

Drug Sample Management and Utilization in Academic Family Medicine Teaching Units of the Réseau-1 Québec PBRN: Lessons Learned

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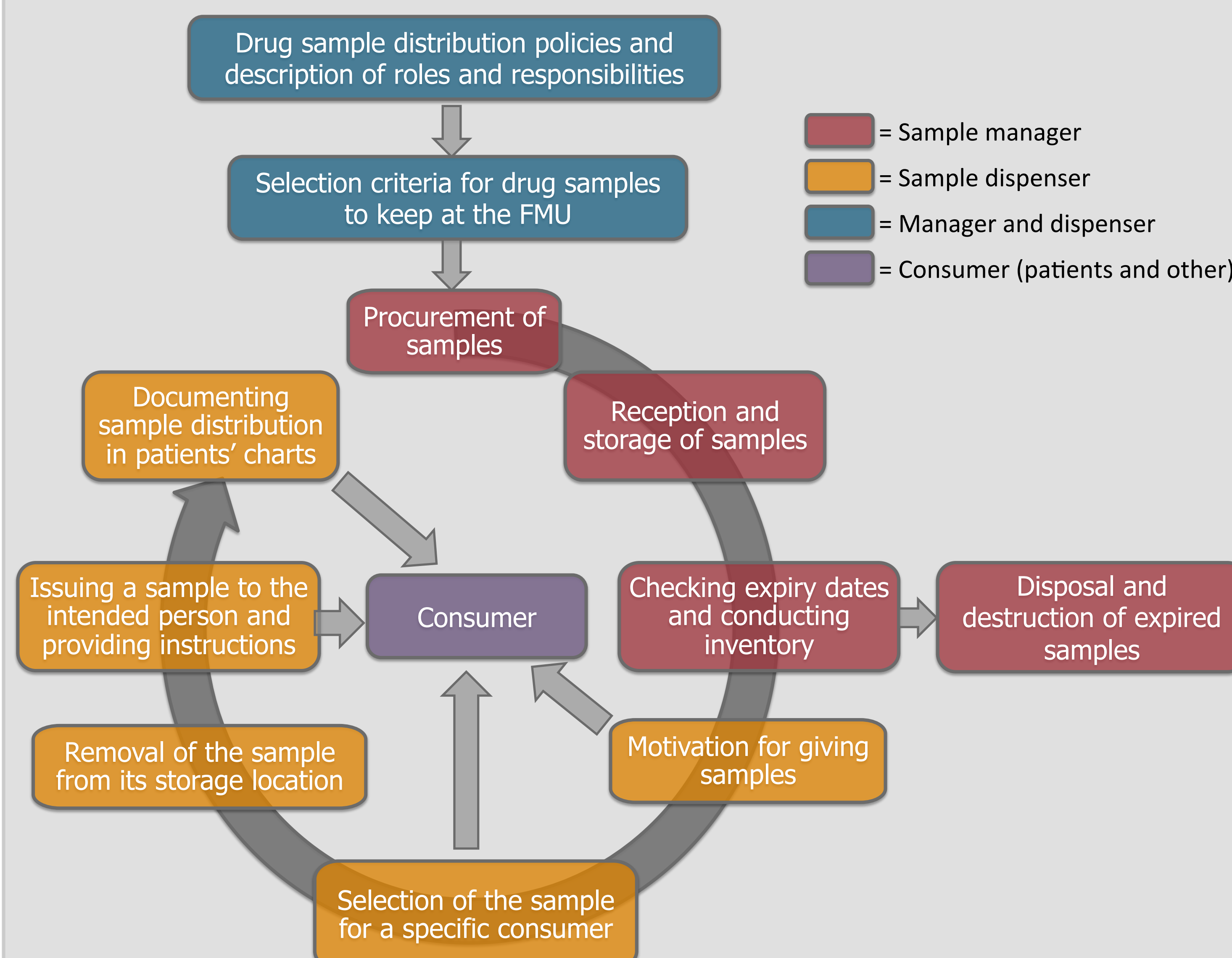
CONTEXT

