



# **AARP VERMONT VOTER SURVEY ON FAMILY CAREGIVING**

Presented by AARP RESEARCH

**JANUARY 2024**

# Key Insights

**Many Vermont voters ages 40 and older help a family member or friend with basic activities necessary for daily living.**

- Thirty-seven percent of voters age 40-plus in Vermont have experience as family caregivers, either by currently caring for an adult loved one (12%) or previously doing so (25%). Most of these caregivers also worked while providing care (66%).
- Many caregivers help their loved ones with the very basic activities they need to care for themselves, such as getting in and out of a bed or chair (58%), bathing and dressing (57%), or getting to and from the toilet or dealing with incontinence (49%). Even more caregivers help their loved ones by getting them to appointments (88%), preparing meals (85%), or with shopping (89%).

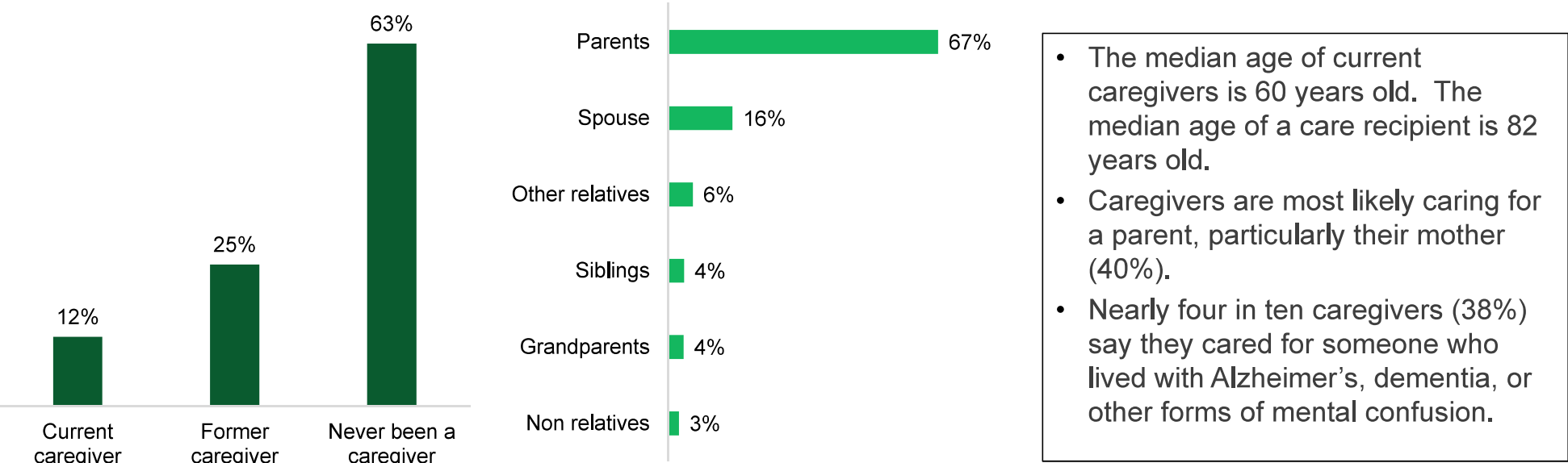
**Caregiving often takes a financial and emotional toll at home and at work.**

- Many caregivers spend money transporting their loved ones (79%), buying medical equipment (40%), modifying their home or their loved ones' home (49%), or paying for general housing costs (34%).
- Three in four (74%) current and former caregivers say they are stressed emotionally due to their caregiving responsibilities, and seven in ten (72%) working caregivers say they feel stressed in balancing their work and their family.



# More than one-in-three voters 40-plus in Vermont have experience as family caregivers, with most providing care to a parent.

