



PeerOnCall

App-based Peer Support: Implementation of PeerOnCall in the Fire Service, a Descriptive Thematic Analysis

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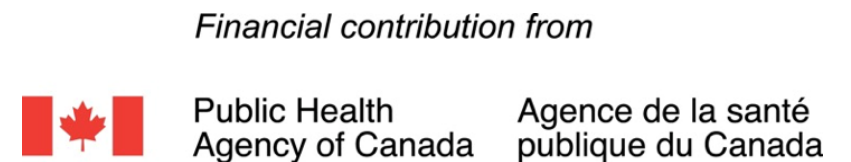
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Faculty/Presenter Disclosure

- Faculty: Sara Stretton (PhD C., Western University)
- Relationships with financial sponsors:
 - No direct financial relationships including receipt of honorarias
 - No memberships on advisory boards or speakers' bureau
 - No patents for drugs or devices
 - No other financial relationships/investments

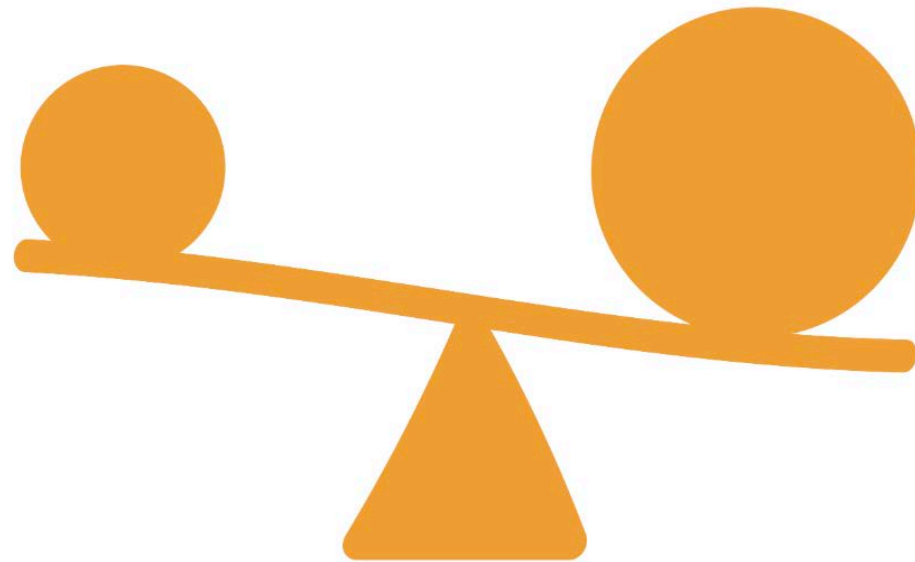
Disclosure of Financial Support

- This study has received financial support from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Movember, and Public Health Agency of Canada in the form of research funds.
- This program has not received any in-kind supports
- We declare no conflicts of interest or relationships with financial sponsors



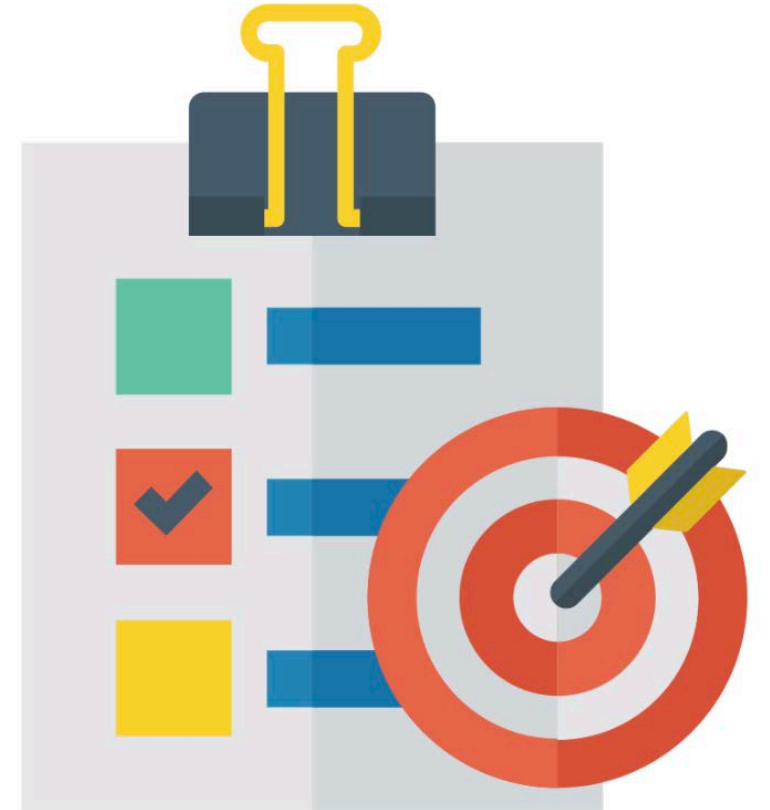
Mitigating Potential Bias

- We have no potential sources of bias identified, as such no mitigating of biases procedures have taken place