- Pharmaceutical companies use drug samples as a promotional tool
- Their utilisation by clinicians raises questions about the pharmaceutical industry's influence on prescription behaviour, especially among physicians in training
- Inadequate drug sample management can:
 - Pose health risks to patients
 - Increase treatment costs for patients
 - Increase costs for healthcare systems

OBJECTIVES

- Draw a portrait of drug sample management practices in all the Family Medicine Teaching Units (FMU) of the Réseau-1 Québec provincial PBRN
- Prepare a synthesis of drug sample management policies
- Conduct an inventory of drug samples found in the FMUs of the Réseau-1 Québec and identify their relevance to FM prescribers and their patients' needs

TRAJECTORY OF DRUG SAMPLES IN THE FMUs



METHOD

STUDY DESIGN: Descriptive transversal

SITES: 42 FMU of the Réseau-1 Québec, 33 have a drug sample cabinet

PARTICIPANTS:

- 859 clinicians** (physicians, residents, pharmacists or nurses)
 - 579 (67.4%)** report dispensing drug samples

INSTRUMENTS:

- Two questionnaires:
 - Sample managers (49 completed / 49 given = 100%)
 - Sample dispensers (859 completed / 1194 given = 71.9%)
- Inventory of the sample cabinets

ANALYSIS: Descriptive statistical analysis (SPSS)

ETHICS APPROVAL: REBs of the 4 Universities & CSSS de Laval

RESULTS

SAMPLE MANAGEMENT POLICY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

SAMPLE MANAGEMENT POLICY (N=42 FMU)

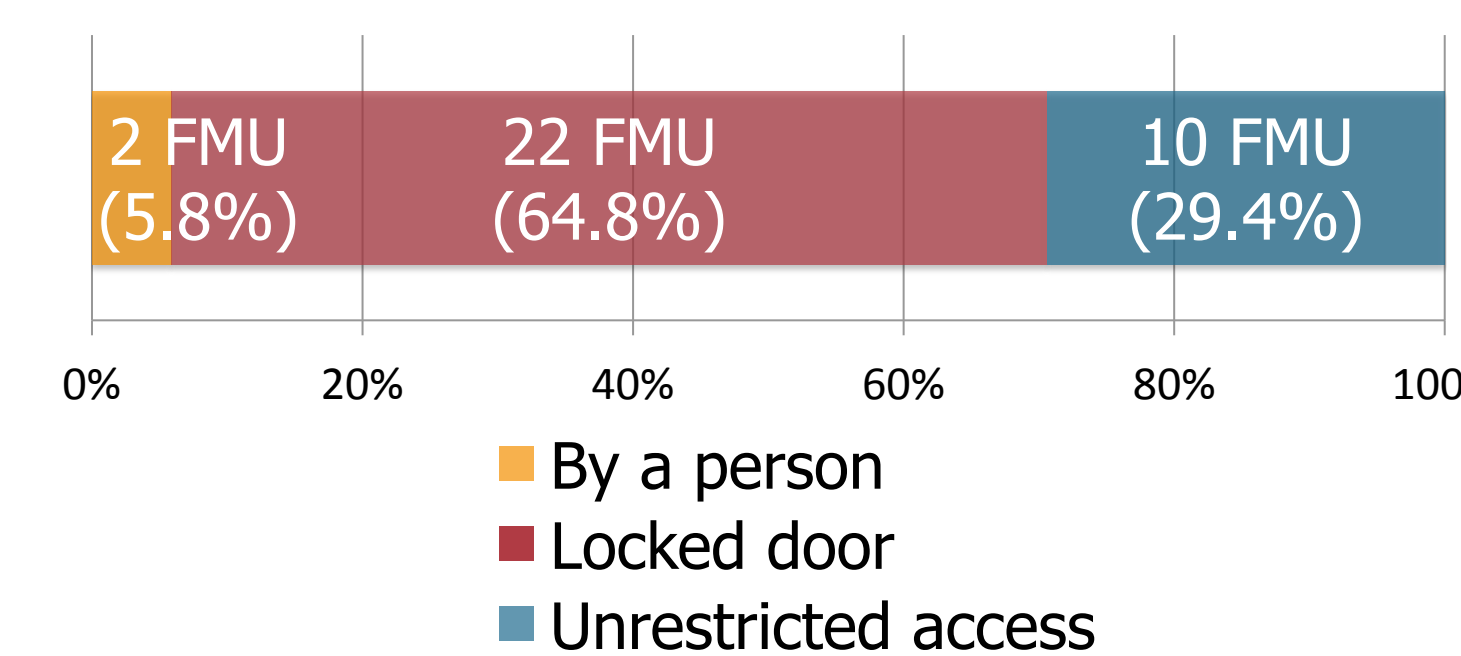
- FMU Policy: 4 FMU (9.5%)
- CSSS Policy: 17 FMU (40.5%)

