

Continuing education/ professional development in aging survey



Centre on Aging
September 13, 2022

The Centre on Aging, established on July 1, 1982 is a university-wide research centre with a mandate to conduct, encourage, integrate, and disseminate research on all aspects of aging.

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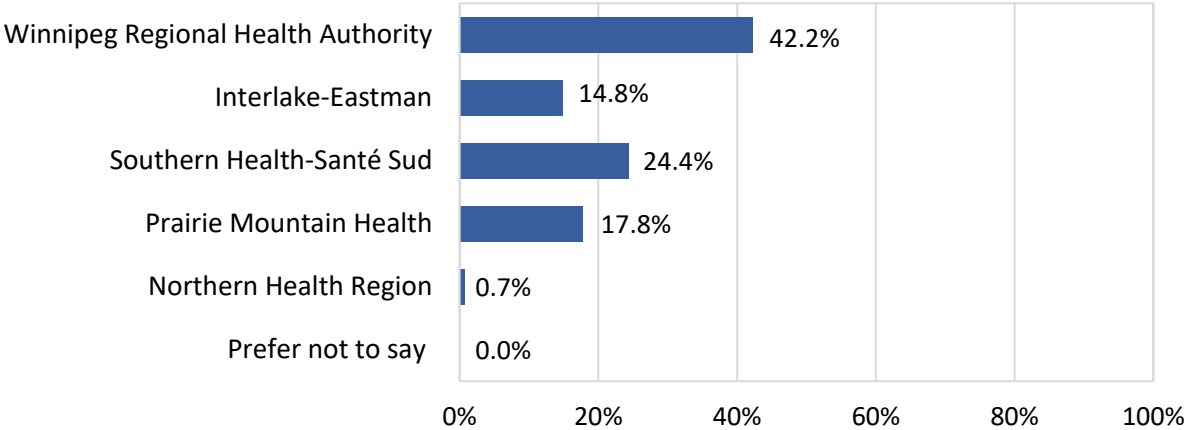
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Introduction

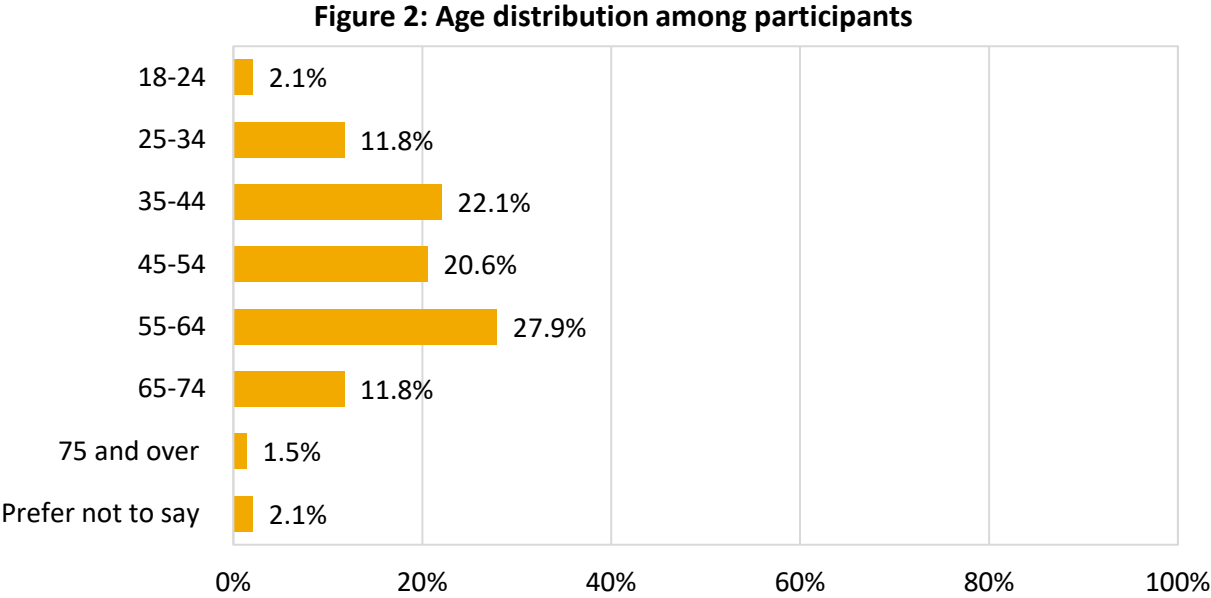
During 2022, the Continuing education/professional development in aging survey was sent to various organizations and people that work and connect with older adults. The aim of this survey was to know what continuing education and topics of professional development training were required for individuals and organizations who work with older people. A total of 146 participants responded to this online survey, which consisted of 35 questions. These respondents were from different health regions of Manitoba, with the majority located in the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Participant distribution among the health regions of Manitoba