Learning Objectives

- (1) Discuss the experiences and perspectives of peer-supporters who have taken part in the PeerOnCall implementation study
- (2) Anticipate benefits and challenges of implementing PeerOnCall within a service
- (3) Identify what steps may be beneficial to take prior and during implementation to increase utilization





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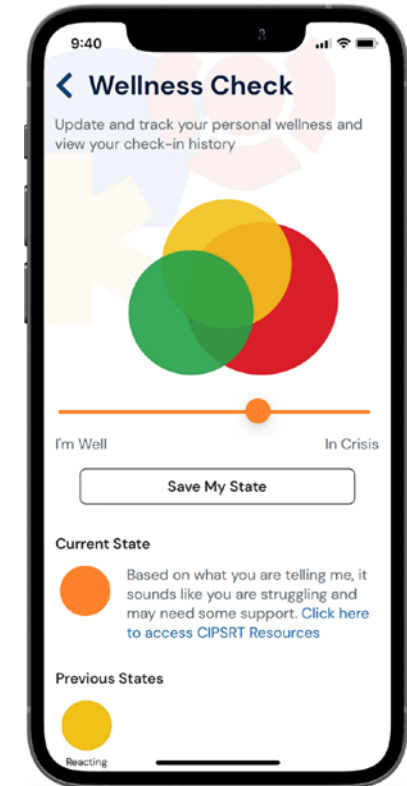
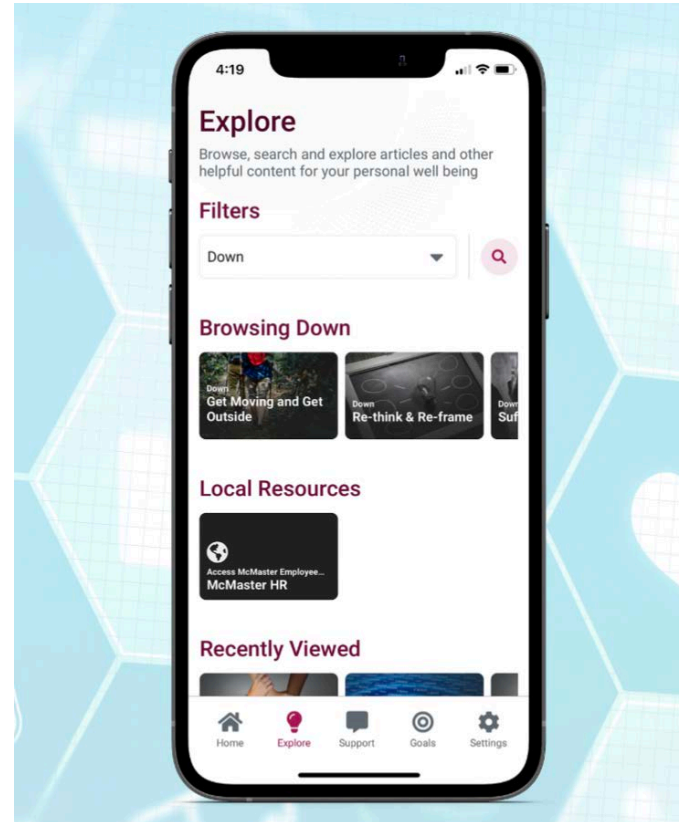
Why develop a Peer Support App?

Response to request for peer support app from Public Safety Community

- High rates of post-traumatic stress injury (PTSI) and mental health issues in the public safety community [1-4]
- Many barriers to seeking support (stigma, access to skilled providers, cultural competency) [5]

PeerOnCall App Features

- Anonymous Text-Based Peer Support
- Anonymous Phone Call Option to Connect to Peer Supporters
- Q & A Chatbot (Search Content For You)
- Peer Wisdom Videos and Content
- Local Resources List
- Wellness Check
- Wellness Toolbox



PeerOnCall



PeerOnCall
Support

App-based peer support designed by and for the Canadian Public Safety community

Why do this study?