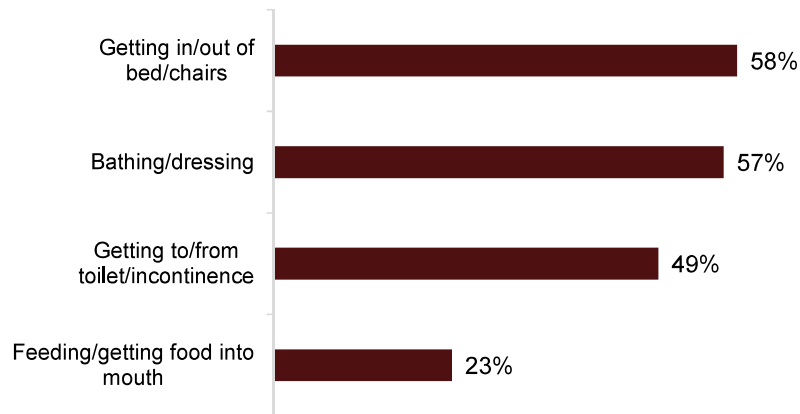
In our survey, about one in eight voters in Vermont say they are currently providing care to an adult loved one; and one in four say they had provided care to an adult loved one in the past.



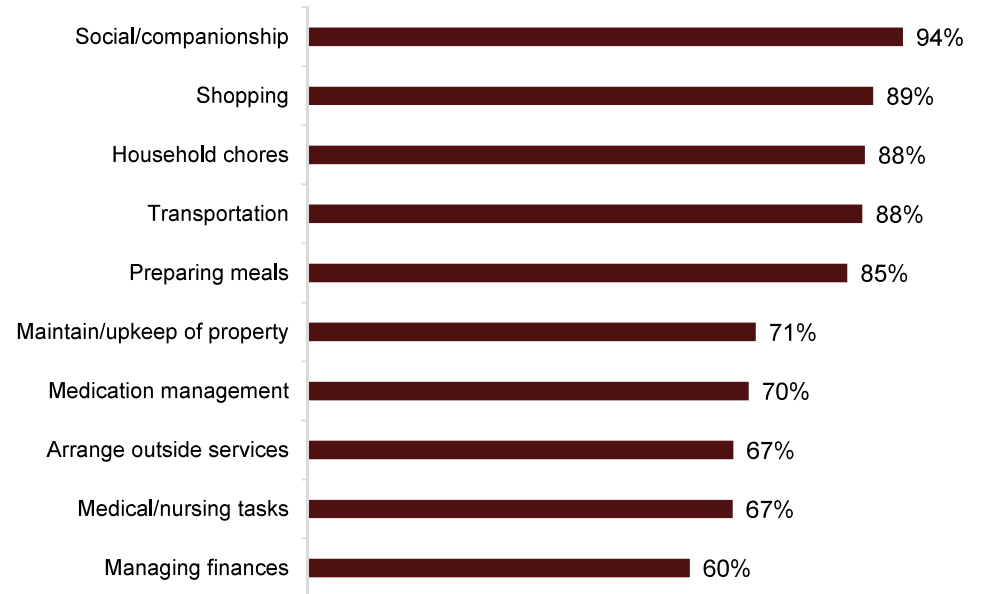
Q1. A family caregiver is someone who provides UNPAID care for an adult loved one who is ill, frail, elderly, or has a physical, mental, or emotional disability. This unpaid care may include assisting with personal needs like bathing and dressing, household chores, meals, shopping, transportation, or managing finances or medical care. (Base: All Voters) Q2. What is (was) the age of the person you are (were) providing care for? (Base: Current and Former Caregivers) Q4. Does (did) the person you care(d) for live with Alzheimer's, dementia, or other forms of mental confusion? (Base: Current and Former Caregivers)

**Although many caregivers help someone with the very basic activities needed to care for oneself (ADLs), even more provide other forms of care such as shopping, transportation, and meal prep (IADLs).**

