/hour



The number of RVTs who get paid sick days



The number employers with proper DEI policies in place



The number of RVTs who have a poor quality of life



Improve the clarity of the RVT career path and options within it



Improve the communication of BCVTA value proposition



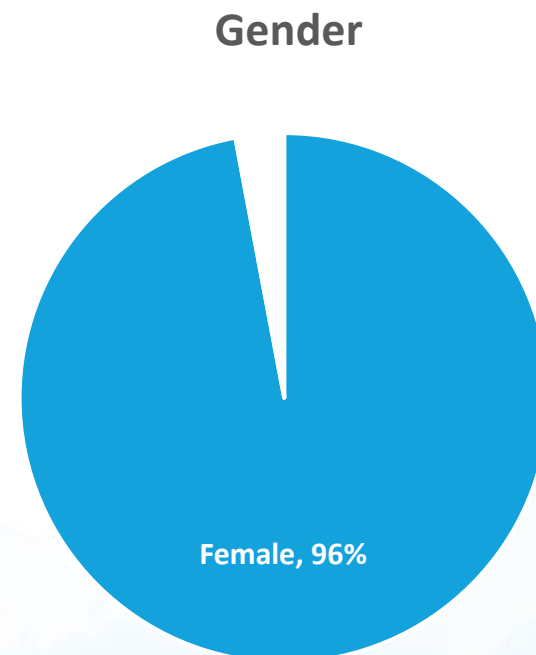
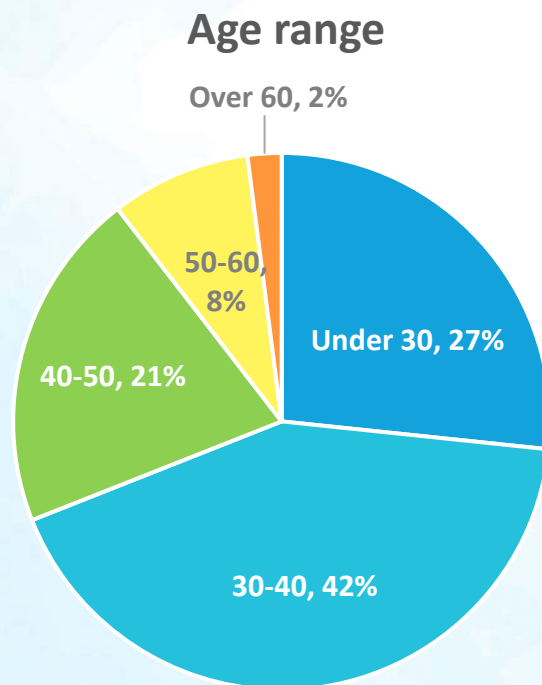
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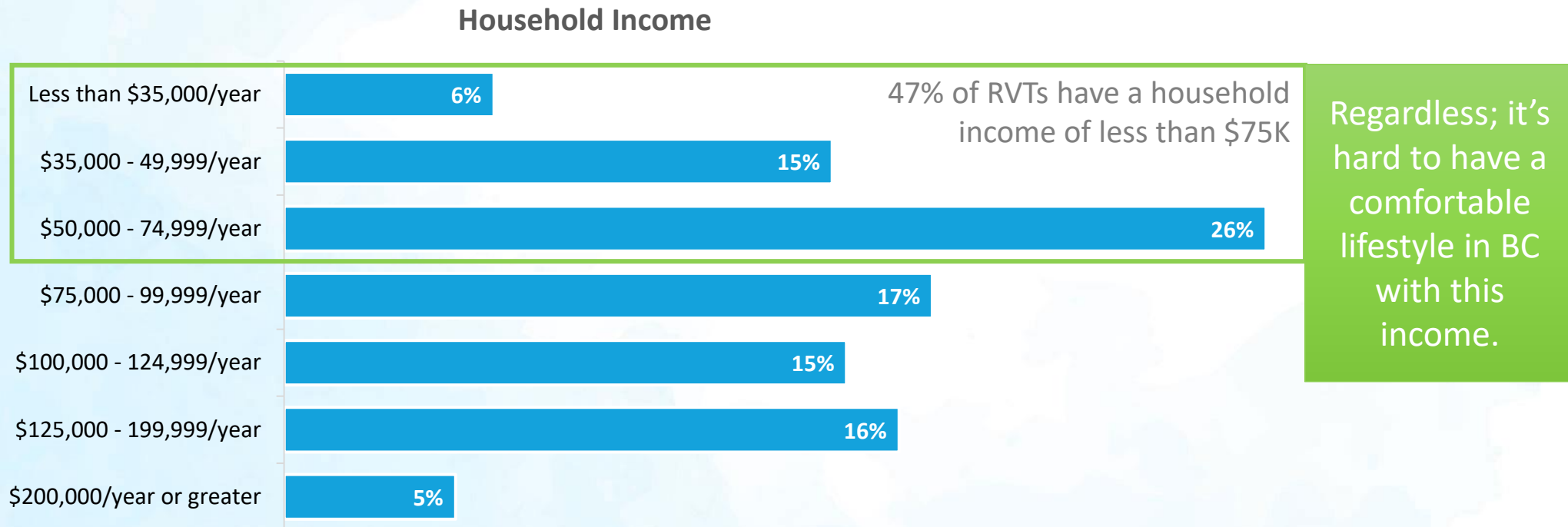
RVTs are primarily women under 40 years old,  
which is not representative of BC's demographic.



Q35: How old are you?  
Q36: What is your gender?



