

Camila Heluey-Rodrigues, MD, Joseph Bahgat, MD, Rebecca Newman, MD, Forugh Homayounrooz, MD, FACP  
Department of Medicine, Stamford Hospital, Stamford, CT

## Background

In the Spring of 2020, Stamford CT was one of the epicenters of the COVID-19 pandemic surge in the NY Metro area. The environment of hospital workers changed significantly, including for Internal Medicine (IM) and Family Medicine (FM) residents, who were integral members of innovative response teams at Stamford Hospital (SH). Stress, depression, and burnout are common feelings during residency training, and such feelings may be exacerbated during a crisis. Identifying areas in need for improvement related to resident wellness during a crisis is a first step towards improving wellbeing.

## Aim/Goal

To evaluate resident mood, stress level, workload, sense of support, and academics surrounding SH's COVID-19 peak. To compare select questions from a previous Wellness Committee survey to current resident interest in wellness activities.

## Methods

An anonymous, voluntary Likert Scale questionnaire was sent via Survey Monkey® to 2019-2020 IM and FM residents at SH, in July of 2020. Questions were on residents' mood, stress level, sense of support, and academics before, during, and after the COVID-19 peak. Additionally, four questions were adapted from an initial Wellness Survey, taken in January 2020, about residency sponsored wellness sessions and activities.

## Results

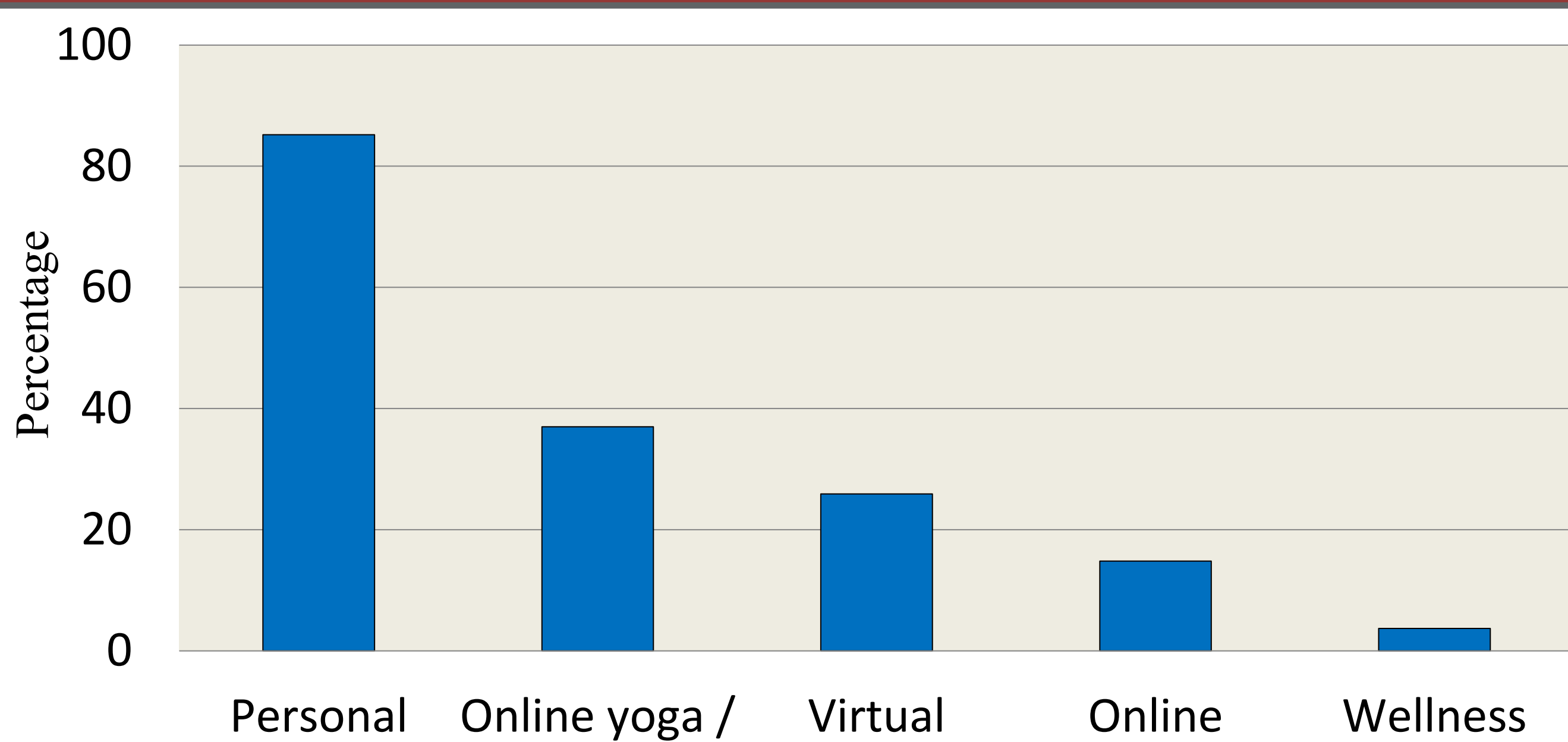


Figure 1: What could we have done differently during COVID crisis?