Caregivers Who Help with Activities of Daily Living

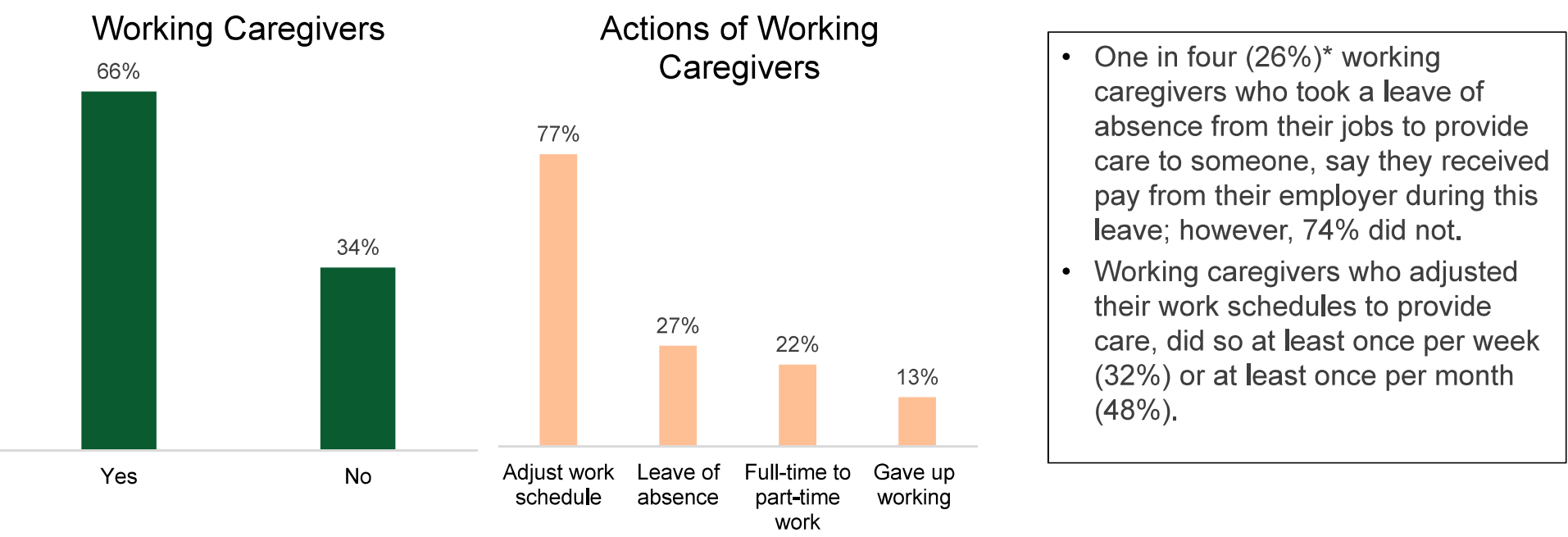


Caregivers Who Help with Instrumental Activities of Daily Living



Q5. Still thinking about the person you are providing care to the most, do you ...? Did you provide any of the following activities? (Base: Current and Former Caregivers)

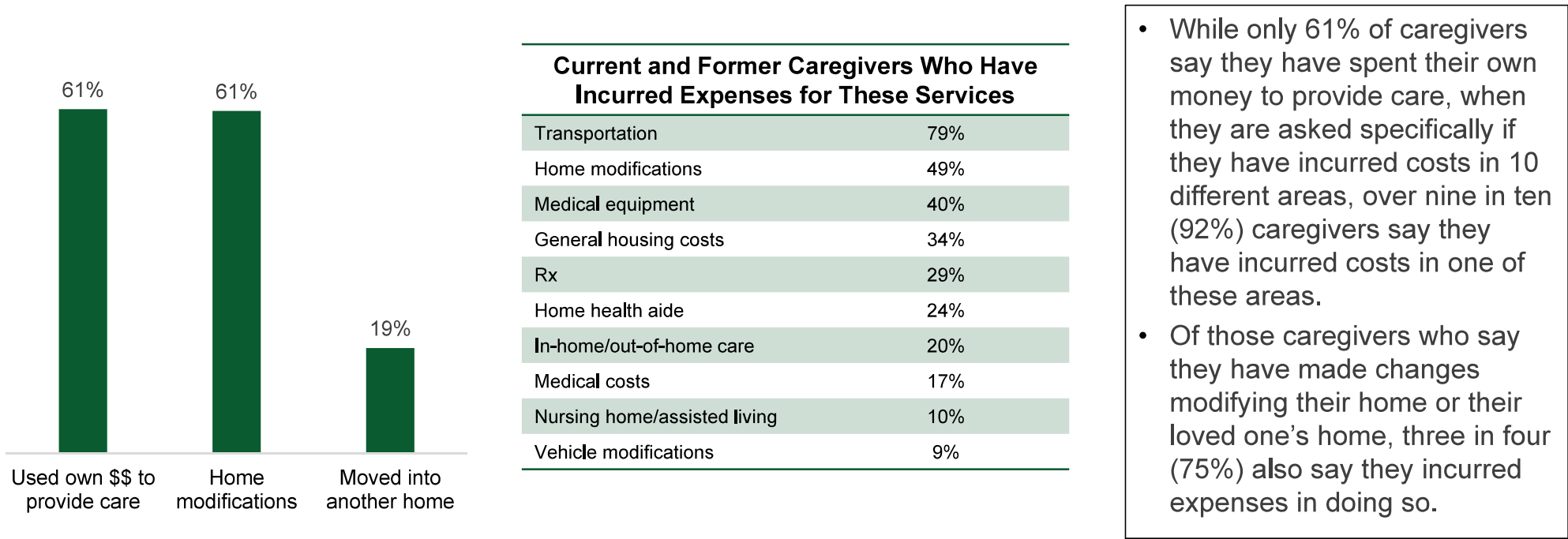
# Most caregivers have worked at some point while they cared for someone, with the majority needing to adjust their work schedules to do so.