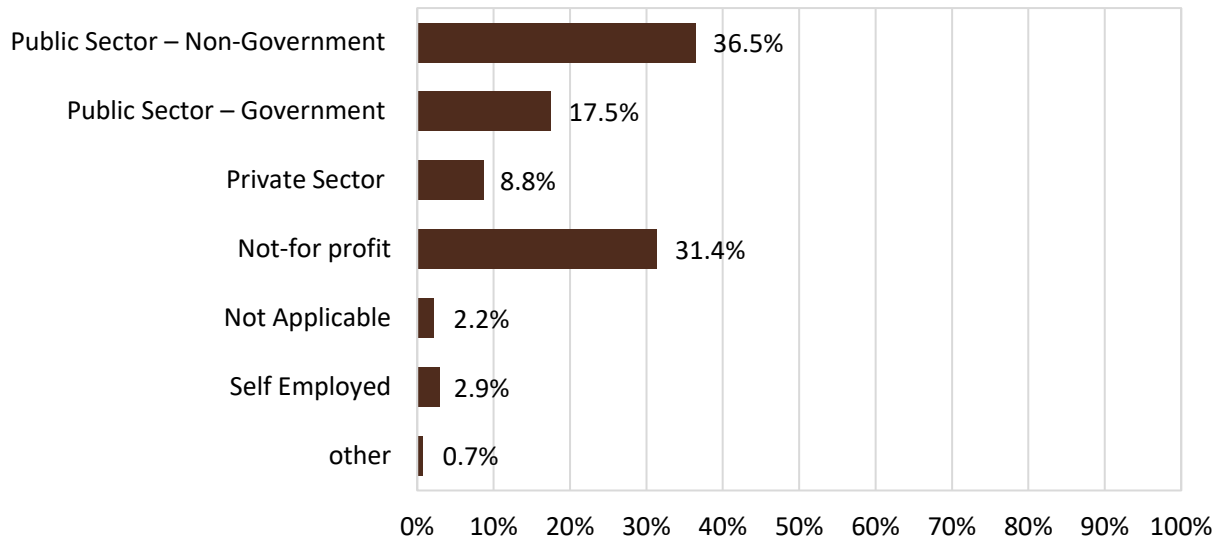
Respondent characteristics

About 12% of the respondents were male, 86% were female and 2% preferred not to disclose their gender. As can be seen in Figure 2, the participants ranged from 18 to 24 years all the way to 75 and older, with most respondents being between 35 and 64 years of age.