SELECTION CRITERIA (N=33 FMU WITH SAMPLE CABINET)

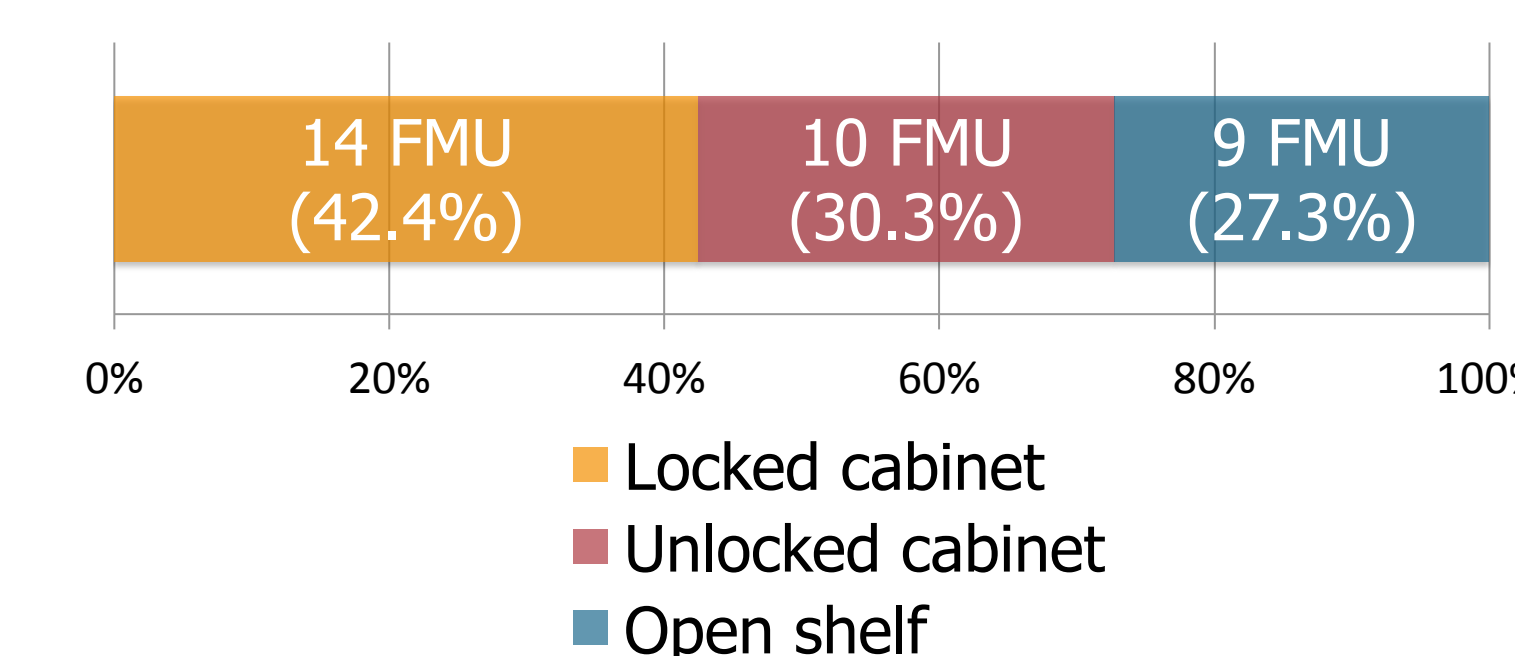
- List of selection criteria: 11 FMU (33.3%)
- List of accepted samples: 6 FMU (18.2%)