## How have your concerns changed during COVID?

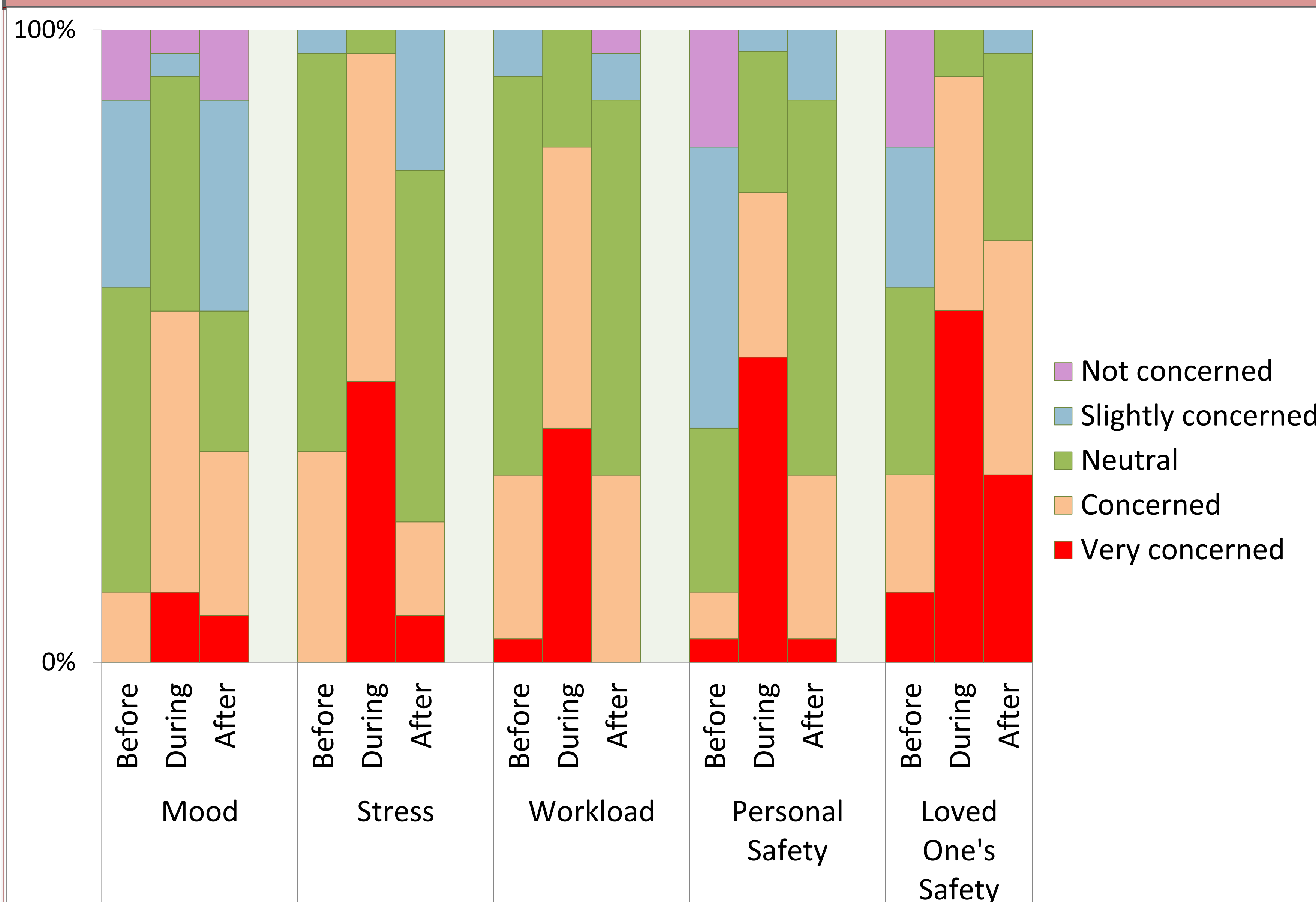


Figure 2: Levels of mood, stress and workload were significantly increased during the peak compared to before and after (all with  $P \leq 0.001$ ). Levels of concern for personal and loved ones' safety were significantly increased from before the peak to both during and after (all with  $P \leq 0.001$ ).