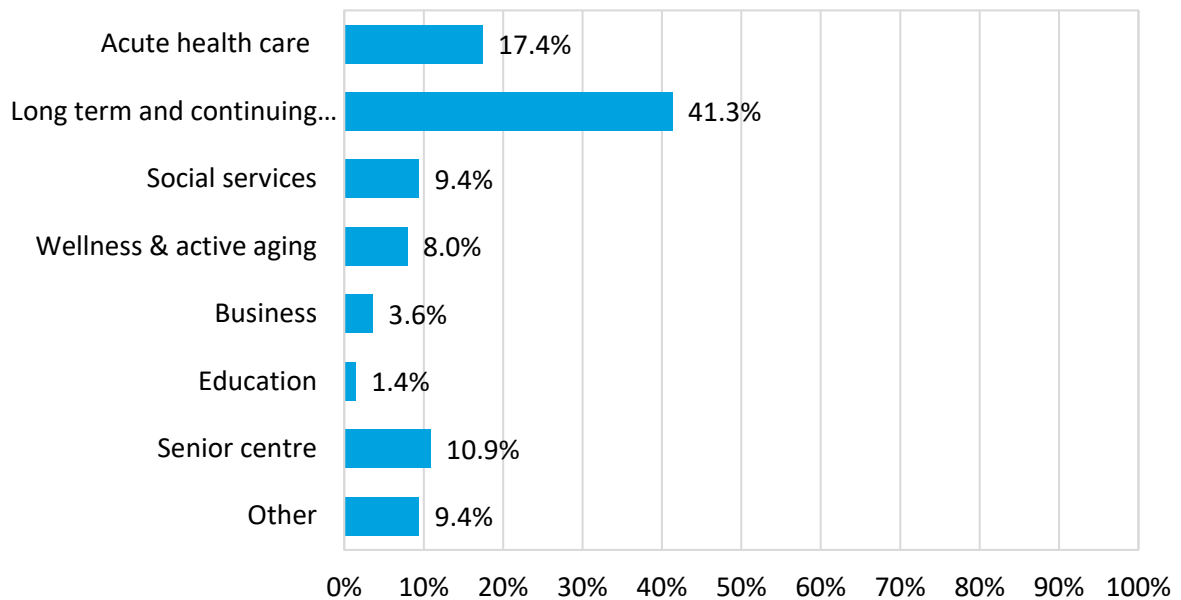
Most of the respondents (75%) answered the survey based on their own educational needs. However, 25% answered on behalf of others in the organization (employees and/or volunteers). The participants belonged to a wide variety of organizations, with some being self-employed (see Figure 3). The participant that selected the category 'other' works in retail.

Figure 3: Organization participants work in



Participants were also asked to indicate the sector they work in or had plans to work in. Figure 4 shows that a high proportion selected the long term and continuing care sector. Those that selected 'Other' either worked in fields such as retail, optometry, laboratories, animal health, mental health or were retired.

Figure 4: Sector participants work/plan to work in



Workshop preferences

Twelve potential topics for the workshops were presented to the participants who were asked to rate each topic depending on their level of interest. The topics could be assessed as 'not interested, minimally interested, moderately interested, interested or very interested.' The overall ratings for each of the topics can be found in Table 1, along with the number of individuals that responded to each topic. Across the 1,712 individual ratings of interest level, a high proportion of them were either 'interested' (35%) or 'very interested' (31%). About 19% rated their level of interest as 'moderate', another 11% rated it as 'minimal' and the remaining 4% were 'not interested' in a particular topic.

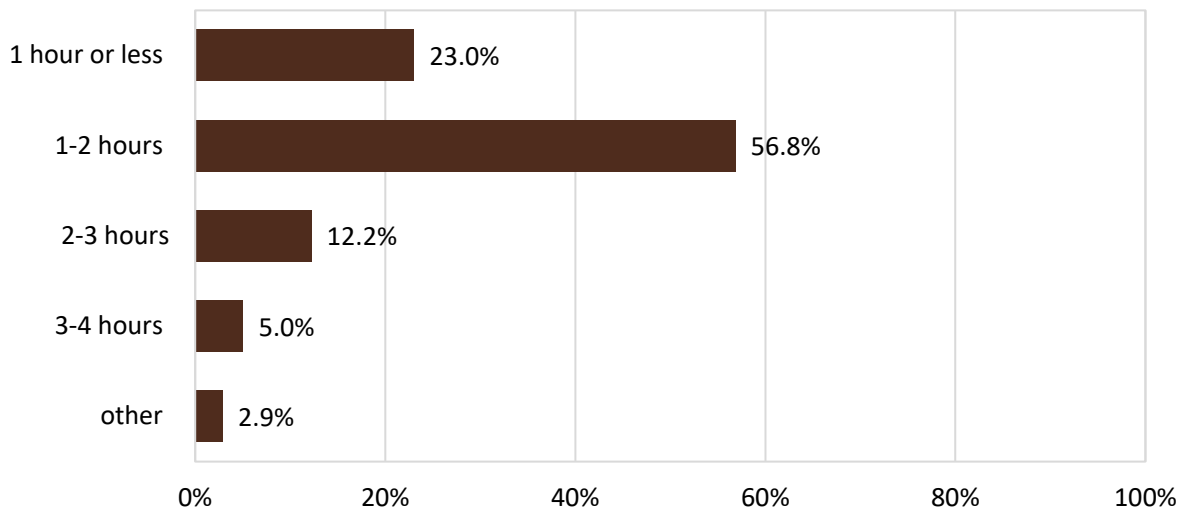
Table 1: Assessment of workshop topics based on interest level, along with the number of responses to each workshop evaluation