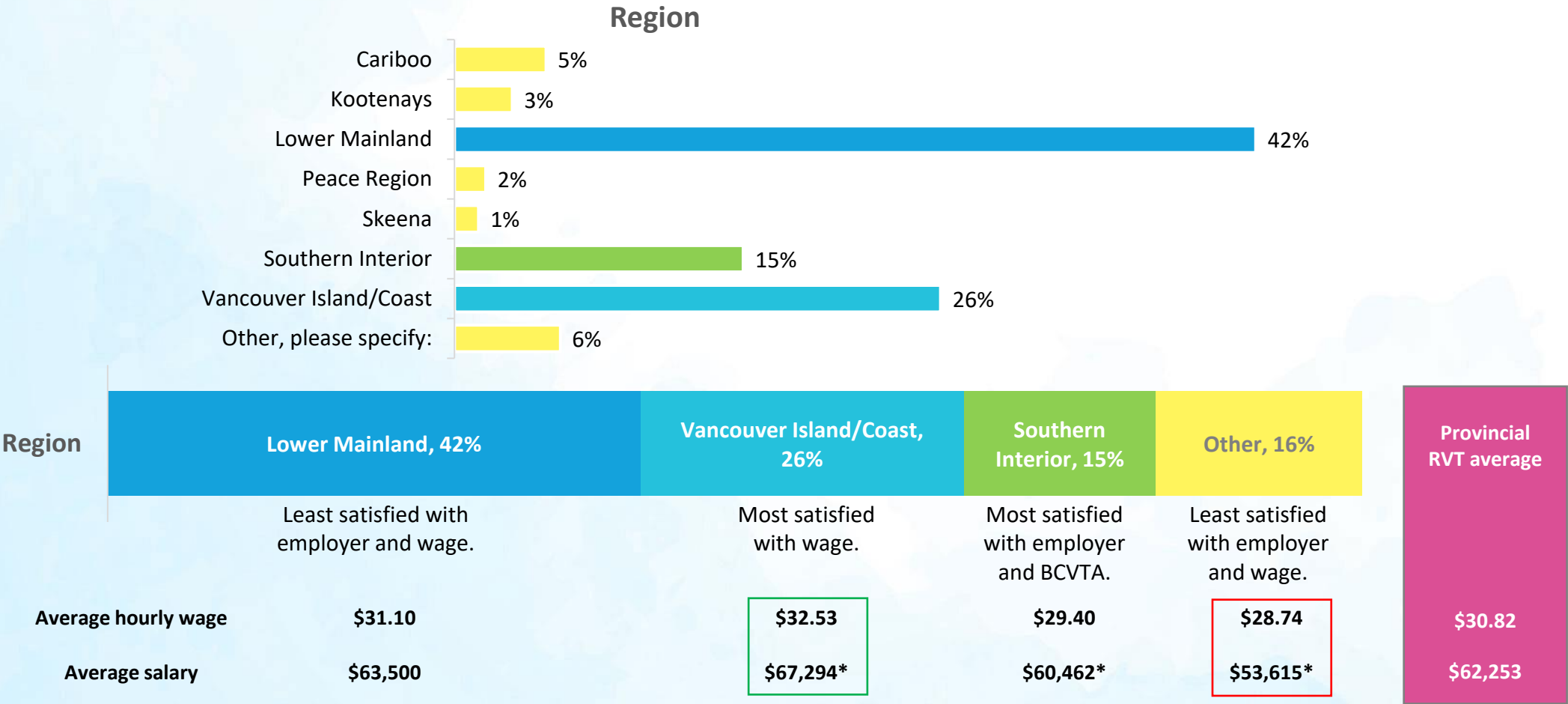
Considering the younger average age of RVTs, it's not entirely surprising that nearly 50% of RVTs' households have incomes of less than \$75K.



Q39: What is your household annual income before taxes?



83% of members come from either Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island/Coast or Southern Interior.



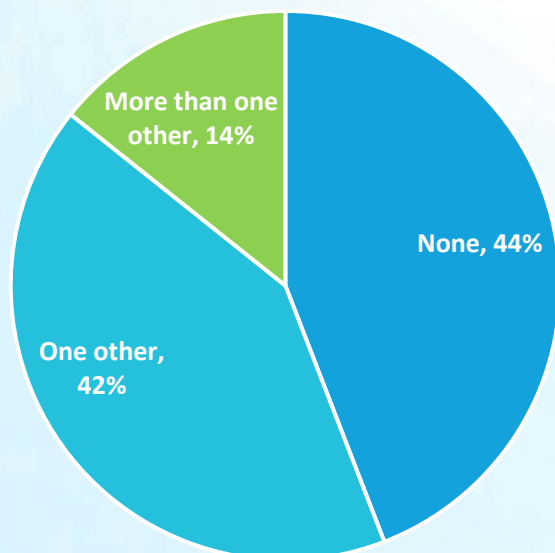
Q37: Geographically, where are you located?  
Regions in Yellow in the top chart are combined into "Other" for the bottom chart due to low sample size.

\*Low sample size (n=13-17); interpret with caution.

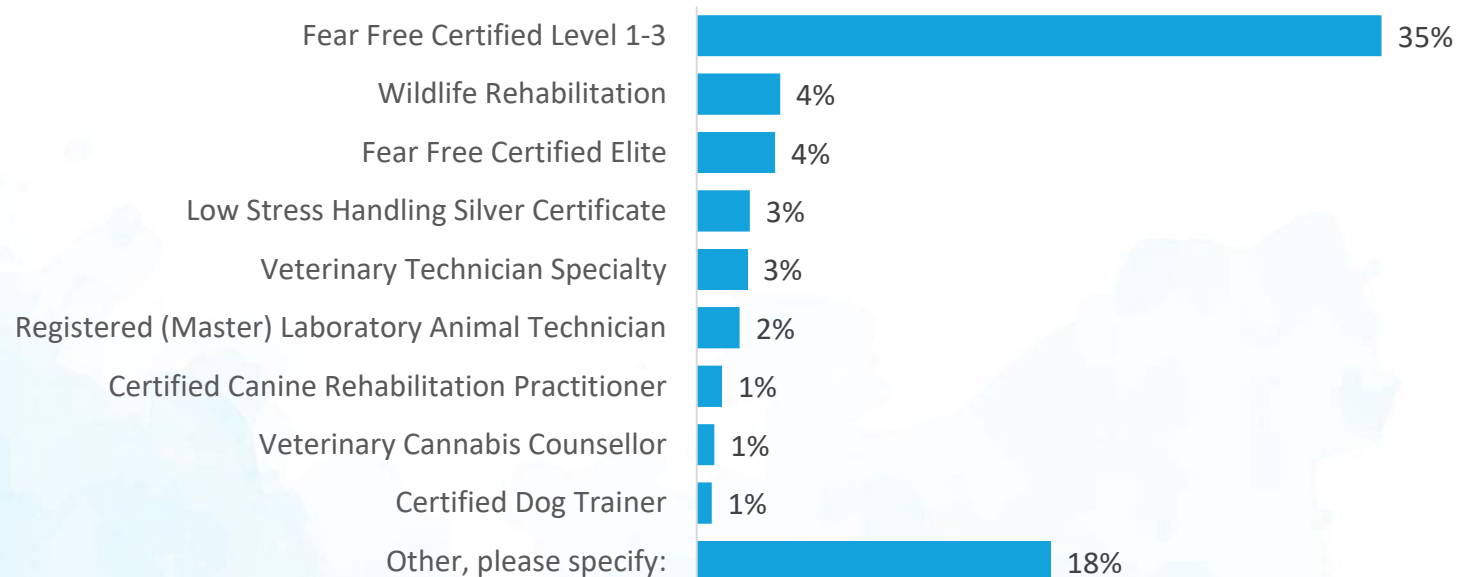


Just over half of respondents have additional credentials / certifications, with “Fear Free Certified Level 1-3” being by far the most popular.

