



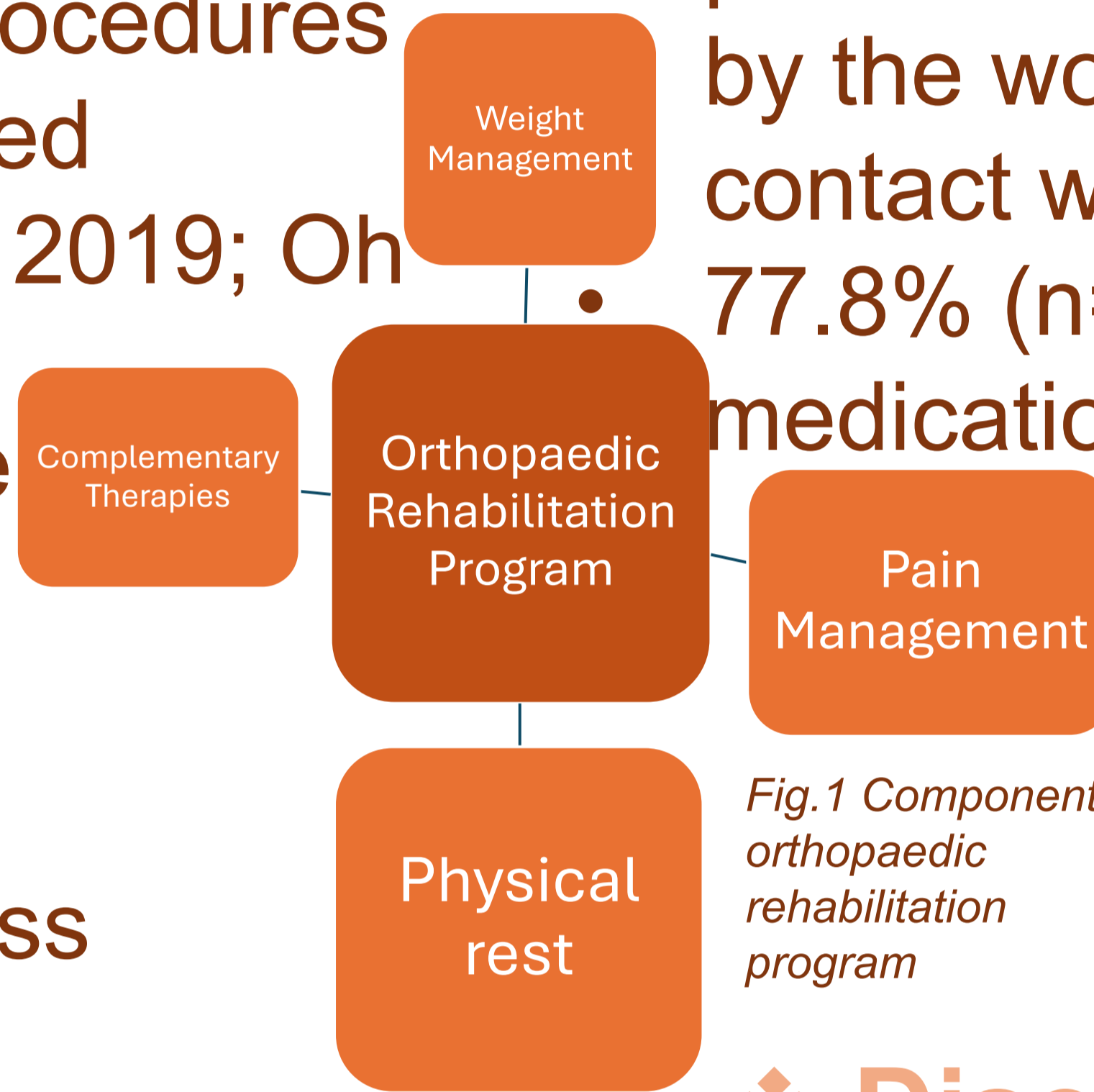
AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT ORTHOPAEDIC DISCHARGE PROCEDURES IN SMALL ANIMAL PRACTICE

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❖ Introduction/Background

- In order to return to full normal function post orthopaedic surgery patients need an adequate rehabilitation program.
- Previous studies have reported a high occurrence of severe postoperative complications in common orthopaedic procedures with 90% of these complications occurring within the first 215 days post-operatively (Engdahl *et al.* 2021).
- Evidence from human medicine showed improved quality of discharge procedures were statistically linked to reduced readmission rates (Luther *et al.*, 2019; Oh *et al.*, 2023).
- This suggests that improving the quality of discharge procedures could reduce the rate of complications prompting this investigation into the effectiveness of orthopaedic discharge procedures in small animal practice.