Topics	Not interested (%)	Minimally interested (%)	Moderately interested (%)	Interested (%)	Very interested (%)	Number of responses
Aging through the lifespan—physiological, psychological, sociological changes of aging	3	10	12	51	23	146
Wellness—such as exercise, nutrition, stress management, brain health	3	8	21	39	29	146
Ageism—what is it, how to prevent and deal with it, and how to communicate effectively about aging	4	16	20	35	25	144
Health issues related to aging—knowing the basics of dementia, depression, osteoporosis, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and more	3	6	13	41	37	145
Elder abuse—what is it, how to prevent and deal with it	6	18	18	31	27	143
Using critical thinking skills in working with older adults—observation, analysis, evaluation, problem solving	4	8	20	35	33	143
How to communicate with older adults—including techniques of Active Listening	4	5	21	34	36	140
Advocating for older people, and age-related programs and services	3	9	20	26	43	141
Legal and ethical issues related to aging—e.g., consent and decision making	3	9	21	34	33	141
Creating age-friendly and dementia-friendly communities and environments	1	8	20	30	41	142
Indigenous aging	9	19	21	31	20	140
How to teach and provide education for older adults	4	12	25	34	26	141

When asked about the potential format of the workshop, the majority (63%) preferred a mix of both in-person and online delivery. Thirty-three percent preferred a completely virtual workshop, while 4% preferred an in-person format. About 52% of the participants selected a combination of synchronous and asynchronous or on-demand online learning. Asynchronous was preferred by 36%, while synchronous was preferred by 8%. The remaining 4% simply stated their disinterest in the available options.

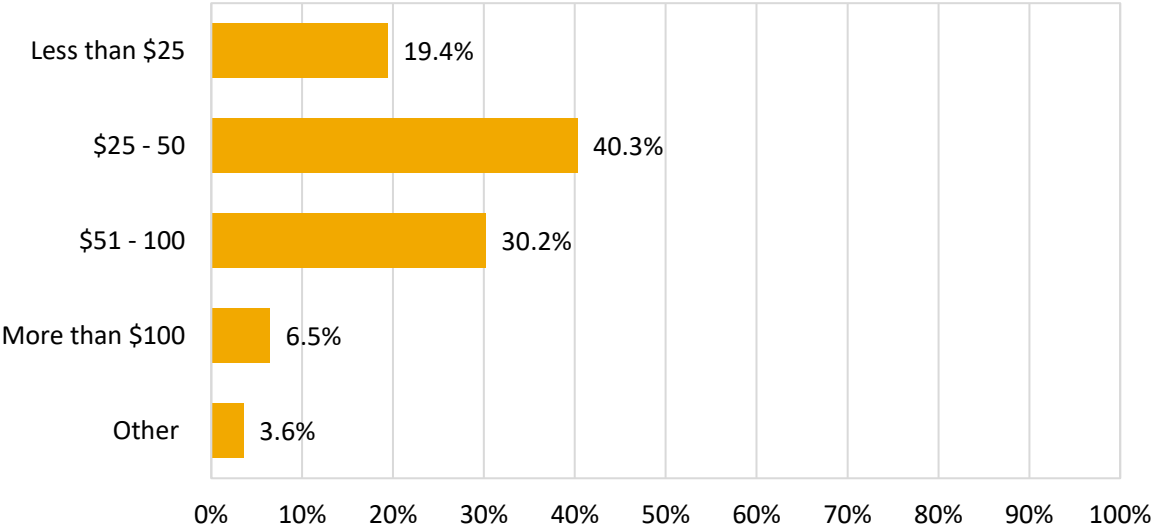
Participants were also asked to select the potential workshop length, the results of which are indicated in Figure 5. Responses of those that selected 'other' included full day and any time length.