Percent of RVTs with / without additional credentials / certifications



Other credentials / certifications (n=438)

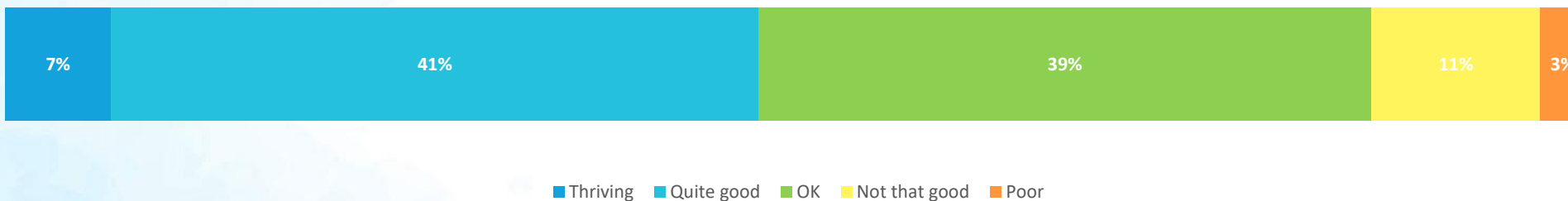


Q6: Other than your Veterinary Technology diploma, do you have any other credentials or certifications? Select all that apply.

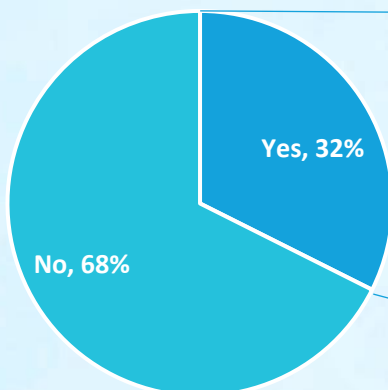


Almost half of all RVTs have a good quality of life; however, about a quarter of all RVTs have a second income because they need it.

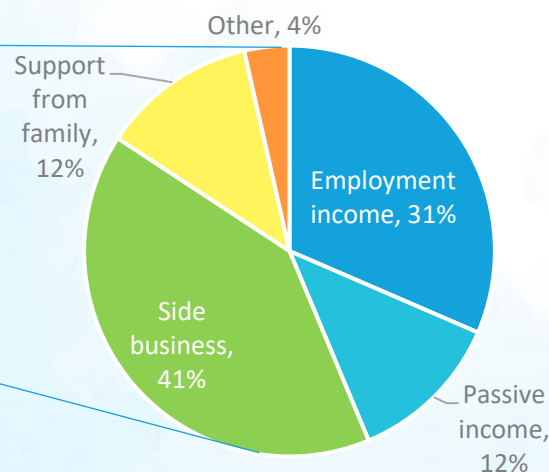
Overall wellbeing / quality of life



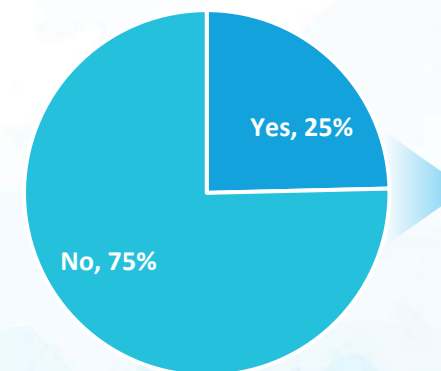
Secondary income?



Types of secondary income (n=254)



RVT wage is sufficient; do not rely on secondary income (n=254)



75% of RVTs with a secondary income indicate it's necessary because their primary RVT income is insufficient to maintain a satisfactory standard of living.

Q33: How would you rate your overall wellbeing / quality of life?




Q26: Do you, personally, have a secondary form of income?

Q27: Do you feel that your current wage with your veterinary employer is sufficient to maintain a satisfactory standard of living without relying on secondary income?



Disposable income enables quality of life – it’s no surprise that satisfaction with current employer and wage go hand-in-hand with wellbeing / quality of life.

### Overall wellbeing / quality of life

	Good/Thriving, 48%	OK, 39%	Not good, 14%
			
% satisfied:			
With employer	86%	60%	36%
As BCVTA member	76%	69%	55%
With current wage	69%	50%	29%
11+ years as RVT	59%	53%	41%

RVTs with longer tenures are more likely to earn more, as with any profession – earning more leads to higher wage and employer satisfaction and a better overall quality of life.

Q26: Do you, personally, have a secondary form of income?



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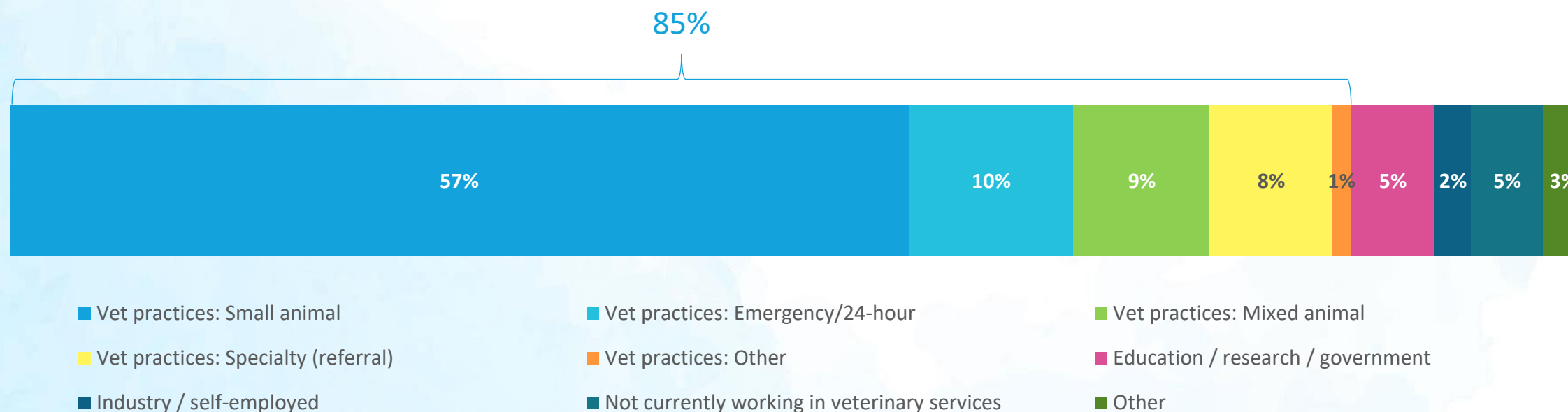
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A majority of RVTs are in “Vet practices: Small animal” with another large amount of RVTs working in the other Vet practices.