- 98.8% (n=82) of veterinary professionals advised owners on physical rest, however, only 24.1% (n=20) were advised on dietary needs.
- 87.95% (n=73) of veterinary professionals felt more could be done to improve discharge procedures as shown in fig.2

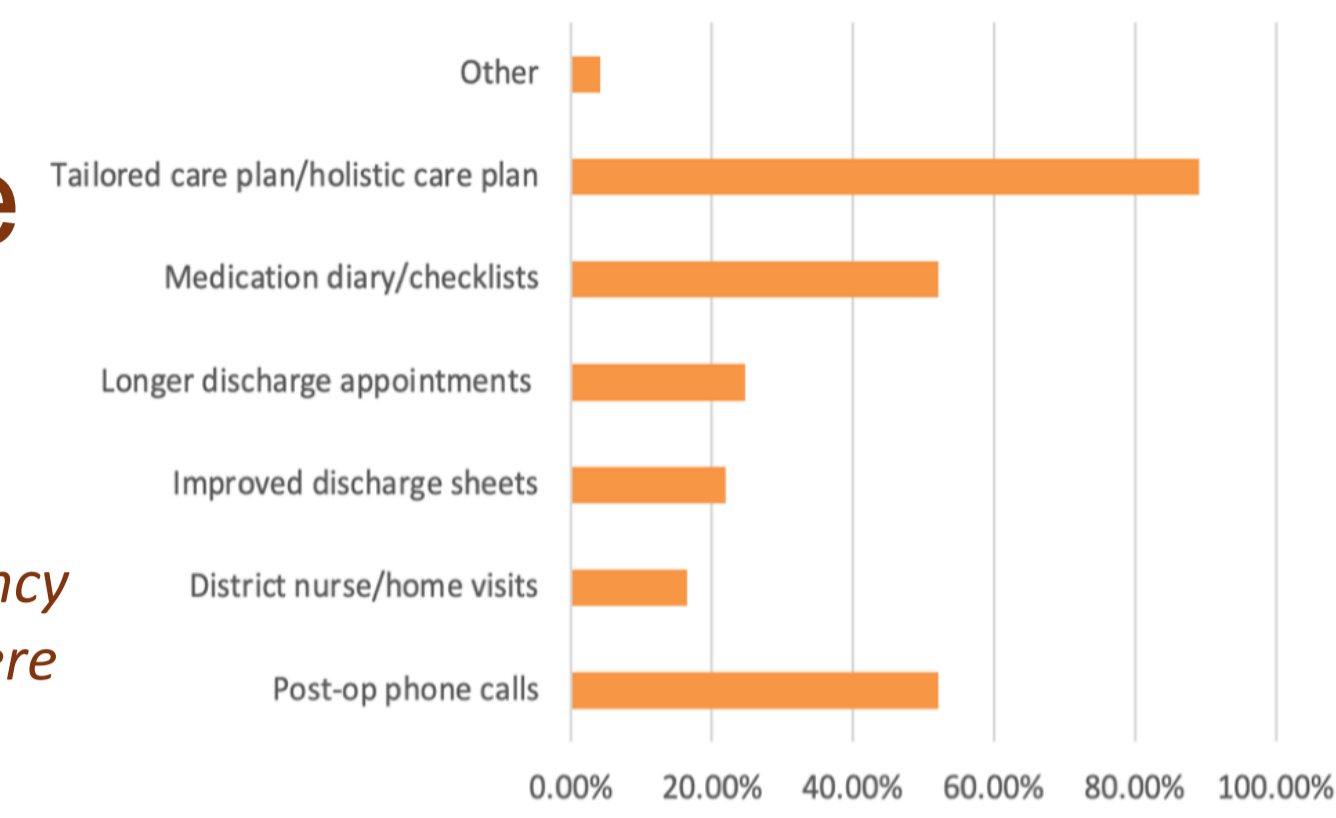


Fig. 2: Bar chart showing the frequency at which suggested improvements were selected by veterinary professionals

❖ Methodology

- A mixed methodology approach was used to obtain a wider perspective on the effectiveness of orthopaedic surgery.
- Interview participants were selected using social media posts in various pet owner and orthopaedic surgery groups, while survey volunteers were recruited via social media posts in veterinary professional groups and electronic mails sent to veterinary practices around the UK.