Figure 5: Potential workshop length



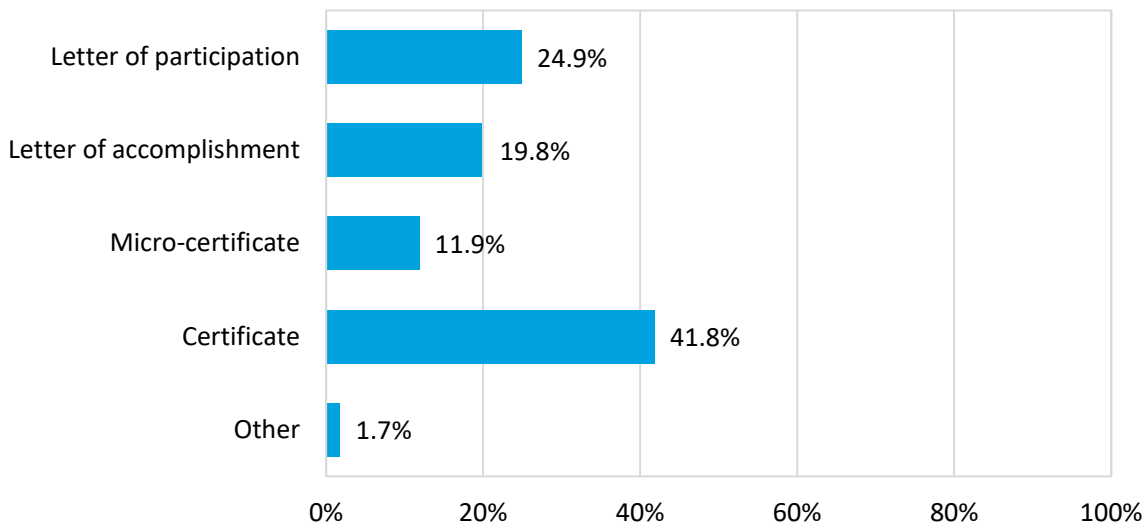
Participants were asked the maximum amount of money they were willing to pay for a 3-hour workshop (see Figure 6). Most were willing to pay for workshops with many (40.3%) willing to pay up to \$50, while another 30.2 % would pay up to \$100 for workshops. Not having enough funds was the main concern for those that had selected the 'other' category. The remaining 'other' responses indicated that some individuals were unwilling to pay for the workshop.

Figure 6: Maximum amount willing to pay for a 3-hour workshop



Seventy-eight percent of participants indicated they would like or need a credential to recognize completion of a workshop. While about 66% were required to get continuing education or professional development credits to maintain professional- or work-related credentials. As noted in Figure 7, over 40% prefer or require a certificate. One participant specified by saying that they would require accreditation.

Figure 7: Type of credential required/wanted



Organization characteristics

Participants were asked what percentage of their clients or recipients of their service are older adults (60+). Figure 8 indicates the responses.