Aim

Explore real-world experiences and utilization of PeerOnCall



Research methods

Design

- Prospective cohort among Canadian fire organizations
- 3 or 6-month PeerOnCall implementation period

Sample

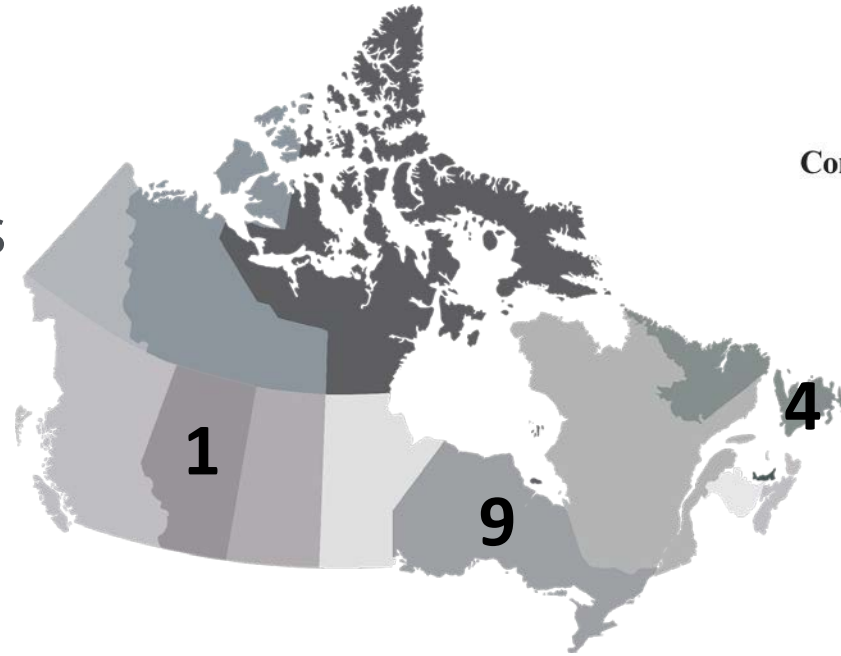
- Volunteer, composite, and career fire organizations across Canada

Data collection & analysis

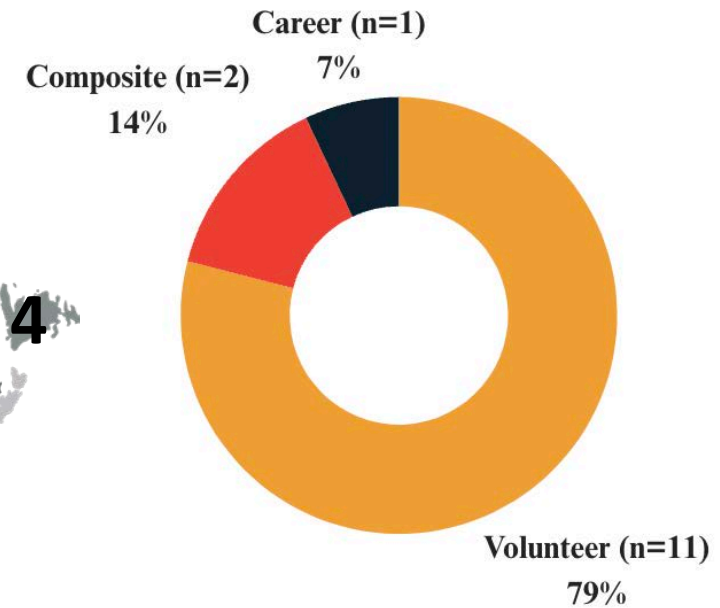
- Anonymous app utilization data
- Qualitative data among “organizational champions” [6,7]

Results: Study Sample

- 14 fire organizations
 - 20 organization champions
 - 116 peer supporters
 - 2,069 employees
- 4 dropped out prior to launching the app
- 50% implemented for 6-months
- 50% implemented for 3-months