## How has your support network been?

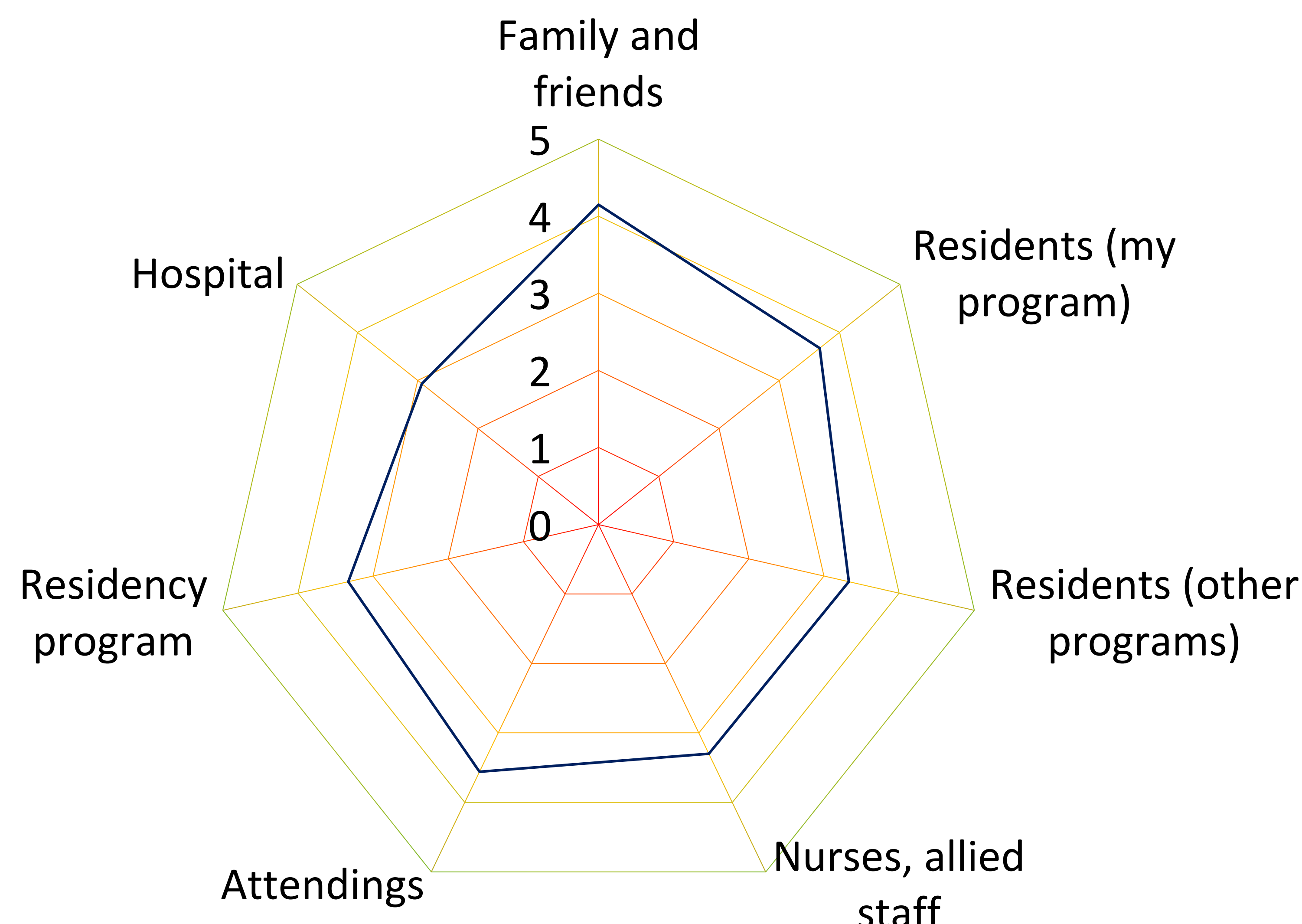


Figure 3: Level of support from family and friends showed a mean of 4.15/5 (SD 0.77), and from the hospital 2.93/5 (SD 1.07)