DRUG SAMPLE STORAGE LOCATION

IS ACCESS TO THE DRUG SAMPLE CABINET RESTRICTED?



IS THE DRUG SAMPLE CABINET LOCKED?



DO PEOPLE OTHER THAN CLINICIANS AUTHORIZED TO PRESCRIBE MEDICATIONS HAVE ACCESS TO THE DRUG SAMPLE CABINET?

- Pharmaceutical representatives: 12 FMU (36.4%)
- Administrative staff: 15 FMU (45.5%)

SAMPLE MANAGEMENT

ARE THE CONTENTS OF THE CABINET VERIFIED REGULARLY?

- Inventory conducted: 13 FMU (39.4%)
- Inventory frequency:
 - Once per month: 10 FMU (76.9%)

ARE THE EXPIRY DATES VERIFIED?

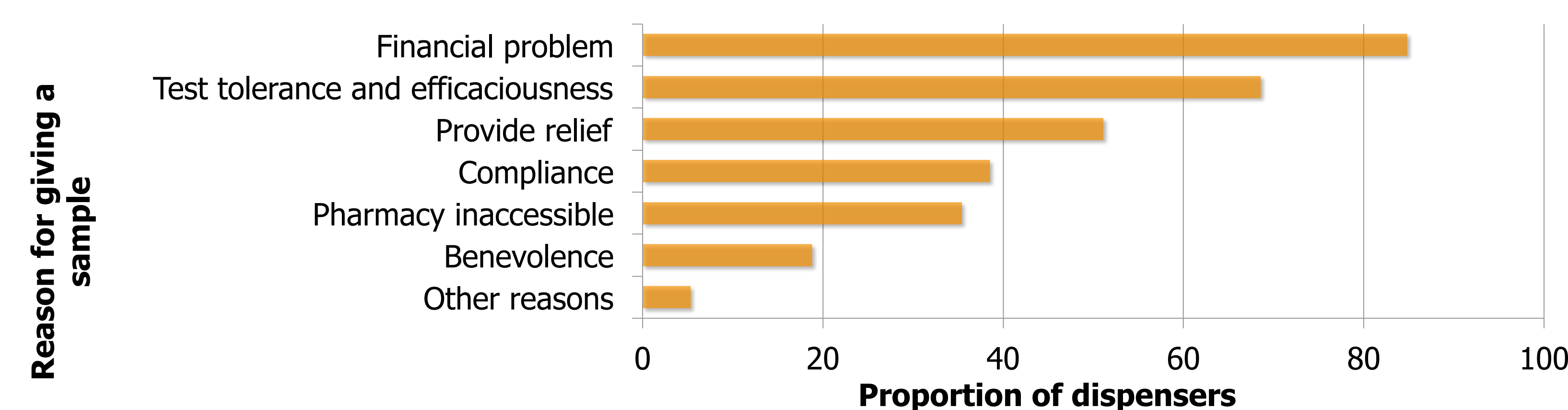
- YES** in all the FMUs with sample cabinets
 - Every month: 20 FMU
 - Every 3 to 6 months: 6 FMU
 - Other or unspecified: 7 FMU

WHAT IS DONE WITH THE EXPIRED SAMPLES?