Type of Fire Organization



Organization size



10 Small (1-49 employees)



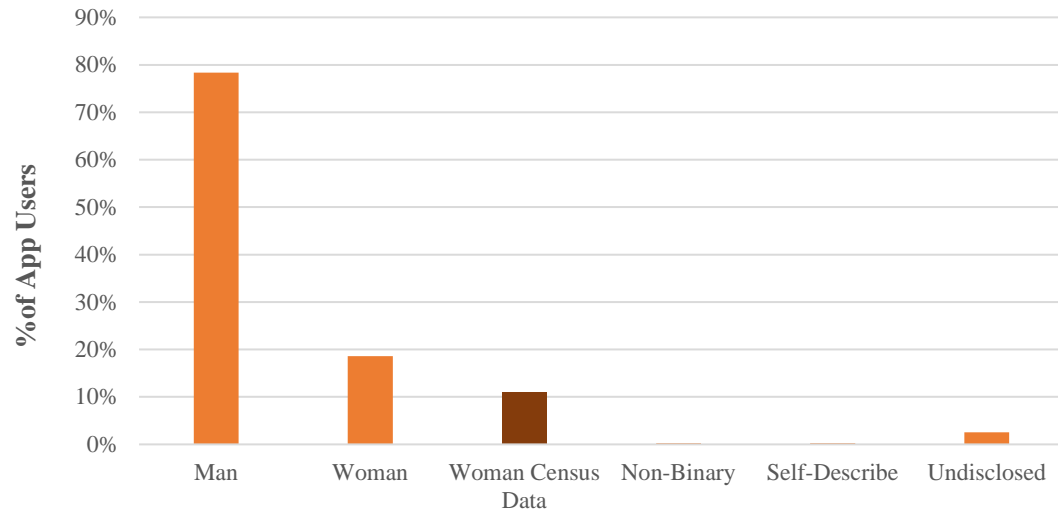
3 Medium (50-199 employees)



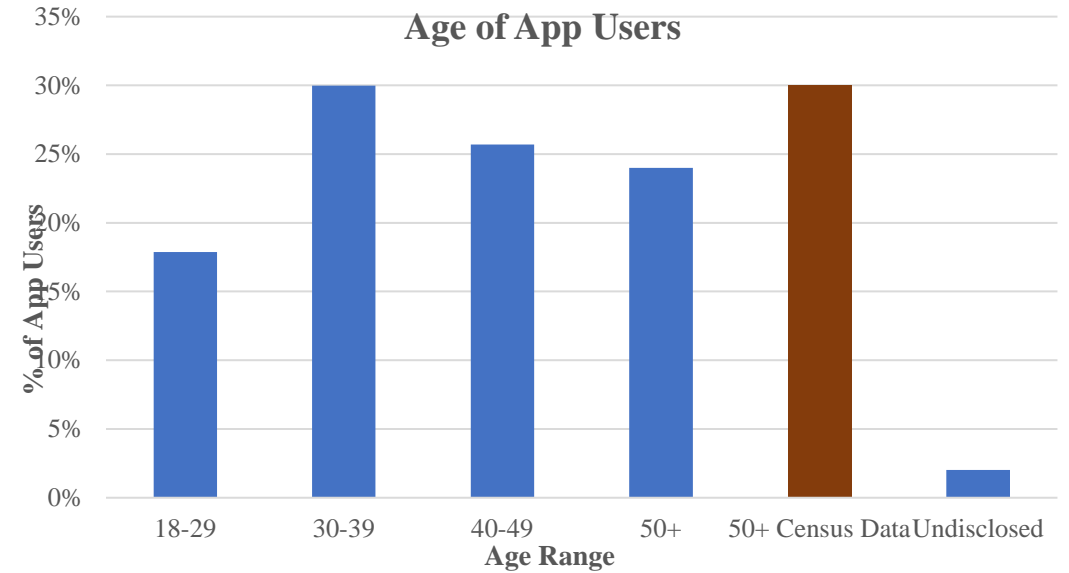
1 Large (200+ employees)