Q6. Have you ever been employed either full- or part-time while providing care to your adult loved one? (Base: Current and Former Caregivers) Q7. Now thinking again about the adult loved one you are (provided) currently providing care to, did you ever have to ...? (Base: Working Current and Former Caregivers) Q8. Did you receive any pay from your employer when you took your leave of absence? (Base: Working Current or Former Caregivers Who Took a Leave of Absence from Job to Care) \*This percentage is based on a small number of working caregivers and should be viewed as directional only.

# Six in ten Vermont caregivers have used their own money to provide care and have also made home modifications to help them care.

Transportation is the most common expense for caregivers followed by making home modifications to their home or to their loved one's home.



Q10. Again thinking about the adult loved one you are current providing care to (you provided care to), did you ever have to? (Base: Current and Former Caregivers) Q11. As a caregiver, have you ever incurred any expenses for the following services to help care for your loved one? (Base: Current and Former Caregivers)

# Emotional stress is all-too-common for Vermont caregivers.

## Current and Former Caregivers

Feel stressed emotionally	74%
Feel stressed in balancing job and family (working caregivers)	72%
Find it difficult to get enough rest	59%
Find it difficult to take care of own household responsibilities	48%
Find it difficult to exercise regularly	45%
Feel strained financially	34%
Experience problems with own health	31%
Feel lonely or isolated	30%
Find it difficult to maintain healthy diet	30%
Find it difficult to visit own doctor	21%

- Nearly all caregivers (93%) say it is extremely or very important to keep their loved ones living independently at home.
- Overall, over six in ten voters in Vermont (62%) say they are at least somewhat likely to be an unpaid caregiver in their future.