Figure 8: Clients/recipients of service that are 60+

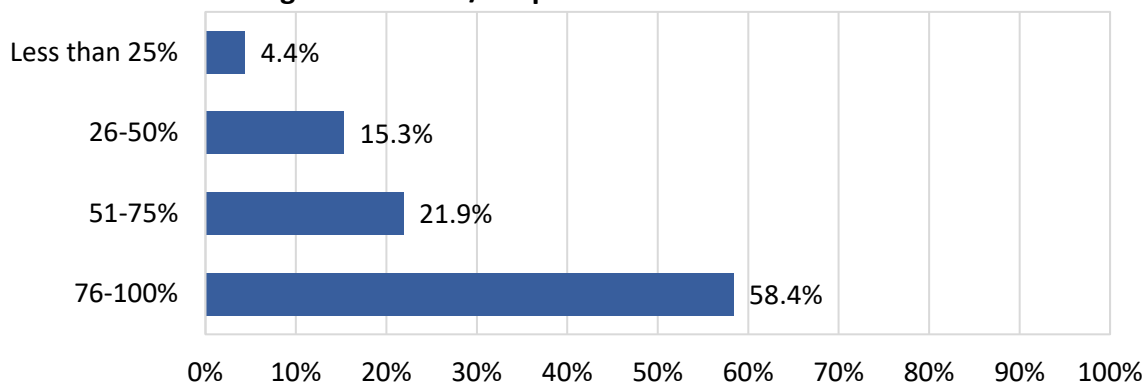
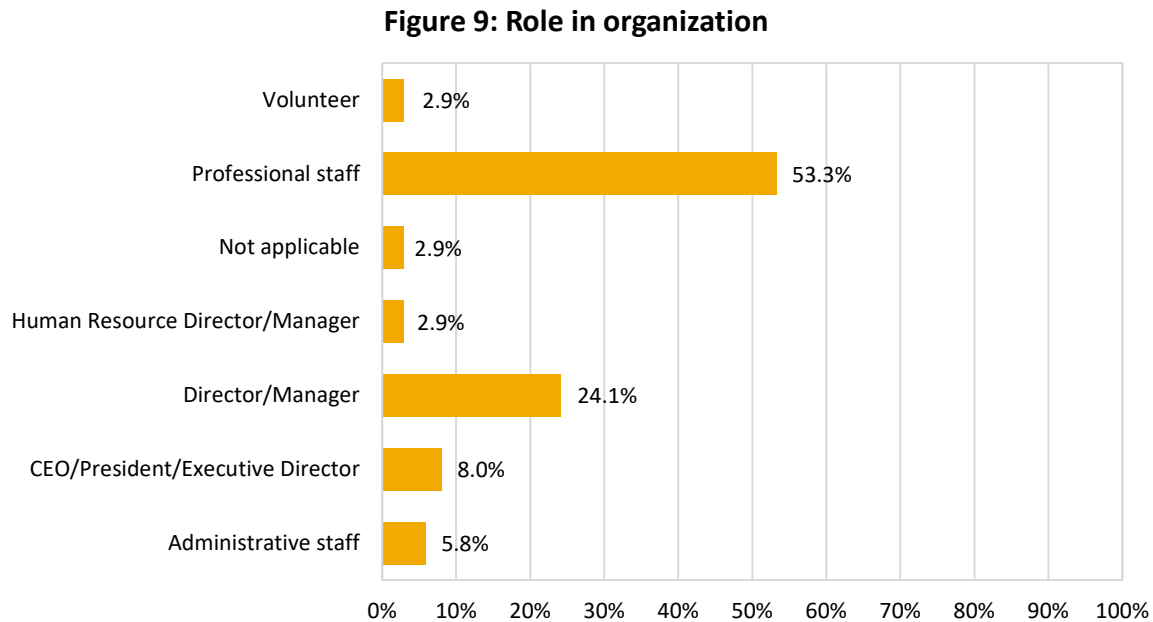


Figure 9 indicates the roles respondents hold in their respective organizations; the majority are professional staff.



The number of paid staff in responding organizations is noted in Figure 10. It appears organizations are small (42.9% with less than 5 paid staff) or large (25.7% with more than 50 paid staff). The number of volunteers in these same organizations is noted in Figure 11 with the majority of organizations having between 5 to 15 volunteers. Most volunteers (74%) provide front line services, while the remaining (26%) do administrative tasks.