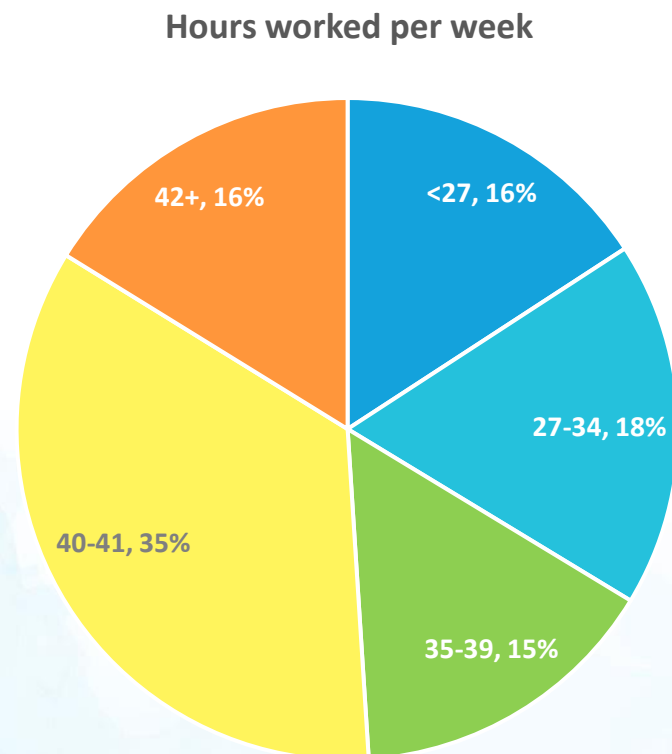
### Sector of employment



Q3: In which "Sector" and "Subsector" do you currently work? Choose a sector and then a subsector.



BC RVTs have a healthy variety of new and tenured experience, with the current average tenure of 14 years; half of RVTs work fewer than 40 hours a week.

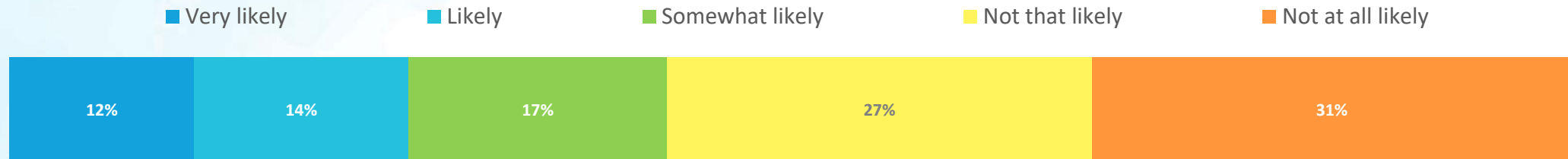


Q1: How many years have you been working in Veterinary medicine? Q2: How many years have you been a Registered Veterinary Technologist?  
Q8: On average, how many hours do you work in the veterinary industry per week?



# A quarter of RVTs are currently in a position where they would likely apply for a management position, should one become available.

Likelihood of applying for a management position (n=720)



## Profile of RVTs likely to apply for a management position

Most likely to:

- Work 40+ hours a week
- Worked at 4+ different employers
- Have more than 10 years of experience
- Are paid a salary

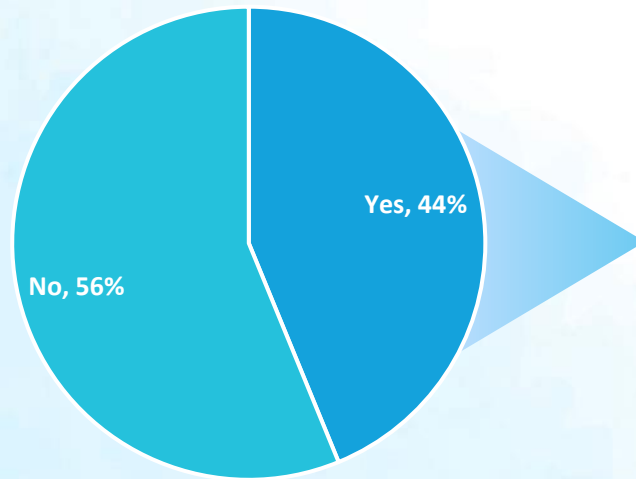


Q32: If the opportunity were to arise, how likely are you to apply for a management-level position within your current place of employment?



# Nearly half of RVTs report that non-RVT staff perform RVT duties, some occasionally and some frequently.

Percent of RVT's practices with non-RVT staff performing RVT duties (n=726)



Of those who said yes and provided a number, the average per clinic is about 2.4 non-RVTs performing non-RVT duties, ranging from 1 to over 10, depending on clinic size and other factors.

RVT duties performed by non-RVT staff include:

- AG expressions
- Performing anesthesia
- Administering sedation
- Dental scaling and polishing
- Provide a variety of treatments
- Dental radiographs
- Patient monitoring
- NG tube placement
- Surgical monitoring
- Client communication
- Prescription filling
- SQ fluids
- Placing IV
- IM injections
- Lab work
- IV catheters
- Intubating
- Discharge
- Inducing
- Wound care
- Drawing blood
- Radiographs

Many quotes indicating non-RVT staff are performing all or most of the tasks that should be performed by RVTs.

*"We have 2 unlicensed techs who perform the same role as RVTs."*

*"2-4 staff members act as RVTs (usually techs/veterinary nurses from overseas that are not licensed here) - perform all the tasks an RVT would. We do have some assistants who also do things like SQF, arthritis injections, cytologies."*

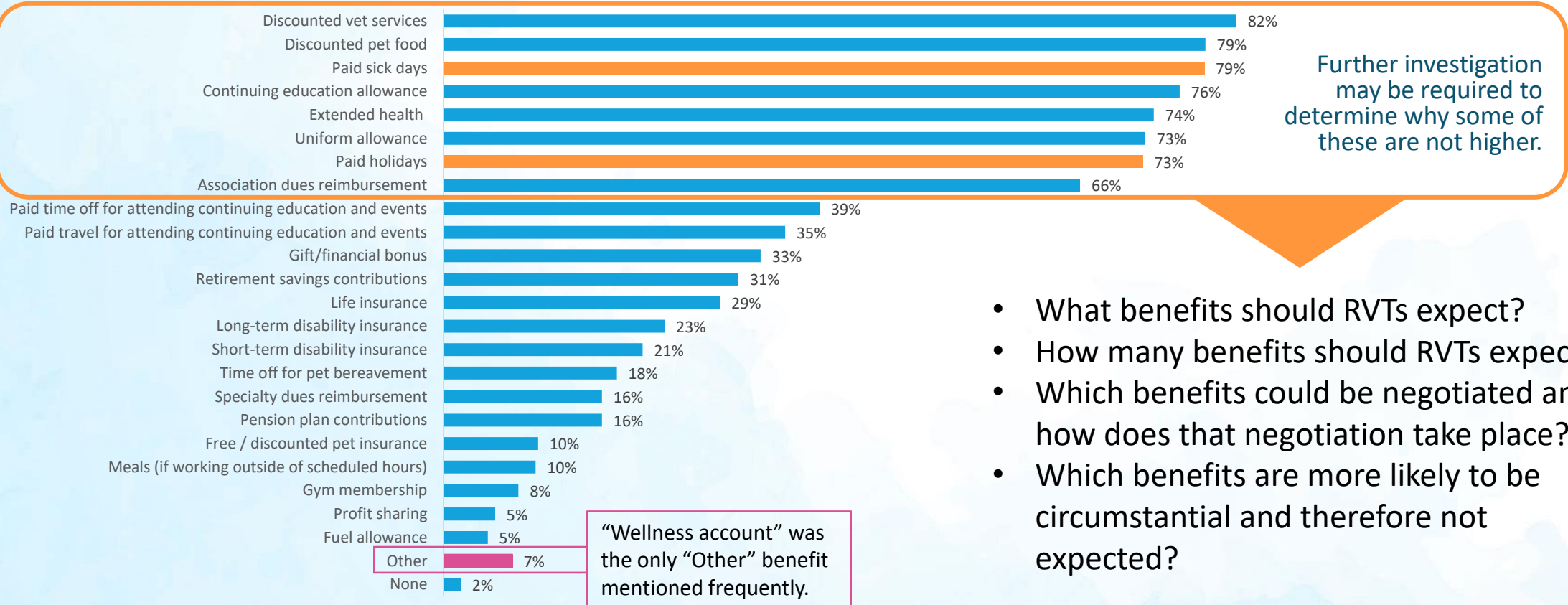
Q28: Does your practice currently have non-RVT staff performing RVT duties?