Results: App users social demographic data

Gender of App users

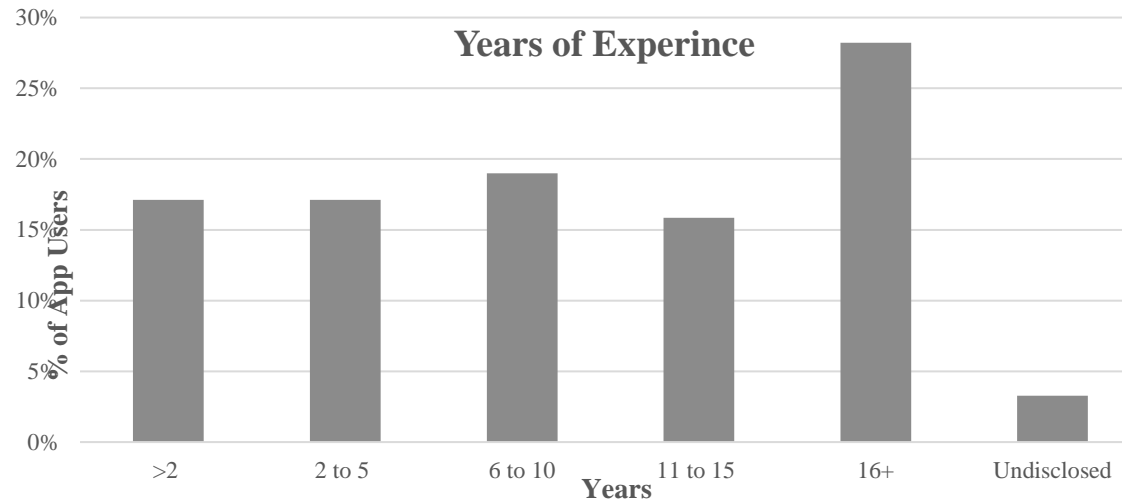


Age of App Users



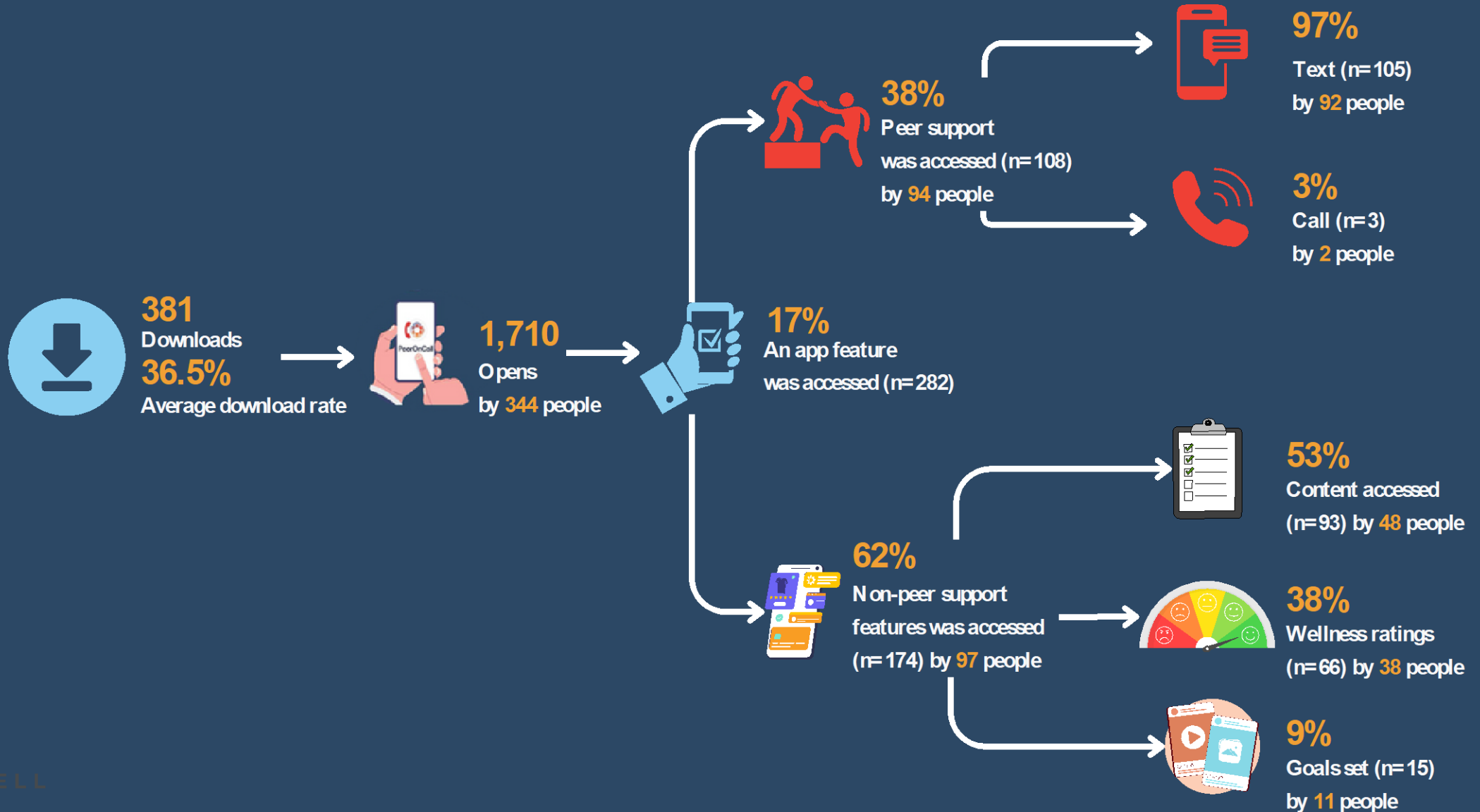
Gender

Years of Experience



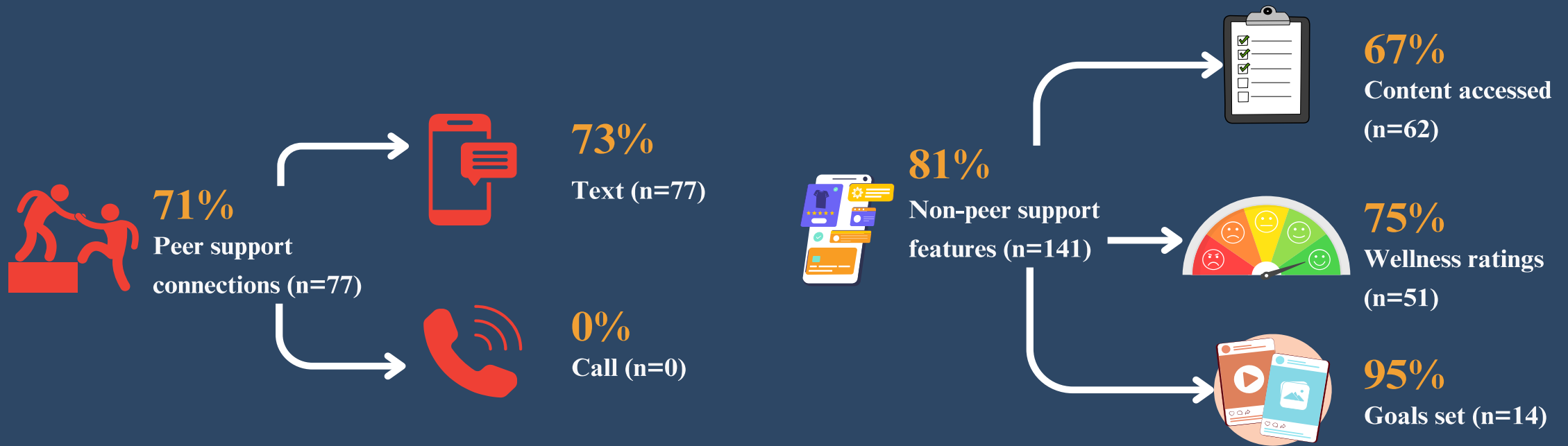
[8] Census data collected from the 2023 Great Canadian Fire Census Data: Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs. (2023, November 22). 2023 Great Canadian Fire Census: Results. Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs. <https://cafc.ca/page/Census-Results-2023>