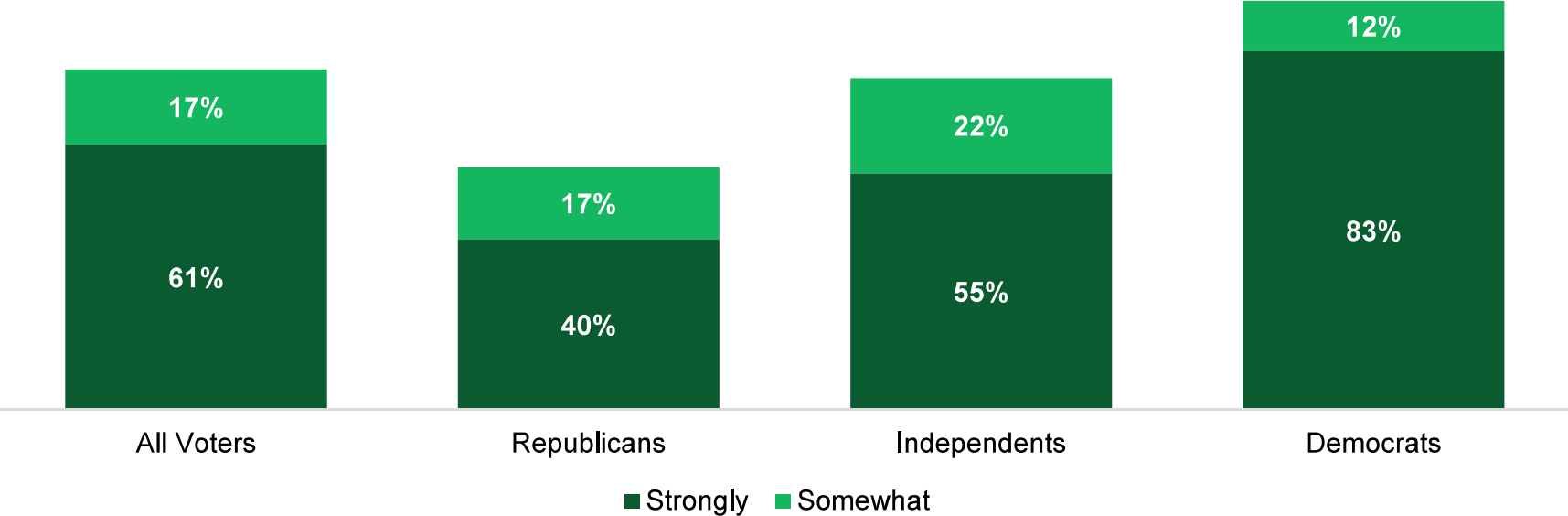
Q12. As a caregiver, do (did) you ever ...? (Base: Current and Former Caregivers) Q13. How important is it to you to be able to provide care for your loved one so that they can keep living independently in their own home? Is it ...? (Base: Current and Former Caregivers) Q14. How likely do you think it is that you will provide any caregiving or assistance on an unpaid basis for an adult loved one in the future? Is it ..? (Base: All Voters)



# Vermont voters ages 40 and older overwhelmingly support the creation of a state paid family and medical leave program.

Most voters in each political party also support this program – Republicans (56%), Independents (77%), and Democrats (95%).