Q29: [IF Q28 = YES] Please tell us how many non-RVT staff are performing RVT duties and the roles they are performing.



# There is a great divide between the top 8 benefits offered and the rest.

## Benefits offered by employer



- What benefits should RVTs expect?
- How many benefits should RVTs expect?
- Which benefits could be negotiated and how does that negotiation take place?
- Which benefits are more likely to be circumstantial and therefore not expected?

Q23: Does your employer offer any of the following benefits? Select all that apply.



Half of RVTs who receive CE funding from their employer don't know how much they can access; of those who do, half receive more than \$800 a year.

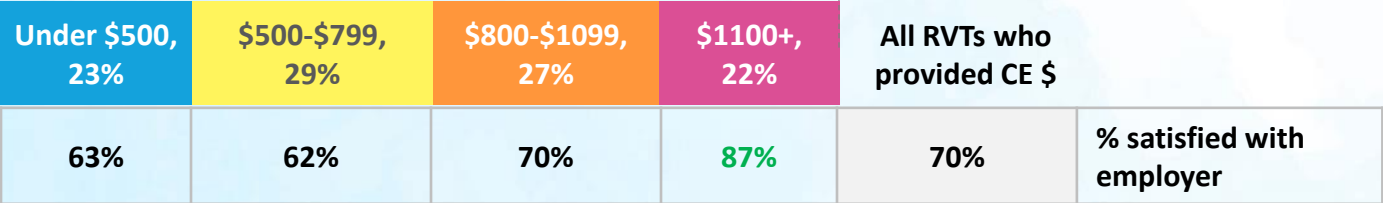
RVTs indicating if they receive CE funding from their employer or not (n=784)



Whether RVTs who receive CE funding know the amount (n=599)



CE amount ranges (n=293)



Satisfaction with current employer is correlated with amount of CE funding that is provided.

Q24: What is your annual continuing education allowance? \$ per year



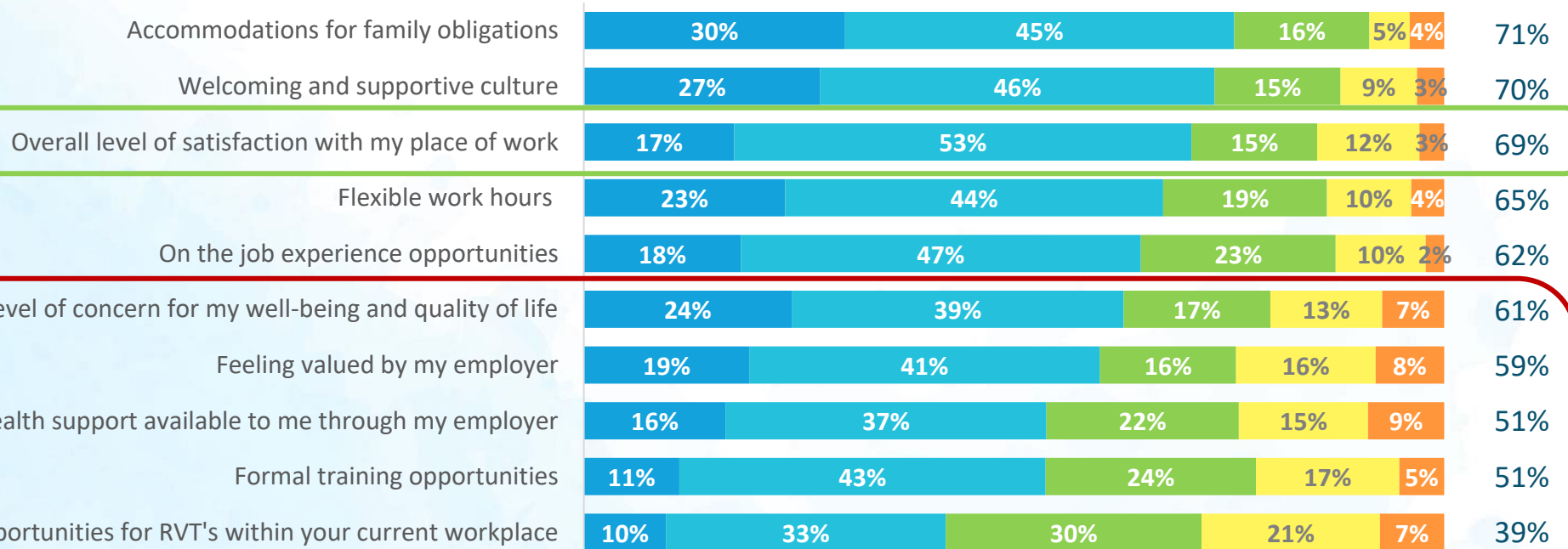
Career growth opportunities for RVTs is a formidable sore spot with employers; other large areas of opportunities include training and mental health support.