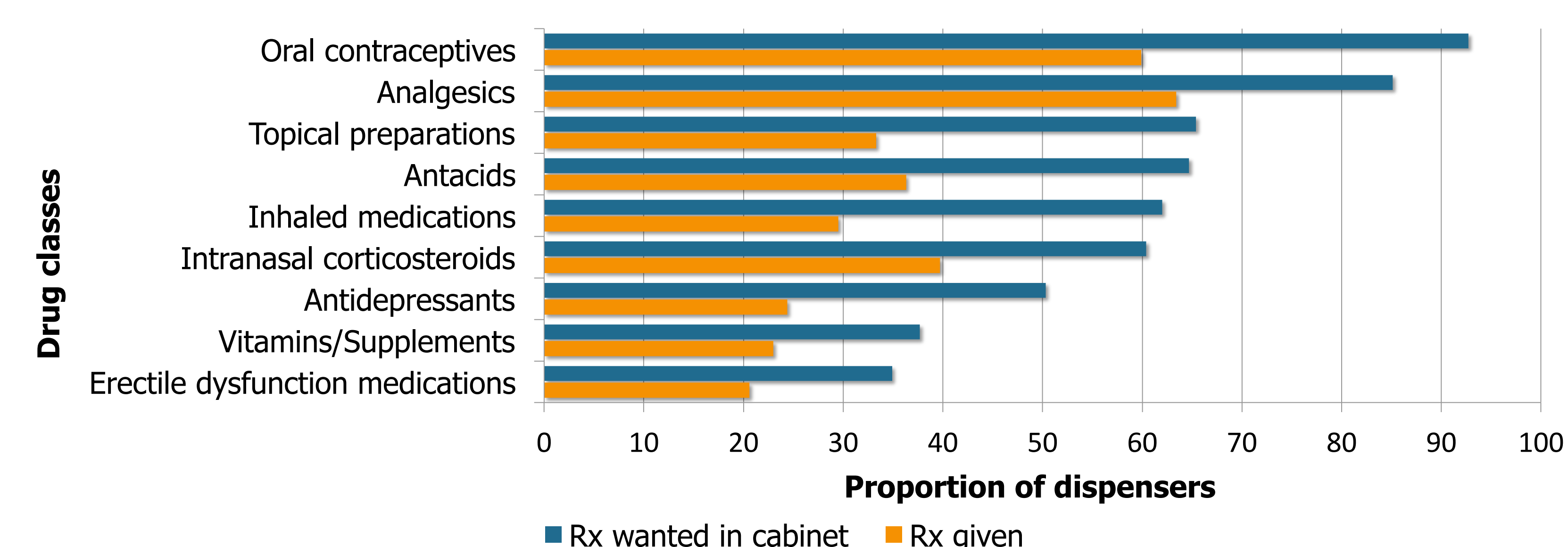
- Institution's central pharmacy: 20 FMU
- Pharmaceutical company: 4 FMU
- Trash: 2 FMU
- Other: 7 FMU

DISPENSATION OF DRUG SAMPLES

REASONS FOR DISPENSING A MEDICATION (N=579)



DRUG SAMPLES ACCORDING TO CLASS (N=579)



DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLES TO PATIENTS

Sample dispensers report:

- Giving a molecule other than the one they sought (51%)
- Never or occasionally documenting their dispensation of a sample (36%)
- Never or occasionally referring the patient to a community pharmacist (65.4%)

PRIMARY FINDINGS

- Access** to prescription medications is not limited to professionals authorized to prescribe them in a significant number of Réseau-1 Québec FMUs
- A **systematic and regular inventory** of the contents of the sample cabinets is not conducted in 60% of the FMUs that keep drug samples
- The **reported reasons for issuing a drug sample** are, for the most part, clinically relevant
- The **documentation of drug sample dispensation** and the **referral of patients to a community pharmacist** are sub-optimal.

NEXT STEPS (2014-2015)

- Complete the analysis of the contents of the 33 drug sample cabinets
- Review and synthesize the written drug sample policies
- Write 4 scientific articles, each led by one of the 4 participating PBRNs
- Develop best practice guidelines regarding the management of drug samples with the **Collège des médecins du Québec**
- Evaluate the diffusion of the best practice guidelines (knowledge transfer)