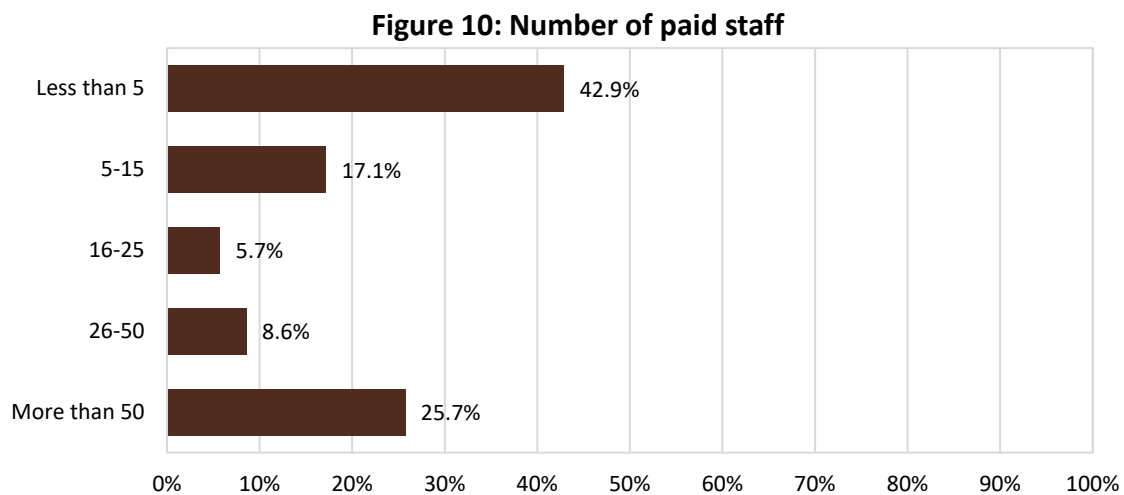
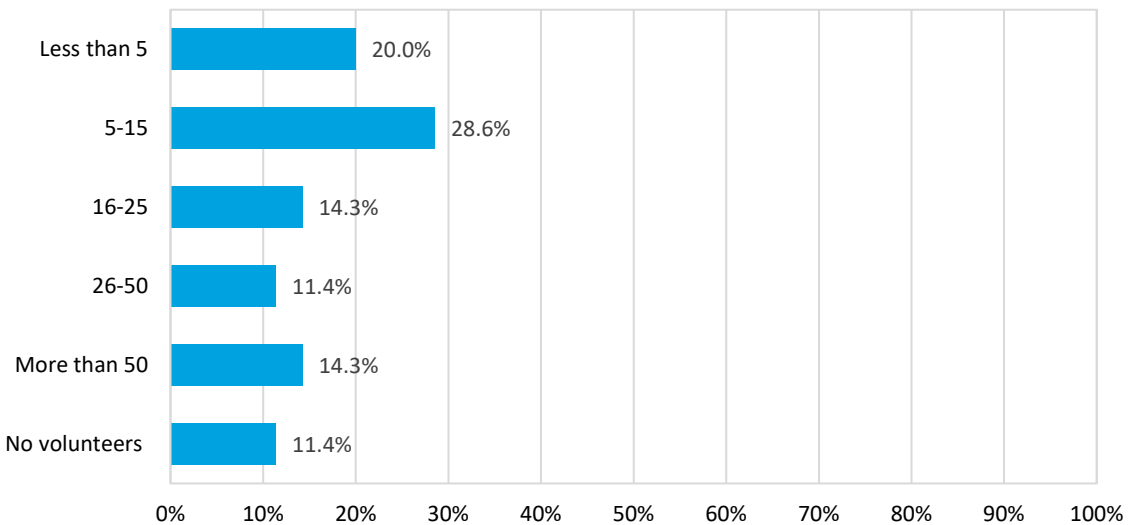


Figure 11: Number of volunteers



Summary

In summary, the survey captured responses to continuing education/professional development learning opportunities from a range of individuals working with older adults. Respondents came from all the health regions in Manitoba, and from a range of age groups and sectors. There was strong interest across a range of topics related to working with older adults. Regardless of topic, the preference was for shorter workshops (up to 2 hours) with a certificate as proof of completion. Participants indicated they are prepared to pay for such workshops. The common choice is for a mix of in-person and online workshops with online workshops delivered asynchronously. The results of the survey provide much “food for thought” going forward with creating a rich learning environment for those working with older adults.

The Centre on Aging would like to thank all the individuals for their participation and valuable input to the survey.

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