Results: Utilization Data



Results: Utilization Data

- Most app usage occurred within the first 3-months

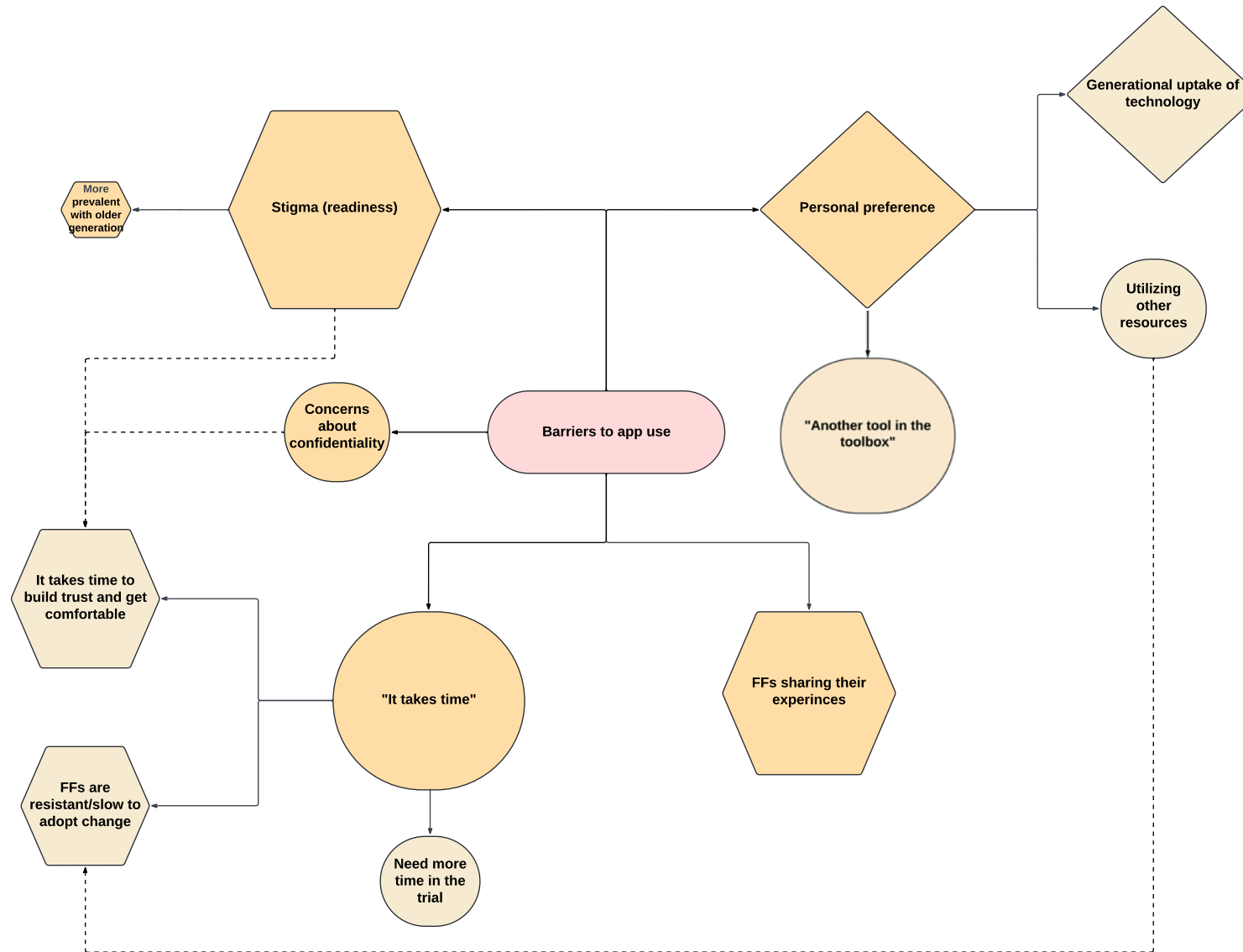


Results: Interview Data Major Themes

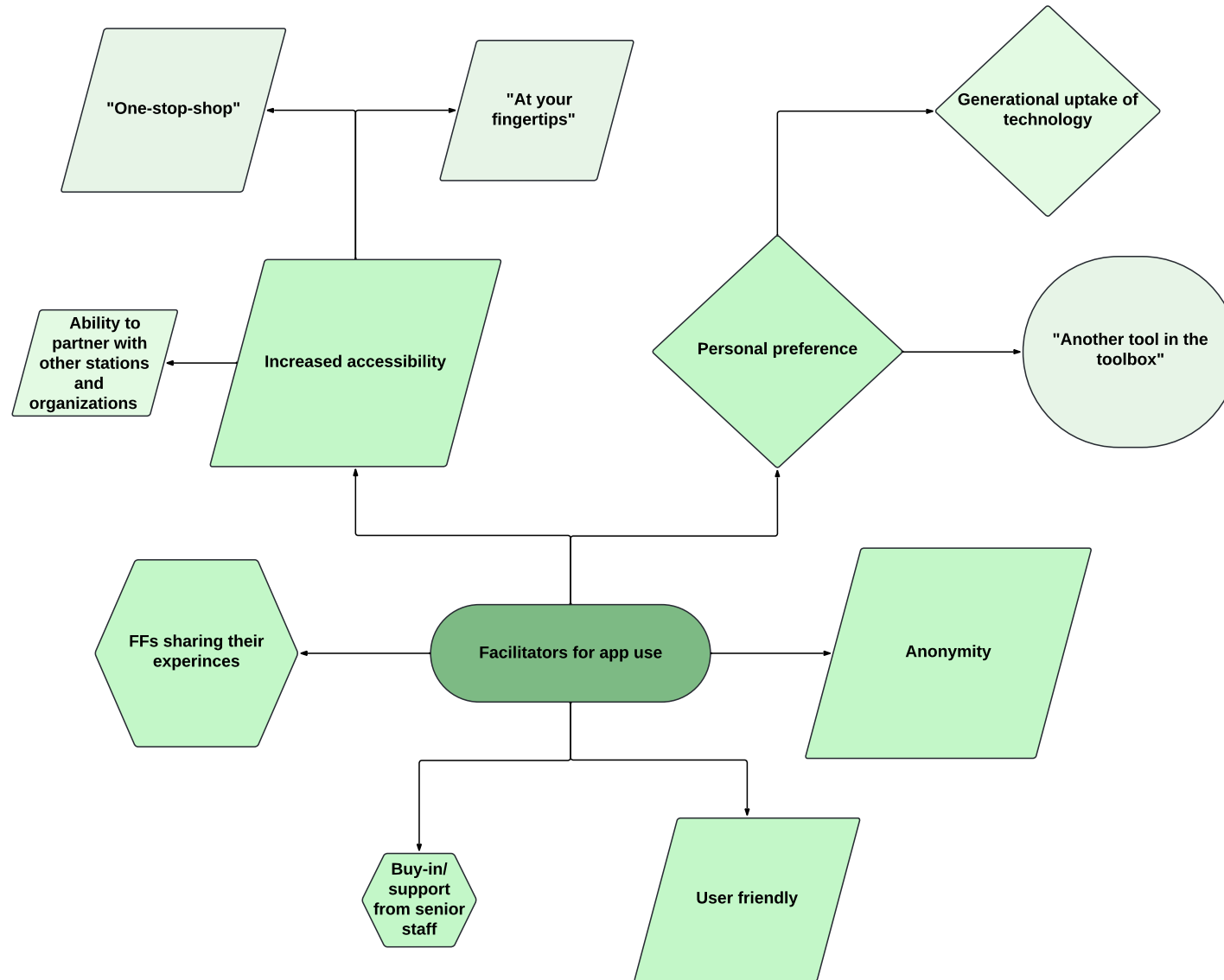
- 18 Organizational champions
 - Baseline interviews (n=14)
 - n=10 in this presentation
 - 3-month interviews (n=14)
 - n=5 in this presentation
 - 6-month interviews (n=6)
 - n=5 in this presentation