### Satisfaction with aspects of current workplace

■ Very satisfied ■ Satisfied ■ Neither ■ Dissatisfied ■ Very dissatisfied

Top 2

General satisfaction is moderate



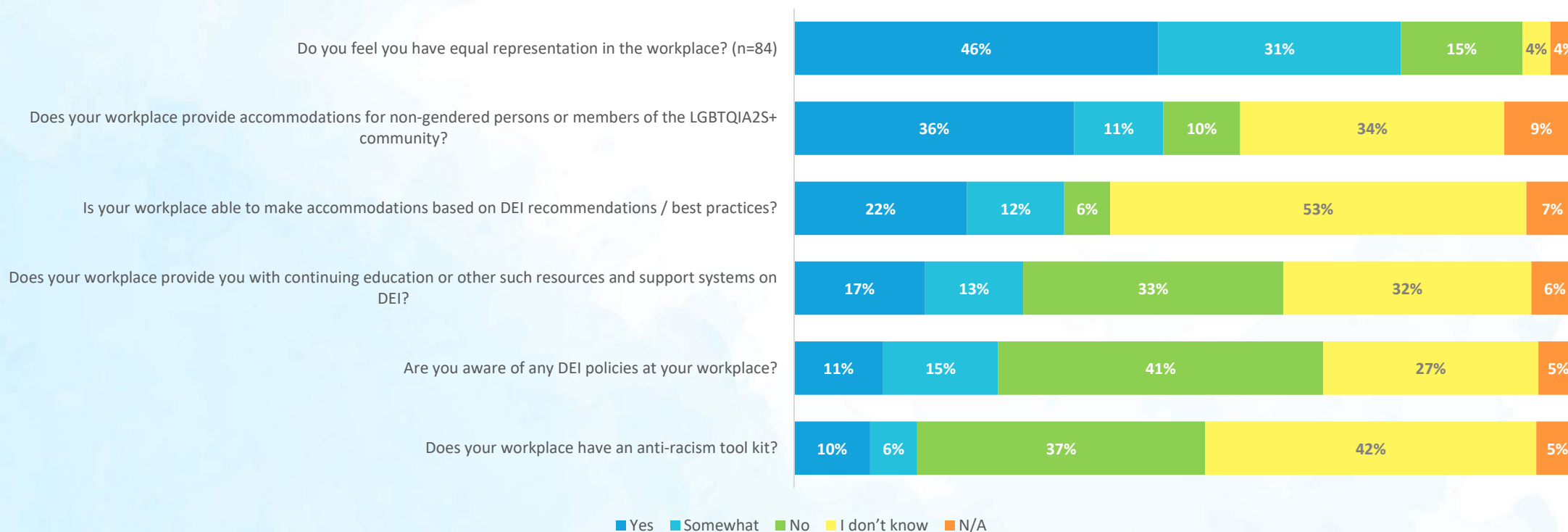
A number of concerning results regarding RVTs' work environments.

Q30: How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your current workplace?



# There is a significant amount of uncertainty when it comes to understanding what, if anything, employers have in place for DE&I.

## Diversity, equity & inclusion in the workplace



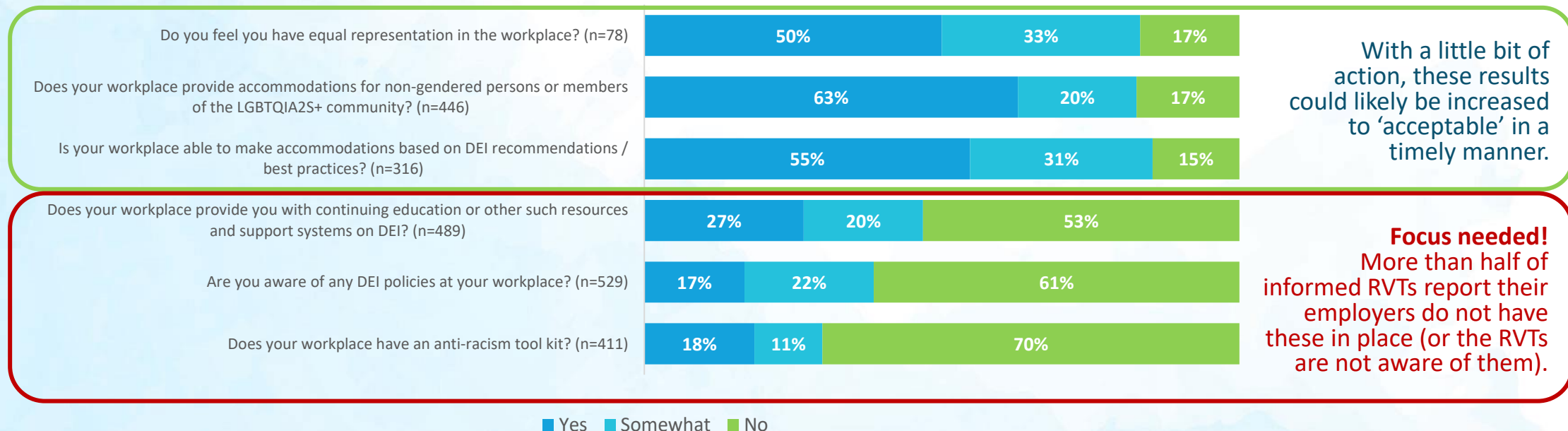
Q41: These last few questions are about DEI in your workplace.



BCVTA should consider an employer awareness campaign to make it easy for employers to implement and/or share DEI policies and an anti-racism toolkit; it's likely many simply don't know they should be doing these things.

*By removing those who said "N/A" and "I don't know" from the graph, we suddenly see a clear divide between the top 3 and bottom 3 DE&I-related topics.*

### Diversity, equity & inclusion in the workplace



Q41: These last few questions are about DEI in your workplace.



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## 44% of RVTs are not satisfied with their wage; comments as to why largely centre around being able to afford a basic living.

### Satisfaction with your hourly wage / salary / base salary + commission

■ Very satisfied   ■ Satisfied   ■ Neither   ■ Dissatisfied   ■ Very dissatisfied



*"For the knowledge and experience, [we should be paid] a wage that is enough for a comfortable home life. It is a hard-working career choice which must be kept continuously updated with CE, we should make enough to feel proud and be able to stick with this career long term."*

*"A living wage would be nice. Prices for services for clients continue to increase exponentially, but the staff wage does not."*