❖ Results

- Only 12.5% (n=10) of veterinary professionals felt completely confident carrying out orthopaedic discharges.
- There was a significant association (p<0.001) between the different job roles within the team and confidence in carrying out discharge procedures with students appearing less confident.

- Owners often found the orthopedic discharge process overwhelming and rushed as illustrated by the word cloud in fig. 3 and felt more points of contact would be helpful.
- 77.8% (n=7) of owners struggled to keep track of medication administration schedules.

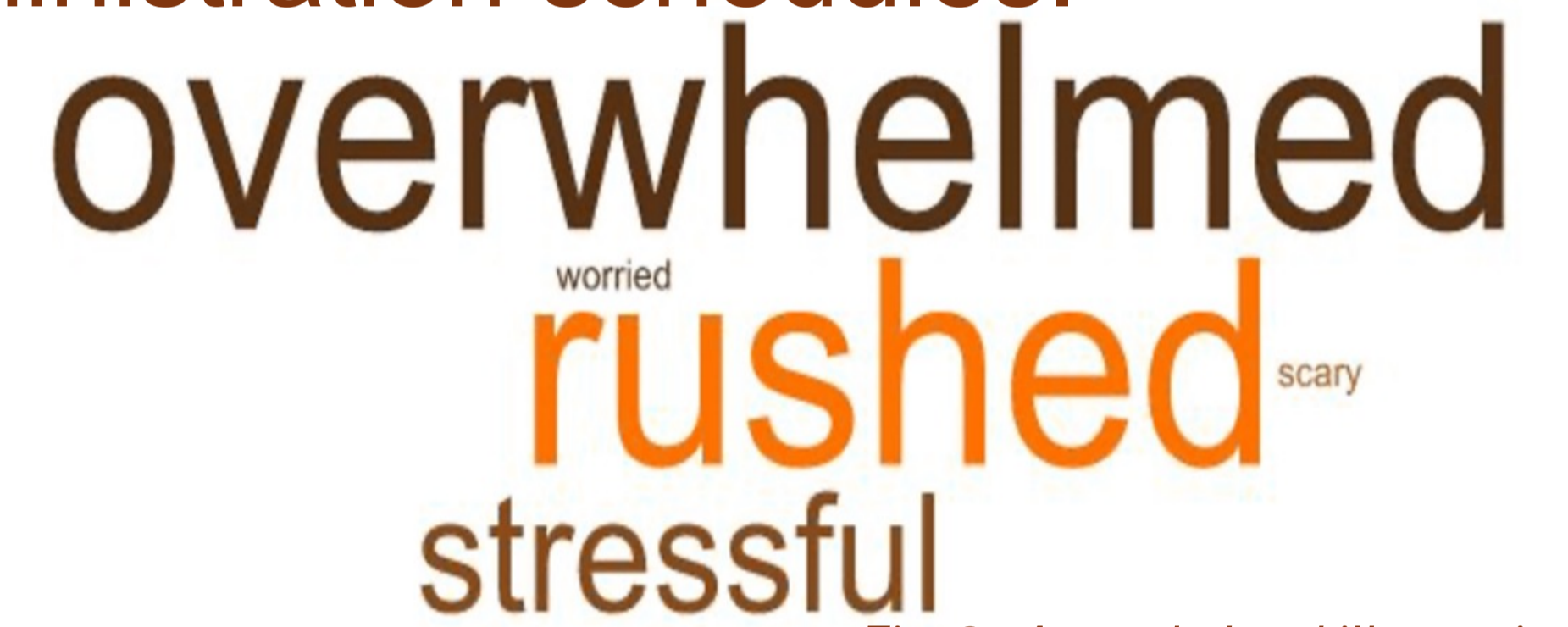


Fig. 3: A word cloud illustrating owners feelings on current discharge procedures

❖ Discussion

- This study showed the need for improved communication teaching for students.
- This study also highlighted the need for more emphasis placed on weight management during the rehabilitation period as part of the discharge procedure.
- The use of teach back method during the discharge process to improve owner compliance.
- Medicine diaries could help owners keep track of when to administer medication.

❖ Conclusion

- This study has provided an insight into the current orthopaedic discharge procedures in small animal practice.
- It suggests a range of improvements that can be made, however, more studies are required to prove the efficacy of these findings.
- The main finding from this study is that more can be done to support owners.

❖ References

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