Support for Program Among All Voters and by Political Party

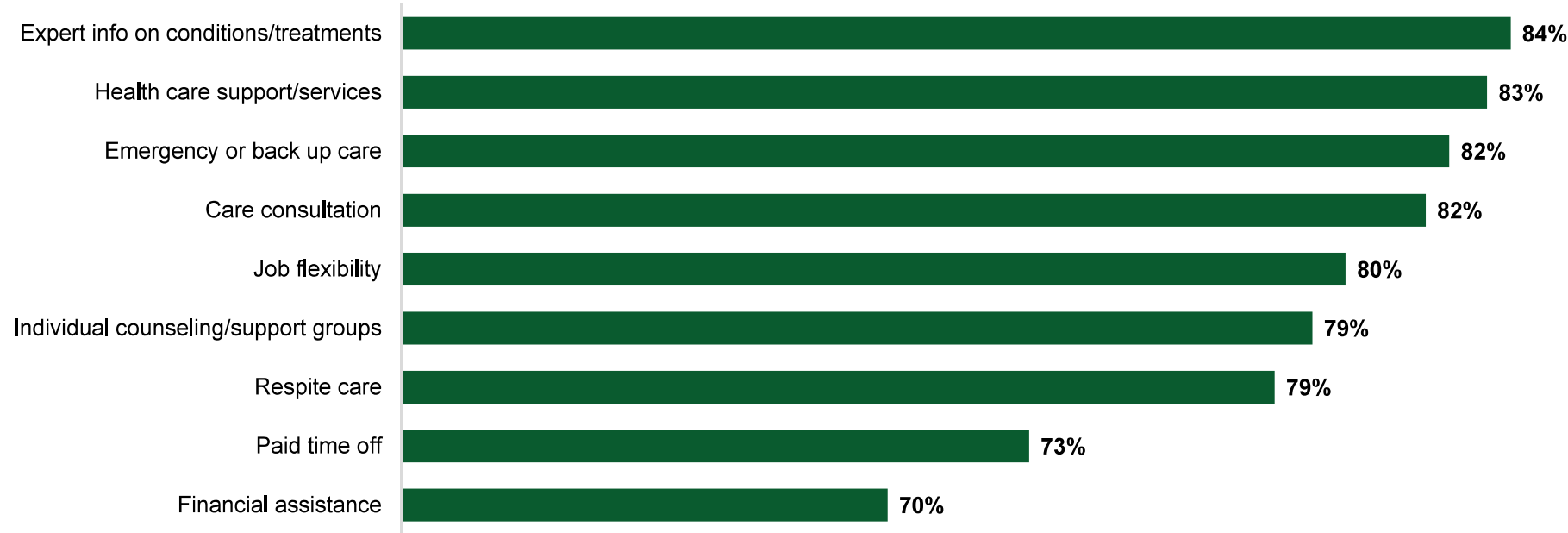


Q15. Vermont State Legislators are considering a proposal to create a paid family and medical leave program run by the state. Eligible workers could take paid leave for up to 12 weeks to recover from a serious health illness or injury, or to care for a family member, including older adults or siblings, with a serious health condition. Eligible workers could also take paid leave to recover from birth and bond with a new child or when a family member is called to active military duty. Do you support or oppose a paid family and medical leave program? Q16. Is that strongly or somewhat? (Base: All voters)



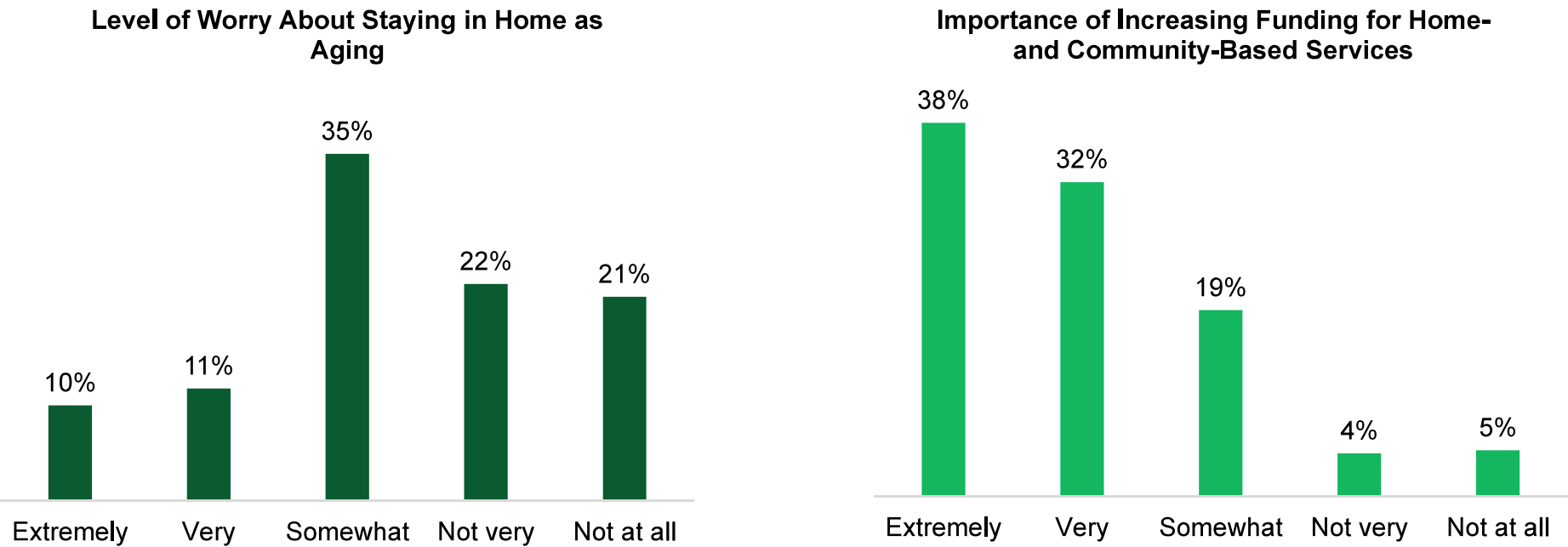
# Most voters say the Vermont state government should help family caregivers in a variety of ways.

At least eight in ten voters say the government should help family caregivers by providing expert information on conditions and treatments; provide more access to health care support and services; provide access to emergency or back up care; provide access to a care consultation – where an assessment is made to ensure that needs are identified, a care plan is developed, and ongoing support is available; and assure that working family caregivers have job flexibility.