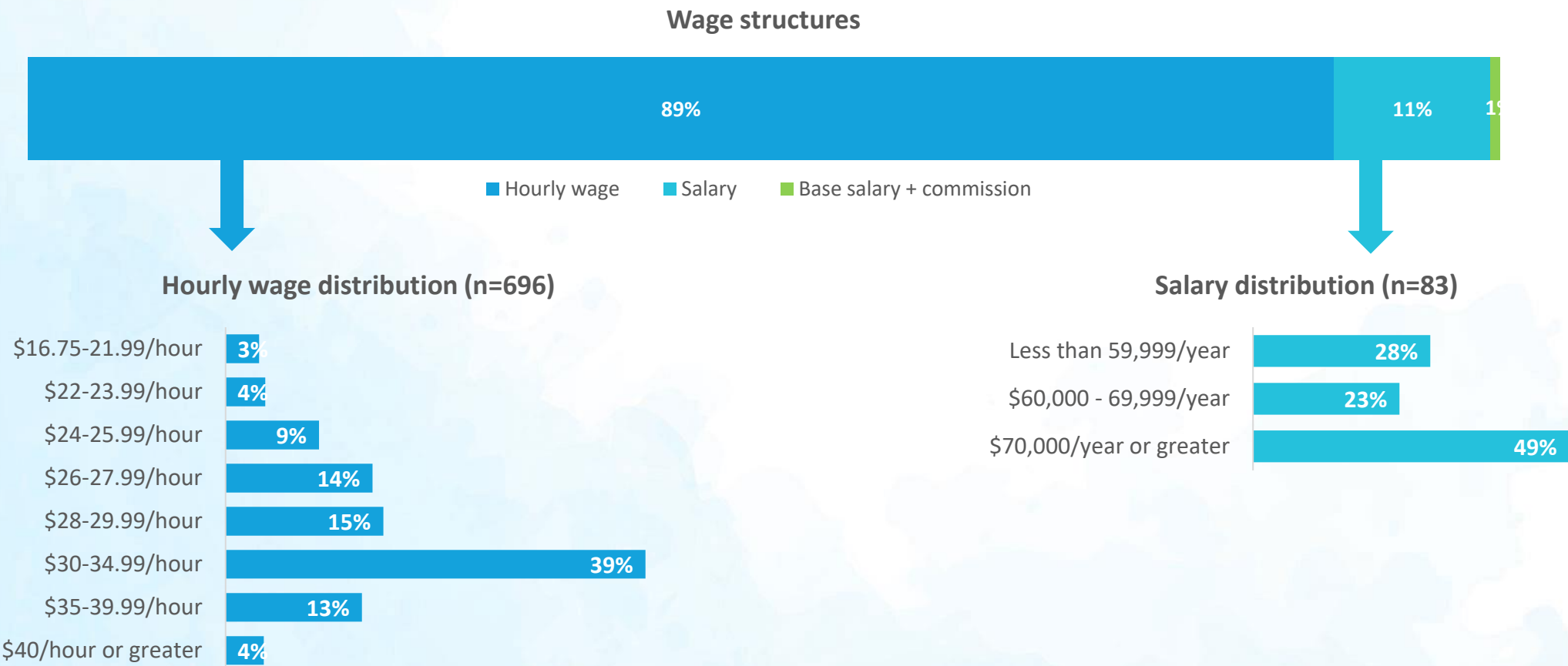
*"I am currently not working in the veterinary field because the wage was too low to survive on."*

Q21: How satisfied are you with your hourly wage / salary / base salary + commission?

Q22: [IF NOT SATISFIED] What do you think would be a more appropriate hourly wage / salary / base salary + commission for your current role, experience and skill level?



Just over half of hourly RVTs make over \$30 an hour, and about half of salaried RVTs make over \$70K/year; implying half of RVTs make a reasonable income.



Q10: What is your wage structure? Q11: What is your current hourly wage?  
Q12: What is your current annual salary? Q13: What is your base salary (excluding commission)?



BCVTA member satisfaction is generally higher among those earning less; interestingly, increases in employer satisfaction *as a result of higher wages* halt after 28\$/hour.

Hourly wage (n=696)

\$16.75-25.99/hr, 16%	\$26-27.99/hr, 14%	\$28-29.99/hr, 15%	\$30-34.99/hr, 39%	\$35/hr or greater, 16%
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All hourly wage RVTs (n=696)

% satisfied:

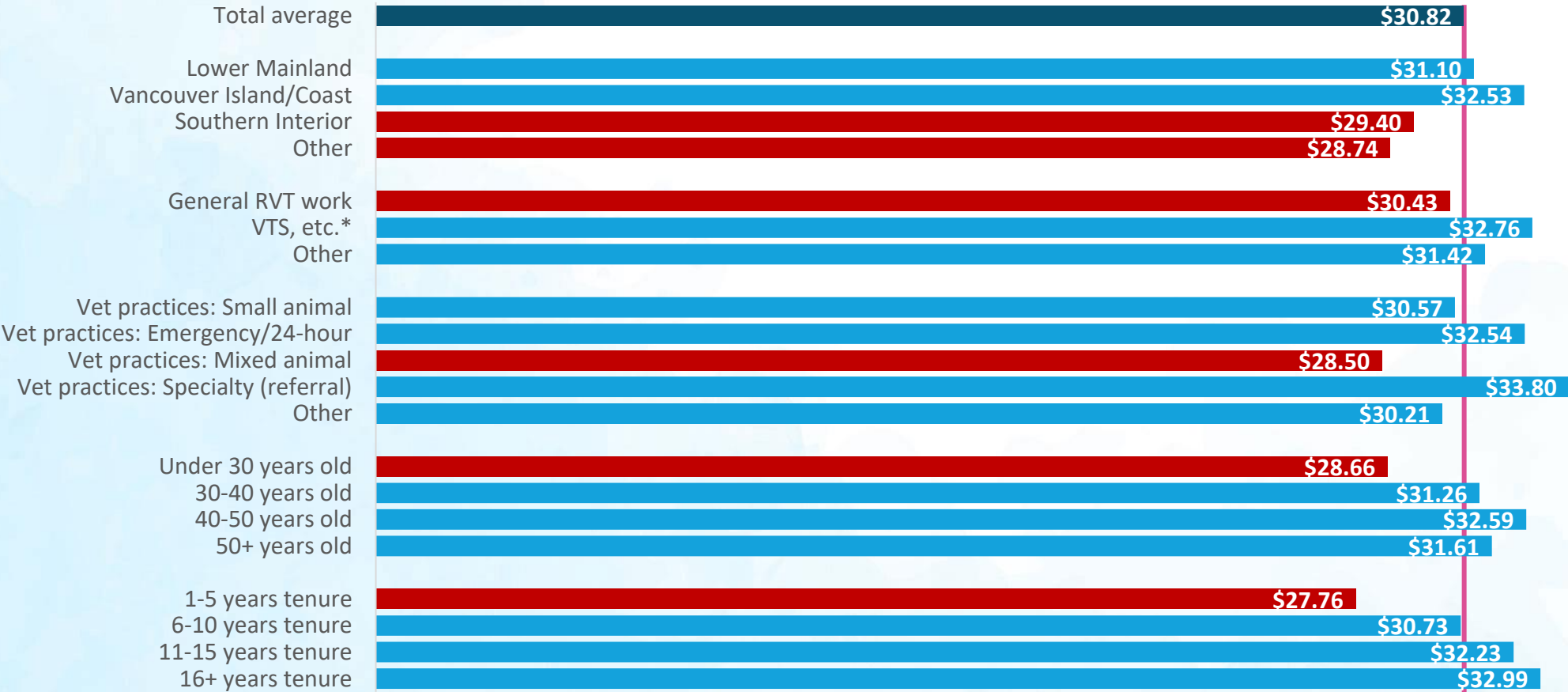
With employer	52%	66%	72%	72%	72%	68%
With current wage	21%	33%	53%	66%	81%	55%
Work 40+hrs/wk	37%	53%	50%	53%	44%	49%
Work 35+hrs/wk	51%	64%	61%	70%	62%	64%
11+ years as RVT	29%	39%	49%	55%	81%	52%

Q11: What is your current hourly wage?



RVTs with the lowest hourly wages are generally under 30, living outside major city centres, doing general RVT work and/or in mixed animal practices.