## Post-COVID Suggestions

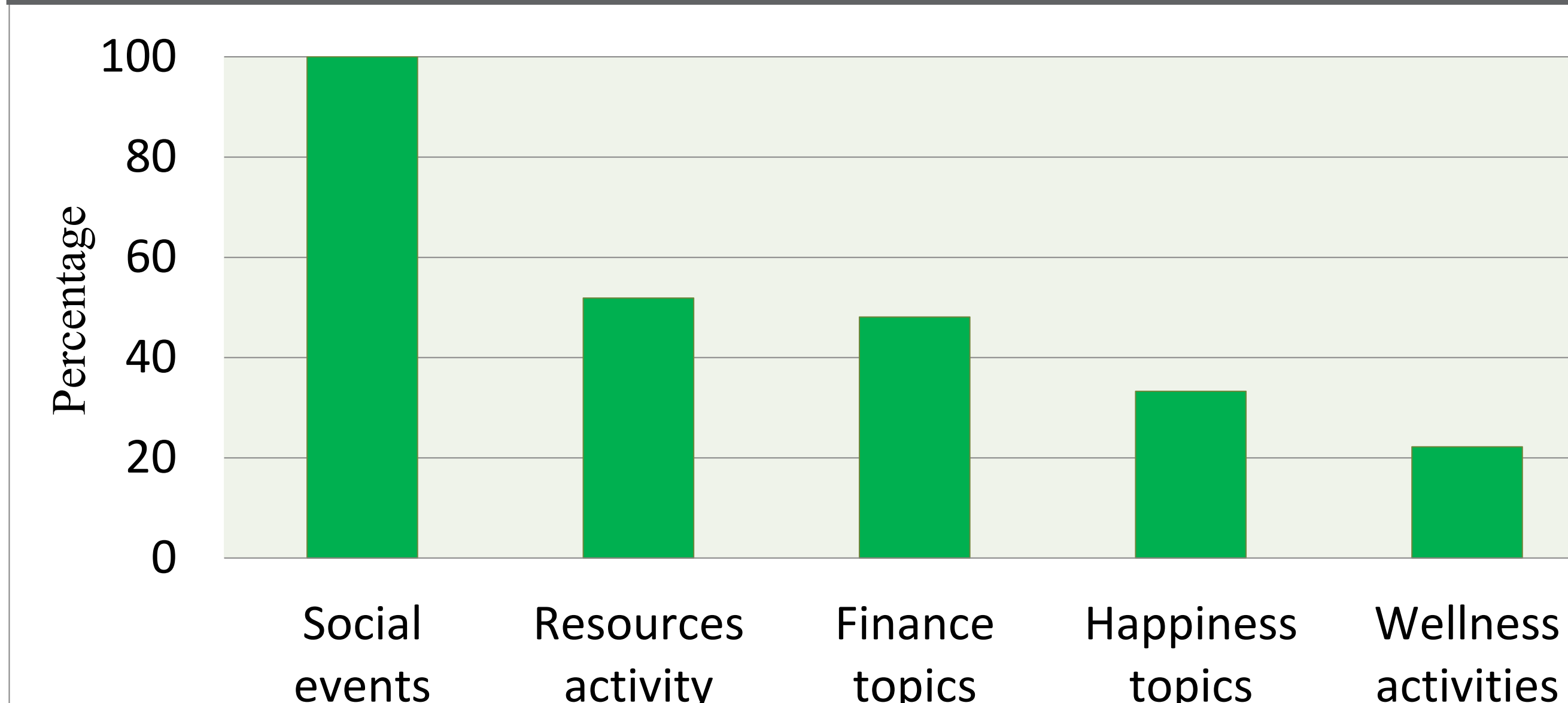


Figure 4: What wellness activities should the residency organize or sponsor during the year?

## Discussion

The survey results suggest that residents felt sad, stressed, and overworked during the pandemic surge, as opposed to feelings of neutrality and happiness pre and post COVID-19 peak. The impact on learning was rated as neutral. Overall, residents felt more supported by their family and friends. Residents were interested in thrice yearly wellness sessions, sponsored social activities, and allotted extra free time to accomplish personal tasks.

## Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic was a rapid and unexpected crisis that challenged the medical community. Our results show that the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted different facets of resident wellness and outlook, including mood, stress level, workload, and sense of support. This provides insight regarding resident wellbeing during challenging times and identifies potential areas for improvement.

## References

- Hategan A, Riddell T. Bridging the gap: Responding to resident burnout and restoring well-being. *Perspect Med Educ.* 2020;9(2):117-122.
- Meeks LM, Ramsey J, Lyons M, Spencer AL, Lee WW. Wellness and Work: Mixed Messages in Residency Training. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2019;34(7):1352-1355. doi:10.1007/s11606-019-04952-5
- Walton M, Murray E, Christian MD. Mental health care for medical staff and affiliated healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Eur Heart J Acute Cardiovasc Care.* 2020;9(3):241-247. doi:10.1177/2048872620922795
- Baiu I, Titan A, Kin C, Spain DA. Caring for Caregivers - Resident Physician Health and Wellbeing. *J Surg Educ.* 2020;77(1):13-17. doi:10.1016/j.jsurg.2019.08.007
- Jaradat R, Lahlouh A, Mustafa M. Sleep quality and health related problems of shift work among resident physicians: a cross-sectional study. *Sleep Med.* 2020;66:201-206. doi:10.1016/j.sleep.2019.11.1258