Major Themes: Barriers for app usage



Major Themes: Facilitators for app usage



Major Themes: Implementation perceptions



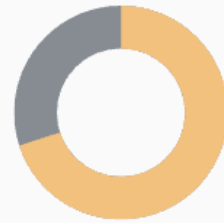
90%

Implementation takes time



70%

Felt PeerOnCall was a
“good fit”



40%

Felt PeerOnCall worked in conjunction
with mental health programs



50%

Felt PeerOnCall “had
an impact”



30%

Believed if PeerOnCall helped one
person it was beneficial to have



30%

Were unsure if PeerOnCall
had an impact



40%

Spontaneously said they wanted to keep
the app post implementation

Major Themes: Implementation recommendations



Limitations

- 90% of organizations were from Ontario
- 12% missing interview data
- Unknown if app “testing” was done during implementation
- Interview data analysis was complete by one researcher



Discussion

- **App users' social demographics**

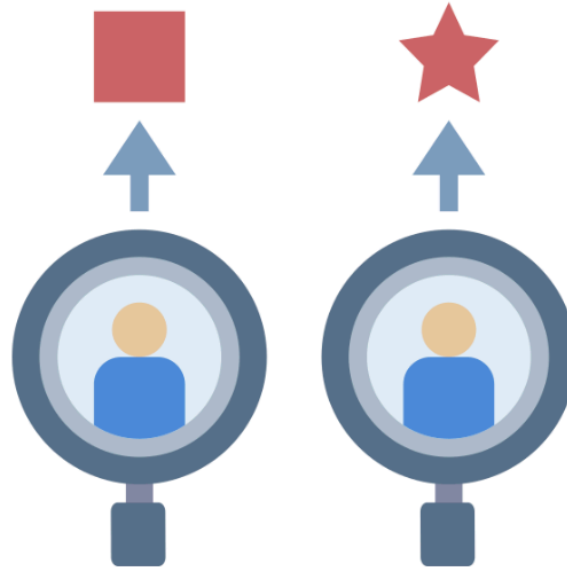
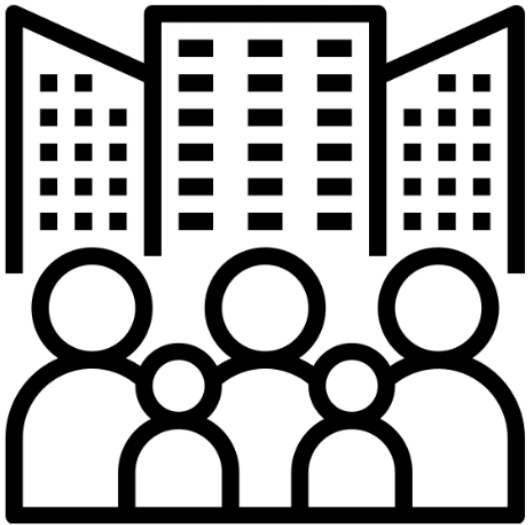
- Women may be more inclined to download PeerOnCall [9,10]
- Firefighters who are 50+ may be less inclined to download PeerOnCall [10]

- **Utilization data**

- 77% of app usage occurred within the first 3 months of implementation [11]
- Utilization over time hypotheses:
 - 1) Utilization slowly increases and stabilizes over time after initial “boom” [11]
 - 2) Surges and reductions in usage are incident dependent

Discussion

- **Interview data**
 - Organization culture, employee preference, and organization size/location may be the best indicator if PeerOnCall is a good fit for your station



References

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