Average hourly wage (n=696)



Q11: What is your current hourly wage?  
\*Includes Educator, Practice Manager, Locum & Business Owner

Data disclaimer: When asking for wage information, respondents could select from salary / hourly ranges. As such, to calculate averages, a few assumptions had to be made. For all the middle ranges, the midpoint was used for the average calculation.  
• For the "\$40/hour or greater" end hourly wage range, \$42.50 was used as the mid-point.



Likewise, RVTs with the lowest salaries are generally under 30, living outside major city centres, doing general RVT work and/or in mixed animal practices.

Average salaries (n=77-83)



Q12: What is your current annual salary?  
\*Includes Educator, Practice Manager, Locum & Business Owner

Data disclaimer: When asking for wage information, respondents could select from salary / hourly ranges. As such, to calculate averages, a few assumptions had to be made. For all the middle ranges, the midpoint was used for the average calculation.

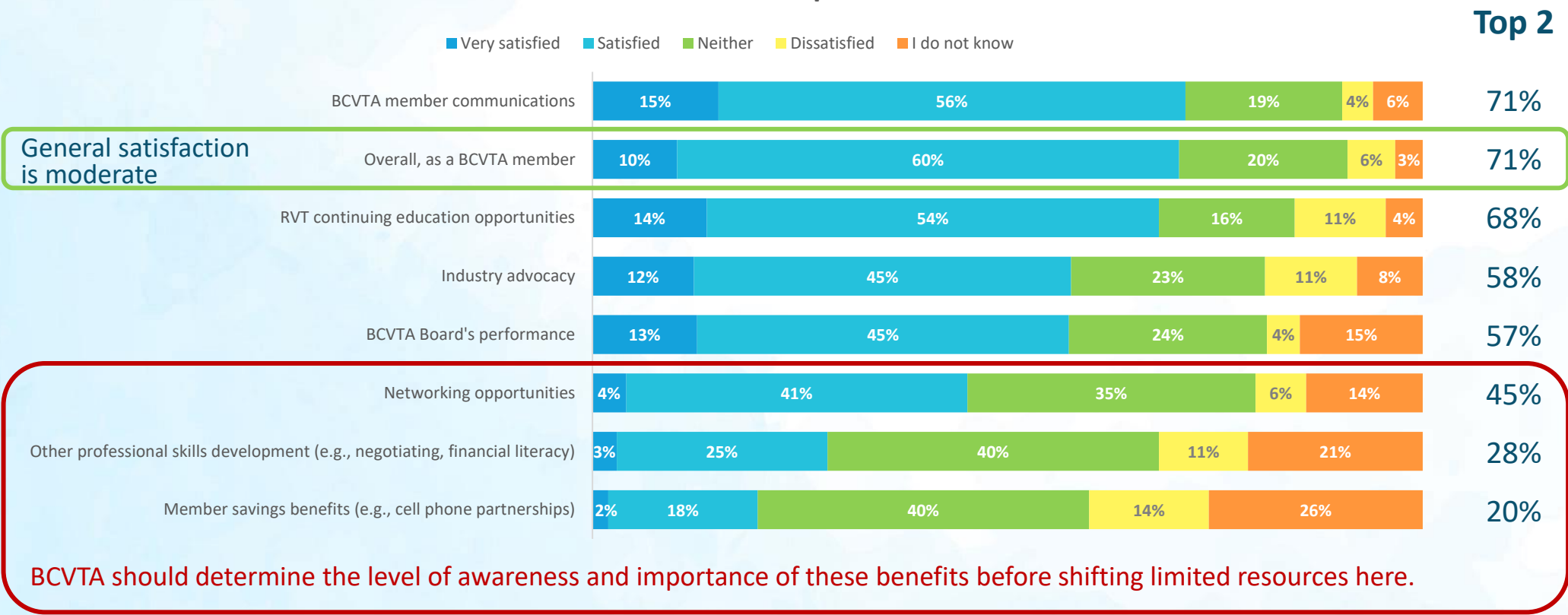
- For the “Less than \$28,000/year” beginning salary range, \$28,000 was used as the mid-point
- For the “\$70,000/year or greater” end salary range, \$70,000 was used as the mid-point, which is likely misleadingly low

Also, salary sample sizes are low; interpret with caution.



# Satisfaction as a BCVTA member is moderate and with BCVTA performance is low; high numbers of “I do not know” responses suggest an opportunity for communication & member engagement improvements

Satisfaction with various aspects of BCVTA



Q34: How satisfied are you with the following aspects of BCVTA?  
Improvement note: Next time consider adding “N/A” to reduce number of “Neither” and “I don’t know”



# Considerations for using these survey results in compensation negotiations.

If you...	...you can use the results to...
...have few extended health benefits...	...demonstrate that most RVTs get the top 8 extended benefits.
...have decent extended health benefits but are missing some of the top 8 benefits...	...demonstrate that most people in your field get the top 8 extended benefits.
...are part of the 24% who are not receiving CE funding from your employer...	...demonstrate that those who receive CE funding are more satisfied than those who do not, and the more CE funding received, the more satisfied RVTs become.
...are part of the 25% who are receiving less than \$800 a year in CE funding from their employer...	...demonstrate that those who receive more than \$800 a year are more satisfied with their employer and those who receive more than \$1100 are significantly more satisfied.
...are making less than \$28/hour or \$70,000/year...	...show that those who are earning less than \$28/hour or \$70,000/year are much less satisfied with their employer.

And ultimately, for RVTs and employees in general, the less satisfied they are, the less effective they are (less willing to go the extra mile, less likely to stay in the role, less likely to recommend their place of work, etc.).

## Additional perspectives

- The more extended health benefits received, the more likely RVTs will be happy at work and at home, and be happy with their current wage
- A wellness account is a great way to provide a flexible extended benefit with simple administration
- Talk with your vet about what getting additional certifications can do for your career and wage growth opportunities

## Avoid

- Saying you deserve a raise because your quality of life / standard of living isn't good enough
- Saying how many other practices employ non-RVT staff to do RVT duties (this will further encourage them to continue)



# Acknowledgements to members about the survey

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- This year the BCVTA increased the quality of the survey in many facets, which has led to many new and valuable insights and many survey-related learnings (thanks to your participation as well as your input and feedback, be it in the comments or via email) that we will employ next time, so thank you!
- **Learnings for next time:**
  - Some of the questions were tough to answer (CE allowances) or were not structured properly, thus not garnering clean data (on-call and OT pay).
  - Some respondents need more tailored experiences in the survey (e.g., those on a leave of absence, business owners, students and retirees)
  - Document more specific wages rather than the ranges used this time
- We said you could earn CE credits for completing the survey but we didn't make it clear how to do that.
- It is common for research projects of this magnitude to experience imperfections with its first attempt; committing to learning from this experience while employing the insights gained is an exciting opportunity for growth within the BCVTA and for you, our members.

*Next survey will be spring of 2026.*

Remember for 2026, the higher the response rate, the more powerful the results!





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For questions about this report, contact  
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