# One in five voters say they are extremely or very worried about staying in their home as they get older.

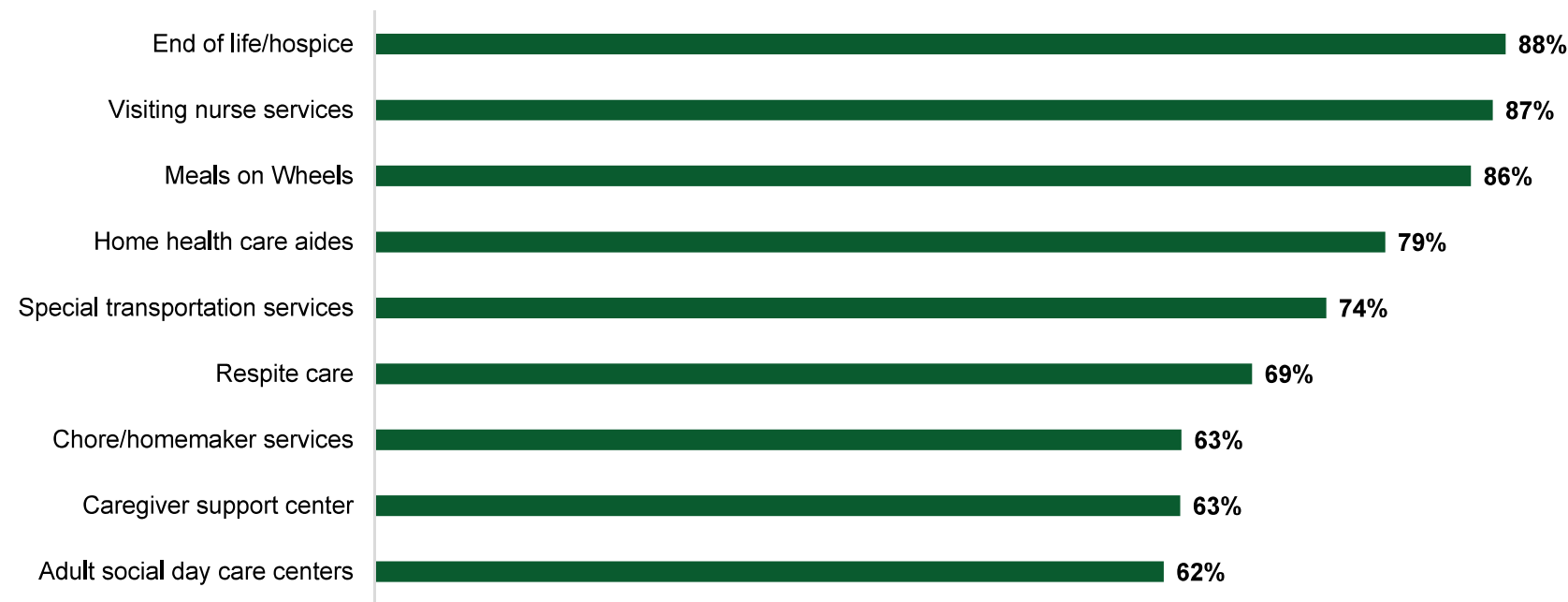
Twice as many voters, however, say they are not very or not at all worried about this. Regardless of worry, the majority of voters (70%) do say it is extremely or very important to increase funding for home- and community-based services.



Q26. Thinking about you and your family in the future, how worried are you about staying in your own home as you get older? Are you ...? (Base: All Voters) Q27. How important is it to you that the State of Vermont increase funding for home-and-community-based services to help people stay in their own homes and communities as they age? Is it ...? (Base: All voters)

# Hospice, Meals on Wheels, and visiting nurses top the list of extremely and very important community services.

At least six in ten voters also say that having adult social day care centers, a caregiver support center, homemaker services, respite care, transportation, and home health aides are extremely or very important to have in their communities.



Q28. Now I'm going to ask you about some specific community services. Please tell me how important you think it is to have the following services available in your community to help older adults live independently. How important is having ... in your community? Is it ...? (Base: All voters)